



# Breaking Barriers

Meaningful employment  
for refugees



**Programme Admissions Officer**  
London, Manchester or Birmingham



# Welcome from our CEO



Ciara Devlin  
CEO

Thank you for considering Breaking Barriers! We are a fast-paced, innovative charity with a mission to welcome refugees into meaningful employment with one-to-one advice, guidance, education and training. Refugees face substantial hardship fleeing war, violence and persecution. Once in the UK they then face many significant barriers to settling in and starting a new life. Employment is the single biggest factor in successful integration (according to the Oxford university Migration Observatory) but refugees are over 4 times more likely to be unemployed compared to the overall population. Yet there is little support available to help build new lives after refugee status is granted. That's wrong. And that's why Breaking Barriers was set up in 2015.

We know, though our work, how determined refugees and people from a refugee background are to being financially stable and finding purpose in their work. Since we launched the organisation we have reached almost 2000 people and of those, around half found meaningful employment, education or volunteering.

We are a team of around 70 staff and we are also supported by several hundred volunteers. Employment support is our specialism, and our tailored advice and guidance is provided in-house to our refugee clients by our dedicated and experienced Employment and Integration Advisers. We give a central role to businesses, and partner directly with over 40 companies across a variety of sectors, to together offer bespoke opportunities for refugees including skills workshops, paid work placements and permanent job opportunities. We also offer English and IT courses at a variety of levels, delivered by qualified and experienced volunteer teachers to support refugees who have barriers around language and digital ability.

Our delivery model is hybrid – with remote support complemented by in-person support for clients with lower digital abilities. We are an organisation that is laser focused on the service delivery of high quality employment and education support. We are data-driven and we use the data about our work to improve both our own and the wider sector practices.

Our clients are at the heart of our work and inform what we do through providing regular survey feedback, specific advisory input, and sharing their stories. We advocate for our clients by collaboratively working with Government departments to make the case for - as well as shape - integration funding for refugees. We've already had tremendous success with the key role we played in the development of the Refugee Transition Outcomes Fund which we have worked on in Manchester and Birmingham. Our work relies on the generous funding of our network of corporate partners, donors and supporters, and statutory grants. We also work closely with national and local partners to strengthen the sector and wider ecosystem. We know that there continues to be a large and dispersed refugee population with unmet needs and we are focused on bettering our services and growing across the UK.

At Breaking Barriers, we work collaboratively and openly to get things done. We have a flexible and welcoming environment where everyone is encouraged to take ownership, feedback and contribute. As CEO, I am passionate about ensuring Breaking Barriers has an inclusive culture, ensuring that individuals feel confident to bring their whole selves to work and that we celebrate the differences that make all our staff unique. I also believe that it is vital that we invest in and support our staff with lived experience so that they can flourish and progress within the organisation. We are looking for individuals who share our motivation, values and ambitions to grow our programmes so we can support more refugees. The right person will benefit from the chance to be part of a growing organisation and have the opportunity to innovate, pursue your passion and work as part of an incredibly talented team. I look forward to hopefully welcoming you to the team soon!

# About Breaking Barriers

## Our vision

We're Breaking Barriers so every refugee can access meaningful employment and build a new life.

## Our mission

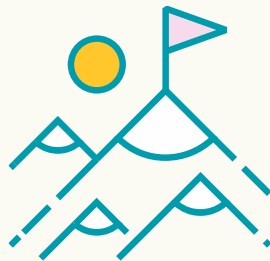
We welcome refugees into meaningful employment with advice, experience and education. We believe in the power of responsible business to change society for the better through our innovative partnerships.

## Our values

Our values underpin everything we do at Breaking Barriers; and our organisation strives to be:

### Mission-led

We put refugees first in everything we do. We listen and respond. We act with integrity. We're focussed on impact.



### Entrepreneurial

We believe in the entrepreneurial spirit of every individual to build a better life. We believe in the power of responsible businesses to achieve social change. We're brave and bold enough to give new things a go. We're driven by making a lasting impact.



### Welcoming

We welcome people of all backgrounds with an open mind. We will make everybody feel comfortable working with us every step of the way. We treat everybody fairly and are friendly. We champion diversity, equality and inclusion.



### Collaborative

We believe in the power of teamwork and partnerships. We work collaboratively with colleagues to find creative solutions for the greater good. We're proud to share our expertise and knowledge with partners to further our positive impact.



# Job Description

Job title: Programme Admissions Officer

Manager: Head of Language Programme

Location: Hybrid work with 40% from Breaking Barriers' office in London, Manchester or Birmingham

Salary: £25,000-£28,000 (London), £24,000-£27,000 (Manchester or Birmingham)

Hours: Full-time (37.5 hours per week), part-time considered

## Overall purpose

The Programme Admissions Officer will be responsible for processing student applications, including conducting initial calls, checking eligibility and signposting where applicable. They would then flag new applicants with the relevant programme. This role is the gateway to accessing our services.

## Key responsibilities

We are a fast-growing charity that prides itself on its flexibility and responsiveness, and as a result your responsibilities may change, develop, and grow according to the needs and development of our programmes.

- Monitoring and processing new and incoming applications, which includes:
  - Conducting initial calls with new applicants to determine their individual pathway and eligibility for Breaking Barriers' programmes
  - Prioritising students according to Breaking Barriers' eligibility criteria and flagging with relevant programmes in order to support enrolments
  - Providing university and career guidance and advice
  - Providing learning plans for all professionals aiming to requalify
  - Providing guidance on the support they can access whilst on the waiting list for our programmes
  - Providing signposting for any students/clients needing additional support
  - Flagging any serious welfare concerns with line manager and/or the Safeguarding Team
- Ensuring all information is accurately recorded on Salesforce for new and existing Breaking Barriers' clients
- Performing any Salesforce admin for the programmes as and when required
- Working with management to improve and enhance enrolment processes where necessary

## Person specification

Skill / experience	Essential	Desirable	Point of assessment	
			CV + statement	Interview
Good administrative and time management skills	✓		✓	✓
Diligent with good attention to detail	✓			✓
Excellent numeracy and communication skills on the telephone, in writing and in person	✓			✓
Good IT skills; specifically, Microsoft Office and CRM systems such as Salesforce	✓		✓	
Resilient	✓			✓
A commitment to understanding the sensitive nature of our work and communication of our work and values	✓		✓	✓
Interest in the importance of long-term solutions in refugee-hosting communities, specifically in breaking down the language barrier	✓		✓	✓
Positive attitude; flexible and adaptable	✓			✓
Collaborative team player	✓			✓
Experience of advocating for client's access to employment and opportunities		✓	✓	✓
Ability to build rapport with individuals from different backgrounds		✓		✓
Experience of working in a person centred, target focused environment		✓	✓	✓
Some understanding of the employment issues facing refugees		✓	✓	✓
An ability to organise own workload efficiently, balancing face-to-face/remote work with administration		✓		✓
Knowledge of Arabic, Farsi or Pashto		✓	✓	

## Considerations

- As part of our safeguarding commitment to our clients, we carry out pre-employment checks to ensure that successful applicants are suitable to work with adults at risk. These include basic DBS checks, obtaining references and verifying a candidate's identity and right to work in the UK.
- We are an equal opportunities employer and welcome applications from all suitably qualified persons regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, sex, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership status, pregnancy and maternity status, race, religion or belief.

Breaking Barriers is committed to protecting an adult's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect and for their views, wishes and beliefs to be fully considered when deciding action.

# Your Application

## How to apply

If you are looking for a role where you can make a real difference, we want to hear from you. To apply, please submit a statement of interest (up to approximately 500 words/1 A4 page) outlining:

- Why you are interested in the role
- What skills you would bring to be successful in this role
- Any experience you would like to highlight
- Any reasonable adjustments you require for the interview process
- Disclosure of disabilities if you wish to do so (as a member of the Disability Confident Scheme, we guarantee an interview to all disabled applicants who meet the minimum criteria for the role)

Interviews will be held online on a rolling basis so please apply as soon as possible to avoid disappointment.

We are proud to be a member of the [Experts by Experience Employment Network](#), which aims to increase representation of people with lived experience in the charitable sector. Please feel free to use information and resources found [here](#), which may help in preparing your job application.

For an informal discussion about the role, please contact Dani Meier (HR Manager) on 07442581708 or [d.meier@breaking-barriers.co.uk](mailto:d.meier@breaking-barriers.co.uk).

We are open to flexible working arrangements and alternative working patterns.

# The Recruitment Process

If you are shortlisted for a role with Breaking Barriers (BB), you will be invited to interview via email. In your invite, the Hiring Manager will ask if you require any adjustments for the interview process. Please feel free to inform them how we can make the process accessible for you.

The recruitment process usually involves two rounds of interviews. The initial round is usually between 5 and 10 applicants, with the second round narrowed down to the final 2 or 3 applicants. One of these rounds may include an interview task, which will usually be shared in your interview invite.

Interview panels will usually be made up of 2-3 interviewers. This often includes the Hiring Manager and another Manager with interviewing experience. In some cases, there will be a representative of the Lived Experience Panel present. This is one of the ways we better involve people with lived experience in our work (lived experience defined as people from a refugee background, with first-hand experience of seeking sanctuary or migration to the UK).

In order to make our interview process as accessible as possible, a summary of the interview questions will usually be shared ahead of the interview. Interview questions will be based on the key competencies included in the job description. Some of the questions will be 'what would you do' scenario-based questions. We believe framing questions in this way makes it easier for candidates to highlight their transferable skills, as opposed to looking at an example of similar roles they have held. You will also be asked about what drew you to apply to work at BB and what you know about the organisation. We recommend you take a look at our values before the interview (page 3 of this pack) so that you can highlight which values you align with, if any.

Your interviewers appreciate that an interview can be a very stressful situation and will do everything they can to make you feel comfortable. Candidates are welcome to bring notes to the interview as a memory aid (though we encourage candidates to avoid reading directly from them as this can limit the flow of conversation). Your interviewers are happy to repeat and reframe questions if desired, let them know if this is the case.

You will have the opportunity to ask questions to your interviewers at the end of the interview. Hiring Managers endeavour to inform you of the outcome of the interview as soon as possible. This will usually be via email.

# Interview Tips for Candidates

Candidates may wish to use the STAR method to help frame answers to some interview questions. The STAR method is an interview technique that gives you a straightforward format you can use to tell a story by laying out the Situation, Task, Action, and Result:

- **Situation:** Set the scene and give the necessary details of your example.
- **Task:** Describe what your responsibility was in that situation.
- **Action:** Explain exactly what steps you took to address it.
- **Result:** Share what outcomes your actions achieved.

Using this method will help candidates provide a focused answer to questions that ask for a real-life example. These questions might start with:

- 'Tell me about a time when...'
- 'What do you do when...'
- 'Have you ever...'
- 'Give me an example of...'
- 'Describe a situation...'



# Why work at Breaking Barriers?

- We're committed to creating a positive and collaborative working culture with regular team meetings and socials.
- We encourage flexible working to achieve a good work/life balance. We offer hybrid working - from the office and from home - and flexi and compressed working hours.
- There are regular opportunities for training and development with our corporate partners, for example: presenting skills and writing for different audiences.
- We celebrate the diversity of our team and have a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Working Group that work with senior leadership to deliver training, agree priorities and hold regular forums.
- You can access the Cycle to Work scheme - enabling you to buy a bike for your commute tax-free and in instalments.
- Everyone gets 25 days annual leave, plus bank holidays. Annual Leave increases one day every full year of service up to 30 days, and the office is closed every year between 25 December and 1 January.
- We also offer generous special leave and family leave policies.
- Access to our employee engagement hub offering discounts, wellbeing support and our 24/7 employee assistance programme.
- Breaking Barriers has also won a number of prestigious awards including the Lord Mayor's Inclusive Employment Award, a National Fundraising Social Purpose Award and the esteemed Queen's Award for Enterprise for "Promoting Opportunity through Social Mobility".
- Flexible working spaces.
- Some of our offices have a multi-faith room, where we don't, we will endeavour to source a private space for you.



## What does our work mean to our clients?

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I got to know about Breaking Barriers when I first got my status and I got a very nice case worker which helped me on how to build my CV, how to build my confidence. They taught me interview skills and also put me into workshops with other organisations that trainings me to be who I am today.

I think my caseworker is the most amazing person I know. Just to know there's somebody out there that's got your back. My support worker told me "Kemi, I got this job. I think it is going to be interesting for you". Which I applied and that's the job I am now. It's a charity that helps refugee worker into employment, and within three months that I got the job, I got promoted twice and all because of Breaking Barriers because even while I'm on the job, Breaking Barriers keep supporting me, telling me what to do and how to carry myself

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**Kemi,  
Breaking  
Barriers client**

# Diversity and inclusion at Breaking Barriers

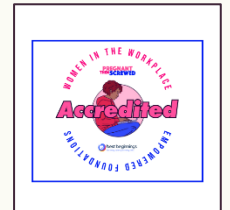
Breaking Barriers is committed to promoting diversity and inclusion regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, sex, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership status, pregnancy and maternity status, race, religion, or belief.

We aim for our workforce to be truly representative of all sections of society and our clients. We celebrate diversity within our workforce and are committed to creating a working environment free of bullying, harassment, victimisation, and unlawful discrimination, promoting dignity and respect for all, and where individual differences and the contributions of all staff are recognised and valued.

We belong to the Experts by Experience Employment Initiative, which advocates and supports organisations to employ more people from a refugee background. With this in mind, we particularly welcome applicants with experience of seeking asylum and/or a refugee background.



We received an accreditation for the Empowered Foundations training with a focus on reproductive health in the workplace. As part of the training, our managers accessed learning on pregnancy loss, fertility, flexible working and eliminating bias. We also have a Menopause and Menstrual Health in the Workplace Policy, to ensure colleagues experiencing symptoms receive the support they need.



As a member of the Disability Confident Scheme, we are committed to offering an accessible recruitment process and guarantee an interview to all disabled applicants who meet the minimum criteria for the role. We are also committed to ongoing workplace adjustments and support for colleagues who need them.



## Accessibility of our offices

Our offices have full disabled access on all floors.

- WeWork Office (London): At the main entrance you can use the free access lift and then the main passenger lifts to all the floors. There is one disabled toilet per floor.
- Landmark Office (Birmingham): This building is designed as three specific cores served by a core staircase in each core – on each floor within each of these cores is the provision of male, female, unisex and accessible toilet facilities, with accessible passenger lifts to each floor.
- Landmark Office (Manchester): This building offers level access to the main entrance, wheelchair accessible lifts to all levels, accessible toilets in each lift lobby and disabled refuges, with two way communication, to each level.
- Spaces Office (Glasgow): 300 Bath Street offers wheelchair accessible lift from entry at street level up to reception and then accessible elevators serve the building overall. SPACES, located on the second floor, is level-entry throughout and has male, female and accessible disabled toilets available for use.

If you require this recruitment pack in another format, please email:  
[enquiries@breaking-barriers.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@breaking-barriers.co.uk)