

**Support for Refugee Women during  
COVID 19 Pandemic**

**Statement of Outcomes 2020/21**

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The Home Office is seeking to award grant funding to non-statutory sector organisations in the United Kingdom (England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales) working nationally to provide support to refugee women. The total available grant funding for the 2020/21 financial year will be £600,000.

Bidders for the funding must be able to demonstrate how they will spend their entire potential award by the end of the 2020/21 financial year. To ensure that we have a full geographic spread we would welcome bids from partnerships or consortia.

## 2. PURPOSE

The purpose of the funding is to provide support to a vitally important sector doing excellent work with refugee women. The Home Office is providing the grant funding to deliver support to refugee women, across the UK, to meet needs associated with the Covid-19 restrictions and the Covid-19 recovery. We expect the focus of support to be largely on addressing digital poverty but will consider suggestions for other support where bidders are able to demonstrate these are high priority.

Grants will be awarded to non-statutory sector organisations working nationally to provide services that help and support refugee women during the Covid-19 pandemic.

## 3. BACKGROUND TO REQUIREMENT/OVERVIEW OF REQUIREMENT

The Home Office leads on integration for refugees, working closely with other Government departments to deliver its commitments in the Integrated Communities Action Plan that was published in February 2019. In the action plan we have committed to increase integration support for all refugees in the UK, including both those that arrive through a resettlement scheme, and those granted status after arrival in the UK, following a successful asylum claim.

The RASI (Resettlement, Asylum Support and Integration) Directorate of the Home Office is committed to improving the integration of refugees into UK society. We are aware that refugee women face additional challenges to integration, and that the restrictions associated with Covid-19 may have exacerbated this. We are looking for one or more non-statutory sector organisations to deliver support to refugee women that meets needs arising from Covid-19.

Refugee women face multiple challenges that have an impact on the extent to which they are able to integrate to life in the UK and become self-sufficient. This is because they face difficulties both as women and as migrants, a 'double disadvantage' that research has consistently confirmed. Some suggest a 'triple disadvantage' of gender, forced migration and immigration status.

Challenges refugee women face include language barriers, lack of social support networks; difficulties finding work which fits around caring responsibilities; experiences of poverty, vulnerability and violence; and discrimination. RASI's stakeholder partners report that Covid-19 and the associated restrictions are having a particular impact on refugee women, with their support needs being deprioritised behind those of others in the family. In particular, with support now being delivered remotely, access to laptops or phones may be difficult, if

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children are using them for schooling, and data may be saved for maintaining contact with family.

Refugee women face multiple integration challenges, and their well-being is adversely affected by language barriers; differences in cultural expressions of illness and coping; lack of social support networks and social acceptance, leading to isolation and loneliness; specific experiences of poverty and vulnerability; and discrimination and loss of valued roles and identities.

Refugee women are vulnerable to exploitation and gender-based violence, both in their country of origin and after arrival in the UK. A Refugee Council project reported that over 70% of the women supported had experienced violence in their country of origin or in the UK: 57% had experienced gender based violence in their country of origin; 44% had been raped; just under 30% had been tortured; half had mental health needs; and more than 20% had experienced gender based violence since arriving in the UK.

Research by the OECD indicates that refugee women are less likely to engage with integration support than their male counterparts: this may be for a number of reasons, including responsibilities within the home, concern around participating in mixed-gender groups and because services are not designed with the needs of refugee women in mind.

The Home Office has sought the views of stakeholders on how the Covid-19 restrictions have further affected refugee women. Responses include that refugee women are struggling to access support services due to their lack of English, lack of access to their own phone/laptop/tablet and lack of understanding of what support is available. They are at increased risk of domestic abuse and are facing food, digital and period poverty.

For the foreseeable future we expect that most, if not all, support for refugees will need to be provided remotely, either by phone or on-line. This increases the importance of refugee women having access to;

- effective equipment for their own use (at least a mobile phone but more likely a laptop or tablet),
- reasonable amounts of data or safe and affordable wifi, and
- IT training and support

We are seeking applications from non-statutory organisations that operate over a large geographic area. Applications from partnerships or consortia will be welcomed. While there will not be a formal cap placed on the amount an organisation can bid for, up to the maximum amount of £600,000, we require all bids to demonstrate that they are scalable. To ensure diversity of funding, please be aware that we may scale back top scoring bids in line with the scalability details provided.

#### **4. LEAD ORGANISATION AND GOVERNANCE**

If successful, the funding will be provided in three payments. The payments will be made in arrears following reports made by the organisation explaining the current status of the bid by, on or around:

- On signing of the grant agreement - 25%

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- 31<sup>h</sup> December 2020 – 37.5%
- 31 March 2020 – 37.5%

Required updates and reports will include (but not necessarily be limited to):

- By 15 October 2020: a **business planning report** detailing outcomes and targets. This should be limited to 500 words.
- By 31 December 2020: an **interim report** on the activities in their business plan. This should be limited to 500 words.
- By 31 December 2020: a completed **Annex A** request for payment and associated financial report (expenditure breakdown) for the period 1<sup>st</sup> April – 31<sup>st</sup> September 2020 to request payment
- By 31 March 2020 a completed **Annex A** request for payment and associated financial report (expenditure breakdown) for the period 1<sup>st</sup> October 2020 – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021 to request payment
- On or before 30<sup>th</sup> April 2021: a completed **Annex B**
- On or before 30<sup>th</sup> April 2021: **final report** on the activities in their business plan. This should be limited to 1000 words.

All updates must be made to the Home Office Resettlement, Asylum Support and Integration, which will be the sponsor authority on behalf of Home Office and will oversee reporting back to Ministers.

### 5. SCOPE OF REQUIREMENTS

The Home Office wishes to make available funding of up to £600,000 to enable non-statutory organisations to increase or improve the support offered to refugee women across the UK to meet needs that are related to Covid-19 and the associated restrictions. To ensure that the funding is made available to women across the UK, we would welcome bids from partnerships or consortia.

Bids should specify the number of women to be supported, and their geographic location, and the support to be provided. Where it is proposed that the funding be used for something other than digital or other socially distanced support (to include provision of equipment, data/wifi, IT training and support, and developing the bidder's own capacity to deliver support remotely) the reasons for this should be explained.

Bids should include a proposal which clearly demonstrates how the funding will be used, with a delivery plan setting out timelines, activities and outputs, and a budget setting out full costs.

Bids should demonstrate experience and success in supporting refugees, and the capacity to upscale support with the funding being made available. Upscaling support may include diversifying the support offered (e.g. by buying in additional digital training resources), but it is not expected that the funding will be used to start significant new or long-term activities.

Separate evaluation of how the funding is used will not be a mandatory requirement of the grant recipients partners, but it is good practice and is encouraged, and any evaluation that successful organisations undertake should be shared with the Home Office. The Home

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Office may also undertake some central evaluation of the project – successful organisations will be expected to support us in this by providing standardised monitoring data. Details of the requirements will be finalised at a later stage but are likely to include:

- the numbers of women supported, their characteristics, and the type of support provided

Successful organisations will also be required to support any Home Office evaluation by:

- taking part in an interview (one per provider) with Home Office research staff, to explore how the funds have been used and gather feedback to inform future exercises, and
- facilitating access for gathering feedback from women who have benefitted from the funding, e.g. through brief surveys or a small number of interviews/focus groups

Successful organisations will ensure that all data recording is GDPR-compliant.

The funding must be spent by the end of the financial year 2020/2021 and all activities to which the funding relates must have been delivered by 31 March 2021

Bidders must set out in their proposal how much they are bidding for, and a detailed breakdown of how this will be spent, and how impact will be evaluated. They will need to show value for money; the intended outcomes and how these will be measured; and that the money will be spent within the financial year for which it is awarded.

### **6. STRUCTURE OF PROPOSALS**

Proposals must demonstrate:

- the ability to apply all the funds within the financial year for which they are awarded
- financial details of the bid. Please note that organisations may bid for costs already incurred since 1 April 2020, provided it is for the same project to which they are bidding to the fund for
- how this bid differs from another bid if you have submitted or intend to submit another bid
- how the organisation will provide a service that directly supports refugee women.
- how the organisation will work with refugee women throughout the UK
- how the organisation has identified demand for the proposed service through analysis of available evidence and data.

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- the scalability of the proposal i.e. the ability of the bid to demonstrate how the project would deliver if less than the requested amount was awarded

The process leading to the award of the grant will be administered using the Home Office eSourcing portal. All applications must be submitted via the Portal. Guidance will be provided on registering and navigating the Portal. The application poses a series of questions which relate directly to the required outcomes. These have been weighted to indicate their relative importance. Guidance will be provided on how the bids will be evaluated.

Full and final bids must be submitted on the Portal by 12 noon (BST) on 01 September 2020.

### **7. DELIVERY APPROACHES**

Bids for funding are welcomed from single organisations or multi-organisation partnerships or consortia.

### **8. DUE DILIGENCE REQUIREMENTS**

During the process, organisations (both lead and partner) whose proposals are successful will be subject to due diligence checks; financial, commercial and extremism.

### **9. PROJECT TIMETABLE**

Bids will need to include detailed mobilisation plans describing how the proposal will achieve a timely commencement of delivery against outcomes.

### **10. SIZE OF GRANT FUND**

While there is no cap on the amount of funding an organisation can bid for, up to the maximum of the funding of £600,000, we may award to one or more organisations. Therefore, all bids will need to be scalable.

To ensure diversity of funding and the greatest level of support, we may scale back top scoring bids in line with the scalability details provided. Bids that do not include the ability to be scaled may be rejected.

Bids should be submitted in pounds sterling and be inclusive of expenses and inclusive of VAT (if applicable).

### **11. GEOGRAPHICAL SCOPE**

Successful bids will have the ability to refugee women across the United Kingdom.