

Head of UK Legal Team - Job Description

- **Salary:** £51,100 – 58,000 gross per annum at 1.0 FTE, or pro rata equivalent if part-time.
- **Working pattern:** 1.0 FTE (37.5 hrs per week), or 0.9 or 0.8 FTE. Flexible working requests will be considered.
- **Contract:** permanent with a 6 month probationary period
- **Team:** UK Legal Team
- **Location:** This role can be hybrid, or office based with the ability to attend ad hoc events and away days in person.
- **Reporting to:** CEO
- **Management responsibilities:** Currently 6 Immigration Lawyers/Immigration Casework Supervisors

Safe Passage International (SPI) is recruiting a **Head of UK Legal Team** to lead our ground-breaking legal work in the UK. The UK Legal team works to ensure that safe routes exist for all people seeking asylum. The team specialises in providing free legal advice and representation to unaccompanied children and families seeking asylum in the UK.

The Head of UK Legal Team will be a UK-based qualified solicitor or barrister or OISC Level 3 accredited caseworker or IAAS Supervising Senior caseworker with experience of working within the UK in a legal capacity, specifically in the area of asylum, immigration and refugee family reunion.

Reporting directly to the CEO, you will lead a high performing team of immigration lawyers, casework supervisors, and caseworkers. You will drive the development and delivery of our legal strategy in the UK; supervise all UK legal casework; lead our litigation strategy; develop good practices of line management and regulatory compliance within the team; and lead legal policy work by collaborating closely with colleagues within the UK, France and Greece to create a cohesive, powerful, cross-border legal response and framework.

You will also work closely with the Heads of SPI Greece and France, our International Safeguarding and Protection Manager, Experts by Experience Consultants, and Safe Passage Young Leaders to shape our legal function.

This is a vital role within the senior leadership team of a young and dynamic organisation. We are looking for an experienced leader with a strong strategic vision, an ambitious outlook for our legal work, and a creative and initiative-taking approach to leading and managing our UK legal team. Experience in a similar role would be welcome, but this could also be your first paid position in the charity sector, or you could be returning to work after time out.

We value equity and diversity in our organisation and are striving to build a workforce reflective of the communities we work with. We encourage applications from people of all ethnicities, working ages, genders, sex, sexual orientations, faiths (or non), marital status (or non) and pregnancy status. We also have full flexible working policies to support people with disabilities and caring responsibilities. People with refugee or asylum-seeking backgrounds are experts by experience and are particularly encouraged to apply.

As a refugee charity, **we offer a guaranteed interview for people with lived experience of seeking asylum who meet most of the essential criteria outlined in the Person Specification.** If you have first-hand experience of applying for asylum in any country, please let us know in your application. We respect that people's identity is not defined by their past experiences and do not expect candidates to describe their lived experience during the interview process unless they wish to.

If you are excited by this role and working at Safe Passage but do not have all the experience you think is needed, we would encourage you to apply anyway and contact us for an informal chat beforehand to discuss why you would like to apply for the role and what skills or experiences you think are relevant. If you would like to arrange this, please contact hr@safepassage.org.uk

Closing date: Sunday 16th June 2024 at 11.59 pm

How do I apply?

For information on how to apply, please visit the How to apply guide [here](#)

Key responsibilities

1. Legal strategy and casework

- Manage a remote and hybrid-working team of immigration lawyers, casework supervisors and caseworkers according to good employment practice and ensuring sustained levels of motivation and performance.
- Support casework supervision ensuring compliance with requirements of regulatory frameworks (OISC, which regulates SPI's UK legal team and SRA, which regulates SPI's individual solicitors) and devise case strategies to achieve best outcomes for the UK Legal team's clients and in response to emerging external events as required.
- Implement best practices and standard operating procedures in nonprofit legal casework, including reviewing internal processes, implementing relevant quality marks, and overseeing effective casework management systems.
- Develop, deliver, and lead an impactful UK legal strategy for our work, including legal casework, strategic litigation and policy work in the UK, with potential scope to develop European-wide policies.
- Work closely with colleagues in our Greek and French legal teams to develop an effective cross-border legal approach, ensuring we support our clients throughout their journeys to safety.
- Respond to changes in the law and/or legal sector to adapt the emphasis of the UK Legal's strategy as and when required.
- Cultivate a network of motivated, high impact legal partners with whom SPI collaborates including for evidence gathering and advocacy, developing ambitious litigation strategies, the referral of cases and pro bono work.
- Where needed, support UK arrivals work, ensuring our clients arriving in the UK have a timely assessment of their needs and are referred to relevant organisations.
- Oversee UK Legal's capacity-building work with partners in the UK and Europe.
- Keep up to date with national and European legal developments, policy and practice, briefing trustees and the leadership team as needed.

2. Legal policy and advocacy

- Work closely with the CEO, Heads of Greece and France and Head of Campaigns and Communications to collaborate and inform, from a legal perspective, an integrated advocacy strategy combining legal work with policy, public affairs, comms, and campaigns work.
- Develop SPI's legal policy work, working closely with European colleagues and the Campaigns team to ensure that rigorous, well-evidenced legal arguments are central to policy work.

3. Leadership and organisation

- Regularly report to the CEO, provide quarterly updates to the Board and attend Board meetings as required.
- Be a pro-active and accountable member of the Leadership Team, contributing to organisation-wide decision-making and strategic directions, under the guidance of the CEO. Manage and be accountable for the UK Legal Team budget and risk register
- Be proactive in positioning the legal service as leaders in the field
- Lead the UK Legal Team's input on team-related and organisation-wide monitoring, learning, evaluation, and reporting
- Lead and be accountable within your team for the implementation of SPI's internal commitments, including increasing lived experience participation and leadership, ensuring a supportive culture of wellbeing, and driving forward work on diversity, representation, and inclusion.
- Lead on integrating SPI's anti-racism objectives and workplan into the UK Legal Teams work and approach.
- Work with the SPI Fundraising Team, assisting with major donor requests, and sharing timely information, data, and stories for reporting.

Person Specification

Essential skills and abilities:

We would expect candidates to meet most of the criteria listed below. We have indicated if this will be tested during the application or during the interview.

1.	Essential Qualifications: Applicants must have extensive experience of immigration, asylum and family reunification and must be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UK Registered or Law Society of England and Wales Solicitor with immigration experience, with a focus on human rights applications, asylum, and family reunion work; or • Barrister with immigration expertise, with a focus on human rights applications, asylum, and family reunion work; or • OISC Regulated Advisor (Level 3 Asylum & Protection and Immigration categories); or • Senior IAAS Casework supervisor. 	Application question 2
2.	In depth knowledge and understanding of UK immigration law, and in particular family reunion and asylum law.	Application question 2 and interview
3.	Ability to lead the legal casework function of an organisation.	Application question 3 and interview
4.	Experience or strong demonstrable understanding of successfully using litigation to achieve a strategic objective/systemic change.	Application question 3 and interview
5.	Experience of operating in a management or leadership role, specifically performance management and implementing best practices in a legal context.	Application question 4 and interview
6.	An understanding of legal regulatory and compliance frameworks such as OISC and SRA and quality marks SQM/Lexcel.	Interview
7.	Demonstrate a strategic mindset, with experience of shaping the strategy of an organisation, function, or campaign.	Application question 5 and interview
8.	Experience of working with people in vulnerable circumstances.	Interview
9.	A strong commitment to Safe Passage's mission, programme and values, including anti-racism.	Application question 1 and interview

Desired skills and abilities:

These are the 'nice to haves' – you may reference this experience in your application too.

- Fluency in French, Greek or any language of refugee communities including Arabic, Dari, Pashto, Somali, Tigrinya, Urdu, Ukrainian.
- Experience providing immigration advice in the UK, particularly in the areas of family reunion and asylum law.
- Lived experience as a refugee or of seeking asylum.
- An understanding of European legal frameworks on immigration and emerging European policy towards refugees,
- Experience/knowledge/understanding of public law matters,
- Experience of Civil Legal Aid and /or running cases under a Legal Aid contract

Other requirements:

- You must already have the full right to work in the UK as Safe Passage is unfortunately unable to sponsor work visas
- An enhanced DBS or criminal record check is required for this role, but a criminal record is not necessarily a barrier to working at Safe Passage
- Safe Passage is committed to ensuring safer recruitment practices and participates in the [Inter-Agency Misconduct Disclosure Scheme](#). We request consent from successful candidates to approach each of their employers from the last five years to ask for a Statement of Conduct. All job offers at Safe Passage are made subject to receipt of satisfactory references and Statements of Conduct.
- In line with this Scheme, we will request information from job applicants' previous employers about any findings of sexual exploitation, sexual abuse and/or sexual harassment during employment, or incidents under investigation when the applicant left employment. By submitting an application, the job applicant confirms his/her understanding of these recruitment procedures.