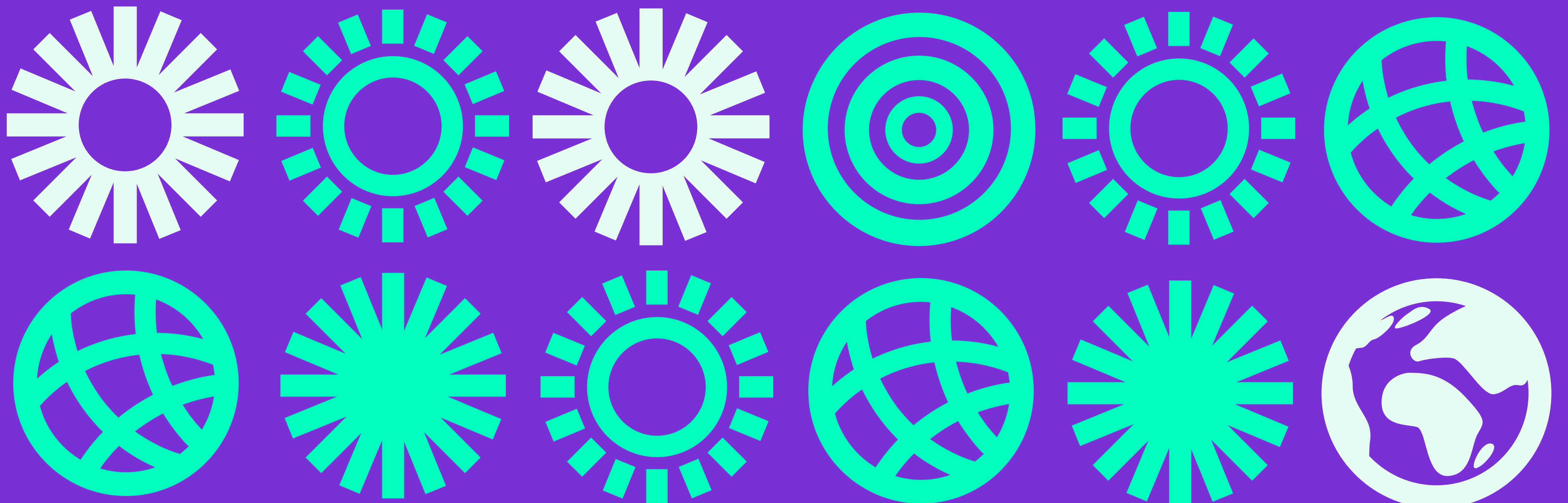


REFUGEE YOUTH SERVICE



DIRECTOR

ROLE DESCRIPTION



OUR STORY TO DATE

Refugee Youth Service (RYS) supports unaccompanied children and young people to restart and rebuild their lives where they are, or safely and legally reach an alternative destination that is in their better interests. Our work aims to resume childhoods, bring an end to perilous journeys, and foster a smooth transition to adulthood. This is achieved through a range of activities which take place within safe spaces or as part of community outreach and street work. A holistic approach is taken to meet the broad and unique needs of unaccompanied children and young people on the move.

The organisation was founded in the Calais jungle in 2016 where it supported over 1000 children through the provision of a safe space and wrap-around services. In 2017 RYS expanded its work and opened the first ever safe space on mainland Greece for displaced children and young people on the move. From 2017-2021 a team of 20+ staff supported on average 1200 young people per year across the two countries.

To achieve this RYS founded a new sister organisation in Greece, Velos Youth, which is now largely independent from RYS with its own local mission and diverse funding portfolio. Velos Youth received the Ockenden International Prize in 2021, in recognition of its work supporting young people to become autonomous.

Collectively, these organisations have

built the skills and capabilities in child protection and youth work of over 50 individuals with lived experience of forced displacement, and have directed approximately £4m towards the welfare of displaced children and young people.

Following a strategic decision to reposition itself to support unaccompanied children and young people arriving alone in the UK, RYS handed over its operations in France to ECPAT France in 2021, along with a three-year grant. Subsequently, RYS introduced its capacity-building training initiative titled "Journey with an Unaccompanied Child," which has since been delivered to over 500 individuals who support unaccompanied children and young people in the UK. The training imparts the expertise garnered from eight years of fieldwork, enabling communities to offer optimal care to children arriving alone in the UK.

In the summer of 2023 RYS stepped-up its work in the UK in response to the hundreds of age-disputed children living in British Home Office hotel accommodations. The 'No Children in Hotels Project' is creating a significant and lasting impact on the lives of children who would otherwise be forgotten about.

In 2024 RYS will be focused on becoming an organisation led by lived experience, and will be releasing its strategy for this during the Spring.

ROLE DESCRIPTION

Location: UK (willingness to travel to London three times per year)

Term: One year

Compensation: £25 per hour (for attendance at meetings) + travel expenses

Deadline: Monday the 26th of February

About the Position

RYS is seeking a passionate individual to join as a Director and play a crucial role in the organisation's transformation. As a Director, they will actively contribute to shaping RYS's strategic direction, policies, and initiatives. RYS's strategic vision is to become an organisation led-by-lived experience, to better centre the experiences of the people we support throughout all areas of the organisation. Therefore RYS is particularly keen to receive applications from people with lived experience of forced migration. The Director will play a vital role in holding to account the wider organisation in its commitment to this.

About the Board

The Board of Directors is currently composed of six members, you can discover more about them on the [about page](#) of our website. The board's skills and expertise include safeguarding and child protection, youth work, monitoring and evaluation, NGO development, campaigning and law. The board meets up to three times a year in person, and up to three times a year online.

RYS board members receive a comprehensive induction process, and are assigned another board member as a mentor if they wish to have one. Directors also receive the training they need to excel in their roles. The training provided is based on the individual needs of each board member.

Key Responsibilities

- Strategic Governance
 - Actively participate in strategy meetings, providing valuable insights based on your expertise and experience
 - Collaborate with fellow Directors to shape and guide RYS's long-term vision and goals
 - Contribute to RYS' mission to become an organisation led by the people we exist to support, and play a central role in holding the wider organisation accountable to this

- Advocacy and Representation
 - Serve as a vital advocate for the rights and well-being of refugee youth
 - Represent RYS at relevant events, conferences, and networking opportunities, amplifying the voices of those with lived experience
 - Foster links and connections between RYS and external organisations, institutions, and stakeholders in your networks, to enhance RYS's impact

Qualifications and Experience

- Lived experience of forced migration is strongly preferred
- Demonstrable commitment to the well-being and empowerment of young people who have been forcibly displaced
- Strong communication and interpersonal skills
- Fluency in conversational English
- Experience in strategic decision-making or leadership roles would be an asset

How to Apply

Please send us a motivation letter or a short video introducing yourself and explaining why you are applying for the role, to jonny@refugeeyouthservice.org. If you have a CV you can attach this too, as well as anything else you think might demonstrate your suitability for the role. Questions and queries about the role can also be directed to this email address, or a short call can be arranged to discuss the role if preferred.

Applicants must already have the right to live and work in the UK. Applications will be accepted until Monday 26th February, with selected applicants invited to a 45-minute online interview. The interview questions will be shared in advance of the interview taking place.

RYS uses the term 'lived experience' broadly, and understands that forced migration is complex and applies to a wide range of situations. Applicants are not required to share details about their personal journey's or histories.

Directors have their travel and subsistence costs paid for by RYS. RYS is able to pay these directly, and therefore directors are not required to spend their own funds and make subsequent reimbursement claims.

WHY JOIN THE RYS BOARD?

Are you passionate about making a meaningful impact in the lives of young refugees and asylum seekers? Are you seeking a platform where your skills and experiences can drive positive change? Joining the Refugee Youth Service (RYS) Board provides a unique opportunity to contribute to a cause that goes beyond personal fulfilment. Here's why becoming a part of our board, especially for those with lived experience of forced migration, can be a transformative journey:

1. Strategic Problem Solving

Board members are committed to finding strategic solutions to the challenges faced by children and young people with experiences of forced displacement. Through their example, they inspire others to get involved, fostering a collective effort towards a common goal. By becoming a part of the board, you play a pivotal role in shaping and implementing solutions that directly impact young people's lives.

2. Beyond Labels

People with lived experience of forced migration bring unique insights about the experiences of the people we exist to support. While they offer valuable perspectives, with RYS they are never limited to the role of 'someone with lived experience.' The board is a platform where your skills and experiences are recognised and valued beyond labels. You contribute to strategic decisions and initiatives, shaping the narrative without being confined to certain labels.

3. Tangible Personal Development

In addition to the satisfaction of contributing expertise, joining the RYS Board brings tangible personal development. Building confidence, accessing training, and expanding networks are pivotal aspects of your journey. These factors not only enhance your personal development but also improve your employment prospects, whilst providing a rewarding experience.

Join us in building a future where every young person has the safety, support and opportunities they deserve!