



CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Trustees' Annual Report for the period

From 1 April 2023 **Period start date** **To** 31 March 2024 **Period end date**

Charity name: Refugee Employment Network

Charity registration number: 1196168

Objectives and Activities

	SORP reference	
Summary of the purposes of the charity as set out in its governing document	Para 1.17	<p>The objects of the Refugee Employment Network CIO as set out in our governing document:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The relief of unemployment of those granted refugee status and, to the extent such individuals are permitted to work in the United Kingdom, those seeking asylum in the United Kingdom, by: (a) the provision of effective vocational and skills training, advice and support, both to beneficiaries and, more commonly, the third parties with which they come into contact, including without limitation local authorities, central government departments, non-governmental organisations, prospective employers and charities; (b) the provision of advice and guidance to employers seeking to train and recruit refugees or, to the extent legally permissible, those seeking asylum in the United Kingdom; and (c) the dissemination, to local authorities, central government departments, non-governmental organisations, prospective employers, charities and any other relevant organisation, of guidance and best practice regarding employment and self-employment as they affect refugees and those seeking asylum;

		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. to advance the education and training of those (a) granted refugee status, and (b) seeking asylum, and in each case their dependants, so as to advance them in life and enable them to adapt and thrive within a new community; 2. to advance the education of employers and the general public around issues relating to refugees and those seeking asylum, in order to better enable refugees and those seeking asylum to build their lives in the United Kingdom; and 3. to relieve financial hardship amongst those granted refugee status and, to the extent such individuals are permitted to work in the United Kingdom, those seeking asylum in the United Kingdom, particularly by the provision of legal and practical advice and guidance relating to employment and self-employment, in each case for the public benefit.
Summary of the main activities in relation to those purposes for the public benefit, in particular, the activities, projects or services identified in the accounts.	Para 1.17 and 1.19	<p>At the Refugee Employment Network, it's our mission to ensure that all refugees can access appropriate, fulfilling and paid employment in the UK.</p> <p>The Refugee Employment Network (REN) is the UK's only national network dedicated exclusively to refugee employment. With a growing network of almost 400 members across all four UK nations, REN is uniting a national community committed to creating opportunities for refugees, spanning a wide range of industries and professions. Our work meets both immediate and long-term needs, ensuring comprehensive support for refugees and employers through each stage of employment.</p> <p>We connect refugees to job opportunities Our Jobs Board, mentoring programmes, and job fairs connect refugees directly with employers and employment opportunities, and employers to refugee talent.</p> <p>We strengthen the refugee employment ecosystem</p>

		<p>Our network includes businesses, local authorities, and refugee charities, working together to advance refugee employment through joint initiatives and sharing best practice.</p> <p>We advance research and policy reform We collaborate with businesses, government and policy makers to advance refugee employment rights in the UK.</p> <p>Delivering public benefit through our work Employment enables refugees to rebuild their lives, contribute to their local communities, and achieve financial independence, which reduces their reliance on public resources. By helping refugees integrate into the workforce, REN strengthens societal cohesion and contributes to addressing critical labour shortages. These benefits extend beyond individuals to employers, local communities, and the UK economy.</p> <p>Our network of almost 400 members, including businesses, local authorities, and refugee charities, ensures that our impact reaches a wide cross-section of society. The main activities undertaken for the public benefits include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enabling refugees to participate fully in society as active contributors to the economy. • Fostering greater inclusion and diversity in workplaces across industries. • Advancing the broader public interest by reducing unemployment and underemployment among refugees.
Statement confirming whether the trustees have had regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit	Para 1.18	<p>The Trustees have referred to the guidance contained in the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit when reviewing the Charity's aims and objectives and in planning its activities. The Trustees have specifically considered how the Charity's activities deliver identifiable public benefit in line with its purposes.</p>

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Additional information (optional)

You may choose to include further statements where relevant about:

	SORP reference	
Policy on grant making	Para 1.38	
Policy on social investment including program related investment	Para 1.38	
Contribution made by volunteers	Para 1.38	This marks the third year of partnership between EY and the Refugee Employment Network. A cornerstone of this collaboration is the support provided by EY volunteers. During the financial year, we had a team of EY volunteers support our events and two full-time secondees for a six-month period, who contributed to the operational running of REN in lieu of paid staff.
Other		

Achievements and Performance

	SORP reference	
Summary of the main achievements of the charity, identifying the difference the charity's work has made to the circumstances of its beneficiaries and any wider benefits to society as a whole.	Para 1.20	<p>We worked directly with 1315 people looking to enter employment and find meaningful work through our job fairs, mentoring programme and jobs board.</p> <p>Growing the network</p> <p>The Refugee Employment Network's priority this year was to grow our network. We focused on building the only national network exclusively focused on collaborative and cross-sector working to redefine and improve refugee employment support across the UK. This year we grew our membership to 355 members of the Refugee Employment Network.</p>

		<p>Sharing best practice in refugee employment is a key focus of the network. We ran the Refugee Employment Annual Summit, in partnership with EY who hosted and supported the organisation of the event. We had 116 people register for the event and 73 attendees.</p> <p>Jobs Fairs</p> <p>Refugee job fairs are a key activity we run across the UK, tailored specifically for the needs of refugees, making them relevant, accessible, and welcoming for all attendees. We convene members of our network to form a local organising committee and work collaboratively to plan and organise our jobs fairs. Jobs Fairs provide job seekers with the opportunity to meet employers who have live vacancies across a range of sectors and professions and access to support and advice on navigating barriers related to employment from support organisations. Jobs Fairs showcase the strength of REN's network model, with local organisations, government bodies, and businesses collaborating to deliver refugee job fairs. Refugee support organisations in our network promote the event to their refugee clients and their own networks.</p> <p>This year we worked with our network to run 3 jobs fairs in Birmingham, Leeds and Cardiff. The events were attended by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1083 job seekers • 81 employers • 30 refugee support services <p>Refugee job seekers reported engaging with an average of 4 employers at each job fair that matched their skills and profession. Employers reported engaging with an average of 70 job seekers per event.</p> <p>Mentoring</p> <p>In partnership with Business in the Community we ran a Refugee Mentoring Programmes to address underemployment. The mentoring programme supports people to overcome barriers to re-building</p>
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		<p>their career in the UK, supporting with qualification recognition, expanding professional networks and increasing understanding of UK hiring practices. Refugees from across our network could join the refugee mentoring programme. The 2023 - 2024 programme supported the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -43 refugees were matched to 43 mentors - 22 out of the 43 jobseekers/mentees achieved a positive outcome (employment, education, training, or volunteering) within 3 – 6 months of completing the programme. <p>One of the mentees shared their experience, stating:</p> <p><i>“The mentor sessions were successful; I have found my first job in the UK. I am working for the last 3 months. I am very pleased for the help... It was the most useful sessions in my life, thank you so much for support.”</i></p> <p>A mentor also reflected on their experience, saying: <i>“My client has been successful in getting a job... it was an absolute pleasure speaking to him and helping him with his job search.”</i></p> <p>Refugee Jobs Board We developed a refugee jobs board advertising roles that meet inclusive recruitment criteria as laid out by the Refugee Employment Network and UNHCR. We are the UNHCR’s UK partner for their European Refugee Employment Platform initiative. 161 roles were posted by employers on the jobs board and 449 applications were submitted by refugee job seekers.</p>
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Additional information (optional)

You may choose to include further statements where relevant about:

Achievements against objectives set	Para 1.41	
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Performance of fundraising activities against objectives set	Para 1.41	
Investment performance against objectives	Para 1.41	
Other		

Financial Review

Review of the charity's financial position at the end of the period	Para 1.21	For the financial year 2023/24, the Refugee Employment Network (REN) reported an income of £95,109 and an expenditure of £33,208.
Statement explaining the policy for holding reserves stating why they are held	Para 1.22	<p>The trustees of the Refugee Employment Network (REN) recognise the importance of maintaining reserves to ensure financial stability and safeguard the charity's ability to meet its obligations, particularly in unforeseen circumstances. REN aims to hold reserves equivalent to three months of operating costs, currently calculated at £31,380. These reserves provide essential protection for core services, staff salaries, and operational continuity during periods of income fluctuation.</p> <p>To achieve and maintain this target, the trustees employ careful financial planning, income diversification, and prudent expenditure management. This includes securing multi-year grants, expanding corporate partnerships, and developing new income streams such as paid training and a charging model for the Jobs Board. Reserves are monitored monthly, reviewed at Board meetings every 6-8 weeks, and any year-end surplus is allocated to reserves until the target level is met.</p>
Amount of reserves held	Para 1.22	£105,921 (26,321 unrestricted and 79,600 restricted.)
Reasons for holding zero reserves	Para 1.22	
Details of fund materially in deficit	Para 1.24	
Explanation of any uncertainties about the charity continuing as a going concern	Para 1.23	The trustees are satisfied that the charity will continue to be a going concern for the foreseeable future.

Additional information (optional)

You may choose to include further statements where relevant about:

The charity's principal sources of funds	Para 1.47	We successfully secured a three-year grant from This Day Foundation to employ our first member of staff, who will also serve as
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(including any fundraising)		<p>CEO. Jenny officially joined REN in July 2024.</p> <p>In addition to the grant from This Day Foundation, we secured income through partnerships with HSBC, the Welsh Government, corporate and individual donations.</p>
Investment policy and objectives including any social investment policy adopted	Para 1.46	
A description of the principal risks facing the charity	Para 1.46	
Other		<p>The Refugee Employment Network (REN) received £40,000 of in-kind support from its long-term partner EY in the 2023/24 financial year. This support was provided in the form of two full-time secondees for a six-month period, who contributed to the operational running of REN in lieu of paid staff. This is shown in our SOFA as Other income and Other Expenditure and nets to zero.</p>

Structure, Governance and Management

Description of charity's trusts:		
Type of governing document (trust deed, royal charter)	Para 1.25	Charitable Incorporated Organisation constitution
How is the charity constituted? (e.g unincorporated association, CIO)	Para 1.25	CIO
Trustee selection methods including details of any constitutional provisions e.g. election to post or name of any person or body entitled to appoint one or more trustees	Para 1.25	New Trustees will be appointed by the Board when and if the need arises. New trustees are required to apply for the position and are interviewed to assess their suitability.

Additional information (optional)

You may choose to include further statements where relevant about:

Policies and procedures adopted for the induction and training of trustees	Para 1.51	Training and induction of trustees is undertaken as needed, including safeguarding training and an introduction to the REN Safeguarding Policy.
The charity's organisational structure and any wider network with which the charity works	Para 1.51	
Relationship with any related parties	Para 1.51	
Other		

Reference and Administrative details

Charity name	Refugee Employment Network
Other name the charity uses	

Registered charity number	1196168
Charity's principal address	54 Crewys Road, London, NW2 2AD

Names of the charity trustees who manage the charity

	Trustee name	Office (if any)	Dates acted if not for whole year	Name of person (or body) entitled to appoint trustee (if any)
1	Janice Lopatkin	Chair		
2	Douglas Ridley	Treasurer		
3	Akeela Ahmed			
4	Nour Eddin Al Talli			
5	Elizabeth Bowles			
6	Sally Bailey			
7	Charlie Fraser			
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20				

Corporate trustees – names of the directors at the date the report was approved

Director name		

Name of trustees holding title to property belonging to the charity

Trustee name	Dates acted if not for whole year	

Funds held as custodian trustees on behalf of others

Description of the assets held in this capacity	
Name and objects of the charity on whose behalf the assets are held and how this falls within the custodian charity's objects	
Details of arrangements for safe custody and segregation of such assets from the charity's own assets	

Additional information (optional)

Names and addresses of advisers (Optional information)

Type of adviser	Name	Address
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Name of chief executive or names of senior staff members (Optional information)

Jenny Walton, Chief Executive Officer

Exemptions from disclosure

Reason for non-disclosure of key personnel details

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Other optional information

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Declarations

The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees' report above.

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees		
Signature(s)	J. Lopatkin	DOUG RIDLEY
Full name(s)	Janice Lopatkin	Douglas Ridley
Position (eg Secretary, Chair, etc)	Chairperson	Treasurer
Date	30/01/25	



Receipts and payments accounts

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For the period
from

01-Mar-23

To

30-Apr-24

Section A Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Endowment funds	Total funds	Last year
	to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £
A1 Receipts					
Donations and legacies	17,109	78,000	-	95,109	61,677
Charitable activities	-	-	-	-	697
Other trading activities	-	-	-	-	-
Investments	-	-	-	-	-
Separate material item of income	-	-	-	-	-
Other	-	40,000	-	40,000	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total (Gross income for AR)	17,109	118,000	-	135,109	62,374
A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total receipts	17,109	118,000	-	135,109	62,374
A3 Payments					
Raising funds	5,424	-	-	5,424	3,456
Charitable activities	19,384	8,400	-	27,784	14,898
Separate material expense item	-	-	-	-	-
Other	-	40,000	-	40,000	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	24,808	48,400	-	73,208	18,354
A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total payments	24,808	48,400	-	73,208	18,354
Net of receipts/(payments)	- 7,699	69,600	-	61,901	44,020
A5 Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-	-
A6 Cash funds last year end	34,020	10,000	-	44,020	-
Cash funds this year end	26,321	79,600	-	105,921	44,020

Section B Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period

Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B1 Cash funds	Cash at Bank	26,321	79,600	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
	Total cash funds	26,321	79,600	-
	(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))	OK	OK	OK
	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B2 Other monetary assets		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
B3 Investment assets			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
	Details	Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
B5 Liabilities			-	
			-	
			-	
			-	
			-	
Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees	Signature	Print Name	Date of approval	
	<i>Doug Ridley</i>	Doug Ridley	30/01/2025	



CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Independent examiner's report on the accounts

Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees

Charity Name
REFUGEE EMPLOYMENT NETWORK

On accounts for the year ended

31ST MARCH 2024

Charity no
(if any) 1196168

Set out on pages

(remember to include the page numbers of additional sheets)

Responsibilities and basis of report

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended DD / MM / YYYY.

As the charity's trustees, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's statement

[The charity's gross income exceeded £250,000 and I am qualified to undertake the examination by being a qualified member of [insert name of applicable listed body]]. Delete [] if not applicable.

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination (other than that disclosed below *) which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; or
- the accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or
- the accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

* Please delete the words in the brackets if they do not apply.

Signed:

Date:

22/1/2024

Name:

BRIAN DEMIDOFF

Relevant professional qualification(s) or body

Finance Manager, Gingerbread, the Charity for Single Parent Families