



Refugee Biryani & Bananas is looking for a fundraising professional to join our Board of Trustees to oversee the work of the charity and contribute to the fundraising strategy of the organisation. We are looking for someone with the skills, experience, energy and time to commit to our important work. Our Board is responsible for the governance of Refugee Biryani & Bananas. The Board does not directly manage the day-to-day work, but provides oversight, shaping organisational strategy and supporting our staff and volunteers. Because we are a small charity, sometimes our Board members do small amounts of hands on support and advice, where this aligns with their skill set and availability.

**Role:** Trustee (Fundraising Lead)

**Responsible to:** Chair of Trustees, Refugee Biryani & Bananas

**Purpose:** To oversee the work of the charity along with the rest of the Board and offer specific advice on fundraising and income generation.

**Hours:** Approximately 6-8 hours a month, in the form of board meetings and supporting the CEO and board outside of formal meetings.

**Salary:** This is a voluntary role. Travel expenses will be reimbursed in line with our volunteer policy.

We currently have five Trustees and one permanent full time staff member. Over the past 12 months we have been undertaking a process of professionalization and renewal, with a totally new board to lead it. As part of this process our intention is that this role helps to broaden our range of skills and help us to sustainably maintain and build capacity. Alongside recruiting for this role we are investing in our fundraising staff capacity.

Board meetings are every 6-8 weeks and are held over video call with opportunities to meet in person occasionally.

### About Refugee Biryani & Bananas

Refugee Biryani & Bananas (RBB) was formed in response to the escalation of the refugee crisis in 2015, when a group of friends decided to provide 2,500 portions of biriyani and bananas for all residents of the unofficial refugee camp in Dunkirk, Northern France.

In September 2015, when Ruhi Loren Akhtar (RBB Founder and CEO) saw images of Alan Kurdi, a 3-year-old Syrian boy who drowned after his boat capsized as his family tried to reach Europe, she was deeply shocked. At the time, her nephew, Usmaan, was the same age as Alan and she recalls he had a red t-shirt resembling what Alan wore the day he drowned.

Ruhi then goes on to say: “That night I couldn’t sleep. I thought to myself: ‘This could have been my nephew. This could have been my child. Enough reading about the refugee crisis on the news. Enough sharing social media posts. I have to do something about it.”



### What we do

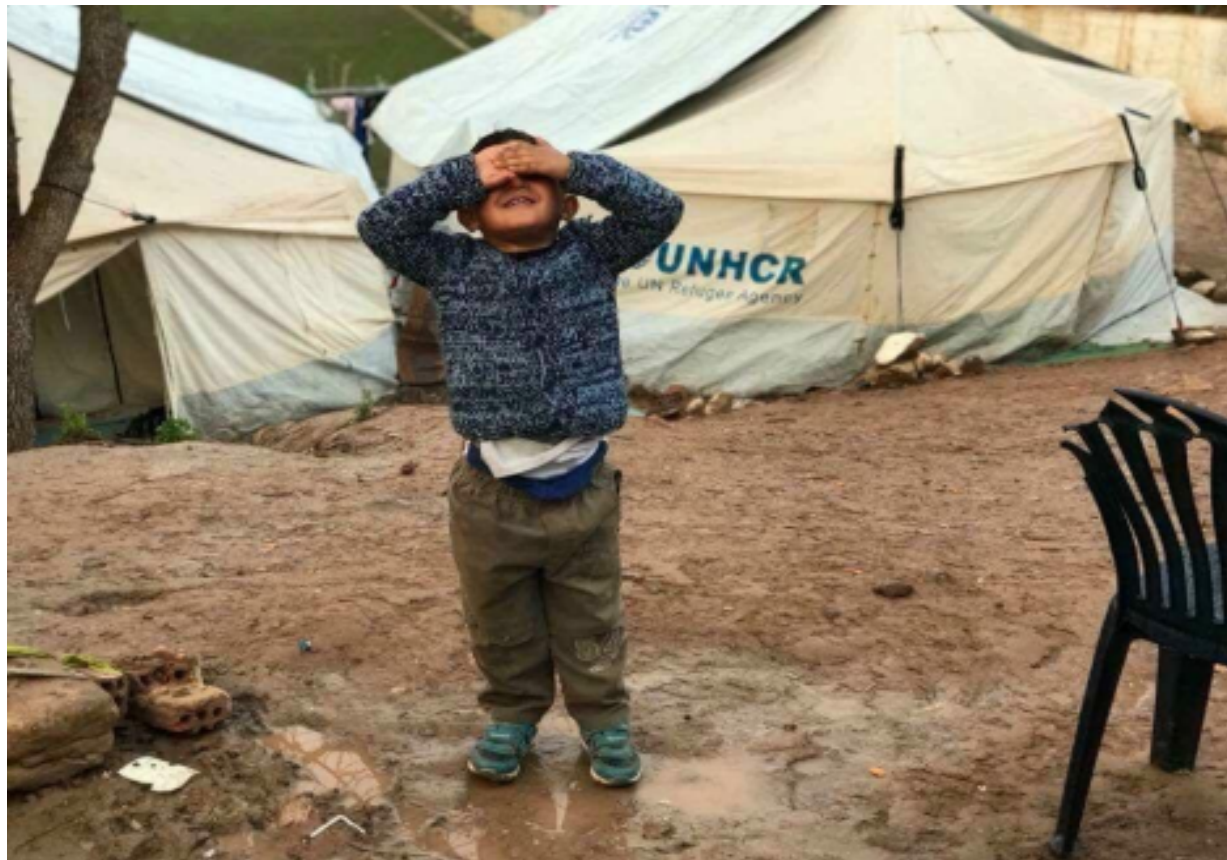
Refugee Biryani & Bananas (RBB) was formed initially as an informal grassroots group, in response to the escalation of the Syrian refugee crisis in 2015. We were a group of friends who decided to cook and distribute 2,500 portions of biriyani and bananas for all residents of the unofficial refugee camp in Dunkirk, Northern France. We initially worked under the umbrella of another organisation before becoming an independently UK registered charity in 2020. We support vulnerable people worldwide, through providing different actions, services and advocacy, depending on the situation. This may range from food distributions to providing medical assistance or campaigning for better global human rights. RBB has been involved in providing humanitarian assistance in refugee and IDP camps, squats, and other unstable settlements along the migratory pathways in France, Greece, Iraq, Serbia, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Turkey, Poland, and the Ukraine Border.

At times, RBB has been a highly mobile organisation, responding quickly and effectively to emerging crises. Over the previous year and a half we have traveled out to the Poland, Lithuania and Belarus border and the Ukraine border where we coordinated with partners and those on the ground, conducted assessments, aid distributions and raised awareness about human rights violations and the situation for displaced people there. After we respond in

emergency situations, we maintain support for those areas through providing volunteers, translation support, medical interventions, aid and advocacy until there is no longer a need or capacity. This may be because the service is then provided by another organisation, or because a situation itself changes.

Our current main base of operations is in Athens and Chios Island in Greece- where we have been operating since 2017. We have built deep connections with the community of displaced people living there. Due to our size, and nimble operating model we are able to adapt to shifting needs on the ground, filling in gaps that larger NGOs miss. This has included running a [free shop](#), alongside more conventional aid distributions, advocacy and signposting. We are enmeshed in the interconnected network of organisations operating in the region, cooperating and coordinating to ensure effective support in difficult conditions.

RBB is a community led project, currently spearheaded by a board of five Trustees and the founder and CEO, Ruhi Loren Akhtar.



The field team consists of 85% people from the refugee and asylum-seeking community, currently representing Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan, Somalia, Gambia, Ethiopia, Palestine, and Yemen. The field team is led by RBB founder and CEO, Ruhi Akhtar and coordinators including members from the community. We also have core team members, advisors and ambassadors from all backgrounds, including those with lived experience of the migratory pathway & from black, asian, minority and ethnic communities. We empower people who are displaced by involving them in decision-making processes and working together as a team as much as possible. At Refugee Biryani & Bananas we provide urgent aid and basic necessities with

dignity and equity.

We also advocate for and share stories of, or from the people we are supporting; aiming to raise awareness and give a platform to voices otherwise left unheard. Our provision of direct aid can include food, water, shelter, medical supplies, clothes, shoes, season specific aid (i.e., sunscreen in the summer or firewood in the winter), baby products and hygiene packs. We assess the needs and communicate with the affected populations as well as colleagues on the ground to identify priority gaps before acting. As well as population wide distributions, we also have an individual, person-centered care approach. We base our humanitarian efforts after liaising closely with those we work with and for and focus on continuity and building trust.

## **Role Summary**

Member of the governing Board of Trustees, who will work closely with other members including volunteers and paid staff, advising on all governance matters. Trustees will be expected to attend Board meetings and AGM, which last around an hour and a half every six to eight weeks. As well as the traditional responsibilities of a Trustee that are outlined below, this role will involve advising and supporting the wider RBB team on fundraising and income generation strategy.

## **Key responsibilities**

- The [general responsibilities of a trustee](#) - a member of the governing board, providing strategic oversight and ensuring effective and accountable governance.
- Overseeing fundraising strategy, to make sure it is carried out effectively, in a legal, honest, and accountable way.
- Contribute knowledge of fundraising techniques and strategies
- Support and encourage CEO and relevant staff/volunteers in their fundraising work
- Contributing to the overall strategic direction of the charity
- Representing Refugee Biryani & Bananas, raising our profile and acting as a spokesperson as appropriate

## **Person Specification**

### **Essential**

- Be eligible to hold a trustee position in [UK Charity Law](#)
- Understanding of the grant writing sector in the UK.
- Experience leading fundraising or income generation in the charitable sector through at least one of the following channels - trusts and foundations/grant applications, major donors, individual giving, corporate partnerships, events/community fundraising
- Ability to work effectively in a diverse, remote team.
- Good communication and interpersonal skills
- Ability to think creatively, with sound judgement
- Impartiality, fairness and the ability to respect confidences
- A commitment to learn more about the charity, our context, history and challenges and to helping us improve.

### **Desirable:**

- Insight/experience or working with people who are refugees and asylum seekers and/or the migratory pathway
- Experience on a trustee board or of charitable law

- Experience in communications

## **Application Process**

We are looking for applicants with the drive to help us reach our ambitious goals.

We are a safe space for all people and welcome those who are new to and currently underrepresented on Charity Boards, in particular members those who consider themselves to have a disability, members of the LGBTQ+ community and those in the global majority<sup>1</sup>. Lived experience of migration or asylum or a commitment to this work is welcomed.

Normally Trustees are asked to commit to a 2-3-year term on the Board and serve for a maximum of 2 terms. All appointments are subject to completion of a successful 3 month trial period.

Following a successful interview, potential Trustees are asked to undergo an DBS check, provide references and complete a three month trial period before being officially appointed. All Trustees are required to adhere to the Charity's policies and procedures.

## **More information about being a charity Trustee**

For more details about the legal obligations of Trustees visit the Charity Commission website at [www.charitycommission.co.uk](http://www.charitycommission.co.uk) and read its publication CC3, *The Essential Trustee*.

Please note: the law places certain restrictions on becoming a charity Trustee (for example, you cannot be under the age of 18, or been convicted of an offence involving deception or dishonestly). If you are in any doubt about your eligibility, visit the Charity Commission website.

For more information about our work please visit: <https://www.refugeebiriyaniabananas.org/>

## **We look forward to hearing from you**

<sup>1</sup> Global Majority is a collective term that first and foremost speaks to and encourages those so-called to think of themselves as belonging to the global majority. It refers to people who are Black, Asian, Brown, dual-heritage, indigenous to the global south, and or have been racialised as 'ethnic minorities'.