



**Prisoners of  
Conscience**

Supporting people who defend human rights

# Package of Support

*Practical support for prisoners of conscience across the world since 1962*

**[prisonersofconscience.org](https://prisonersofconscience.org)**

# Welcome

## Welcome to Prisoners of Conscience (POC) Package of Support for beneficiaries.

We hope that you will benefit from this package and be provided with the tools to live a dignified life and continue to make a positive difference in the world. If you would like to discuss any aspect of the brochure in more detail or if you think there are other areas we should consider please do get in touch.



[info@prisonersofconscience.org](mailto:info@prisonersofconscience.org)

## About Us

**Prisoners of Conscience (PoC)** *has been providing financial and practical support to prisoners of conscience across the world since 1962.*

**We aim to positively transform the lives of people who have been persecuted for their non-violent acts or expression of their beliefs.**

An act of conscience can be the start of an uncertain and isolated existence, leaving people indigent, separated from their families, in exile and without any resources for their basic human needs.

Our beneficiaries are at the core of everything we do and we aspire to work for and alongside them. We aim to encourage beneficiaries to get involved in our activities and nurture a sense of community, developing a strong network of like-minded individuals.

# How do we support our beneficiaries?

## 1. Financial Support

**PoC** provides rapid financial assistance by way of grants to ensure immediate relief, re-settlement and requalification at the time of greatest need.

### Hardship relief

These grants cover items such as food, living expenses, accommodation, furniture, travel and medicines in the UK and overseas.

### Family reunion

Prisoners of conscience are often forced to leave their families behind as they seek asylum in the UK – our grants for travel, emergency documentation, medical assessment, DNA testing and legal expenses enable families to be reunited.

### Bursaries

We fund post-graduate and re-qualification studies in the UK to allow prisoners of conscience to re-establish their careers, thereby becoming self-sufficient and able to contribute to society.





## 2. Employability Panel (UK only)

We have launched an Employability Panel of trusted specialist organisations who may be able to assist our beneficiaries to find meaningful, skills-related employment.

If you would like to access their services, please contact us directly through [info@prisonersofconscience.org](mailto:info@prisonersofconscience.org). It will then be for our beneficiaries and the organisations themselves to explore what services may be possible and of use.

### Breaking Barriers

Breaking Barriers supports refugees to rebuild their lives through meaningful work, training and education opportunities.

We offer intensive, personalised one-to-one employment support to work on CV and cover letter writing, job, university or funding applications and interview techniques, as well as access to work placements and permanent roles in a variety of sectors.

**For more information  
please visit**

[Home - Breaking Barriers](http://breaking-barriers.co.uk)  
[\(breaking-barriers.co.uk\)](http://breaking-barriers.co.uk)

Through our Education and Prospects programmes we also provide English and IT courses as well as employability workshops delivered by our corporate partners. Breaking Barriers works across all boroughs of Greater London with people with refugee status, family reunion, discretionary leave to remain, or humanitarian protection as well as non-EU victims of trafficking and asylum seekers with the right to work.



## Refugee Council

The Refugee Council has a long history of providing specialist integration and employment support to refugees in the UK. We understand the often complex barriers individuals experience when trying to access employment or reconnect with previous careers.

**For more information  
please visit**

[Homepage - Refugee Council](#)

Our team of expert employment advisers offer a personalised approach and work closely with individuals to develop achievable plans to get back to work. We offer employment-preparation workshops, help with CVs and interview techniques. We provide work experience opportunities and ultimately support people for as long as they need us to find a job that's right for them. We currently offer a range of employment support services across London, Leeds, Sheffield, Hull and Hertfordshire.

## Refugee Journalism Project

The Refugee Journalism Project works towards social change by creating opportunities that support the authenticity and agency of groups whose voices and perspectives struggle to get heard in the mainstream media. Since 2016, we have supported displaced and exiled journalists and storytellers by re-connecting them with their careers. We have focused on helping them become better connected within the industry, updating their journalistic skills and finding publishing opportunities, freelance work and placements.

**For more information  
please visit**

[The Refugee Journalism  
Project](#)

Since the project's inception, we have worked with three cohorts involving more than 60 participants, originating from 20 different countries, including Syria, Afghanistan, China, Egypt, Eritrea and Sudan. Some of our participants have gone on to win awards, get work published in national media outlets or gain paid work at organisations like BBC, Thomson Reuters Foundation and the Daily Mirror.

## Refugee Radio

Refugee Radio is a refugee and asylum seeker charity in Brighton that produces radio programmes and podcasts about human rights issues. We run a mental-health support group every week for people suffering from PTSD and depression. We also support the Conversation Over Borders project which provides 1-2-1 English tuition and befriending online.

**For more information please visit**

[Refugee Radio](#)

## Refugees and Mentors

Refugees & Mentors is based in Greater Manchester and offers pre-employment information and guidance to refugees, people seeking asylum and vulnerable migrants. We also support employers to develop inclusive recruitment practices, diversify their workforce, fill skill gaps and offer support to refugees.

**For more information please visit**

[Refugees and Mentors](#)

## Renaisi

Renasi is a London-based social enterprise that has been helping people and places to thrive for more than 20 years. We are passionate about creating the conditions for strong and inclusive communities so that everyone, regardless of background, can share in the social and economic wealth of their community. One of our key areas of focus is delivering high quality support to London's diverse communities through a range of employment and advice services. Below are two of our services which help build the confidence and capacity of refugees to secure employment.

**For more information please visit**

[Renaisi](#)

## 1) Transitions

Transitions is a specialist employment service. We work with employers to provide 6 month paid Returner Placements for professional refugee Engineers, Architects, and Business Services candidates (HR, IT, Project Management) living in London to restart their interrupted careers. A job is not guaranteed at the end of our placements but around 70% of our candidates go on to secure permanent employment. We work with our candidates on a 1:1 basis providing information, advice and guidance so that they are ready for employment in their chosen field in the UK for example helping them to rebuild their professional networks and engage with their respective UK professional bodies.

**For more information  
please visit**

[Transitions](#)

## 2) Refugees Into Sustainable Employment (RISE)

RISE is a free employment service for unemployed refugees in London, funded by The Big Lottery and European Social Fund through the Building Better Opportunities programme. We recognise that our participants often face multiple barriers, so we take a holistic approach to securing employment; offering them information, advice and guidance on housing, benefits, and wellbeing in addition to the support listed below:

- A dedicated caseworker providing one-to-one support assistance with job searches and applications
- tailoring CVs and cover letters
- up to £150 job related expenses

**For more information  
please visit**

[RISE](#)

Once a RISE participant enters employment they receive:

- in-work support to ease integration
- a free travel card to cover their first month's travel to work



## RefuAid

RefuAid was founded to empower forcibly displaced people and help them achieve their educational and professional aspirations with dignity and independence. Since its inception, we have assisted thousands of individuals living in the UK by enabling them to live independently through work or studies, earn income to support their families, and learn English.

We are now a team of 15 individuals passionate about providing equal access to employment and education and do so via 3 programmes. RefuAid now supports over 1600 people a year in accessing employment and/or higher education .



**For more information please visit**



### 3. PoC Alumni Forum

PoC has launched a Prisoners of Conscience Alumni Forum. This is a secure platform where PoC beneficiaries can share messages, thoughts and experiences.

The forum is a safe space to share information, promote integration, and improve employment and study prospects. We would love to see people connect and learn from each other through a network of beneficiaries engaged in PoC's work.



**If you are a PoC beneficiary  
and would like to join the  
forum please contact us**



[info@prisonersofconscience.org](mailto:info@prisonersofconscience.org)

The forum is intended solely for the use of PoC beneficiaries. Once you contact us, we will set up an account and send further details.

Your forum account is intended solely for personal use and to enable you to connect with other beneficiaries. Users will have access to their profiles, which can be edited and customised.

To help keep the forum a welcoming and supportive place, Prisoners of Conscience have put together some Terms of Use (TOU) that apply to the use of the forum.

[Click here](#) to read the TOU.

### 4. Volunteering for POC

We rely on the support of motivated and enthusiastic volunteers to help us carry out our work.

We would love to see our beneficiaries who are interested in our work and are keen to gain valuable experience volunteer for PoC or serve as trustee members. This will enable them to put their skills into practice, carry on their vital work of defending human rights and improve their employment prospects.

More importantly, in working alongside our beneficiaries we believe that we can achieve a greater transformation for prisoners of conscience.

If you would like to get involved with PoC's work please get in touch with us at:  
[info@prisonersofconscience.org](mailto:info@prisonersofconscience.org)

## 5. Publishing case studies and blogs

All over the world, press freedom is under threat and an increasing number of journalists find themselves being threatened, arrested, tortured and imprisoned for speaking their minds, exposing corruption and showing discontent towards autocratic governments.

By supporting prisoners of conscience during their time of need, we enable them to re-establish their careers and make a positive difference in our world.

PoC aspires to enable those determined to hold fast to their beliefs to continue doing so even after they have been persecuted for speaking up. We hope that the PoC website and social media channels can serve as a platform where our beneficiaries can share their story and write about human rights in their home countries and around the world. If you are interested in writing blogs for our website, we would love to hear from you.



## 6. Events and Fundraising

PoC occasionally organises events, conferences and briefings to raise awareness and funds for prisoners of conscience. We encourage our beneficiaries to participate in and attend our events, as it is an opportunity to connect with like-minded individuals and raise awareness about prisoners of conscience. If you are interested in getting involved in our events please let us know and we'll be in touch.

## 7. Collaboration with other NGOs

PoC works with other NGOs to amplify the voices of prisoners of conscience and help uphold and protect human rights around the world. If you would like us to collaborate with any particular NGOs to promote your human rights please let us know.

## 8. Technology

We understand that access to a computer and the internet is essential. Employment, education and participation within society has become increasingly reliant on technology.

PoC has partnered with [Computer Aid](#), a non-profit organization active in the field of Information and Communication Technologies for Development, who provide us with low-cost computers for our beneficiaries.

If you are in need of a laptop please contact us directly at [info@prisonersofconscience.org](mailto:info@prisonersofconscience.org)

## 9. Therapy and mental health services

Many prisoners of conscience, due to the persecution they have faced, may require some form of therapy and mental support.

We partner with a number of mental health services and we will signpost those who need support to an appropriate organisation. You can find the [full list here](#).

## 10. Advisory and legal services

We know that many of our beneficiaries require legal advice for some of the situations they face and we signpost them to organisations that provide the best advice and support for their individual case. You can find the [full list here](#).

## 11. Communications and updates

We maintain contact with beneficiaries so that we can send regular updates informing them about our work, new initiatives and volunteering opportunities. If we do not have your contact details and you would like to receive our newsletters please do drop us an email so that we can add you to our mailing list.

## 12. Signposting to other NGOs

Below are links to many organisations which our beneficiaries might find helpful.

[UK list](#)

[Overseas list](#)







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**prisonersofconscience.org**

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