

## Consultancy Opportunity

### Understanding and informing funder responses in the UK migration and refugee sector: scoping, briefing, and funder education on Palestine

**Term:** June 2024 - January 2025

**Available budget: £15,000** including expenses for participants and VAT where applicable.

**Deadline to submit expression of Interest:** 24 April at 9 AM

**Interviews held:** 16 May (10 - 4 PM)

## Background

### Our mission

The mission of Migration Exchange (MEX) is to cultivate insight, connection and action across the UK refugee and migration sector. We have two ultimate goals: an equitable, power-aware, and intersectional funding landscape, better able to resource systems change, and a connected and action-focused refugee and migration sector, better able to drive systems change. We focus particularly on independent funders and charities to achieve this mission, connecting people through convening, events, and a funder network.

### Our values and approach

- We are collaborative, inclusive and anti-racist
- We respect rights and equity in all our work - staffing, grant-making, governance, delivery and partnerships
- We will co-design all our interventions in dialogue with others
- We add value to the bilateral relationships between funders and sector organisations by focusing on strategic issues and being relational, agile and responsive
- We proactively seek and engage with critical challenge and diverse perspectives
- We are transparent about our activities and choices
- We are open about our successes and failures, and what we have learned
- We will be expert in the specific challenges facing this sector as a result of the policy and legal context, but will proactively build common cause across issues

## **Our work**

We commission research and analysis on trends and patterns affecting the UK refugee and migration sector, as well as developing and co-designing responses to shared challenges and opportunities. Our general approach is to listen and respond to what people doing the work say is needed.

We are particularly motivated to accelerate learning and improve practice amongst funders, to be better able to respond to what is needed on the ground and to understand the wider social, political and historical context. For example, in response to the Black Lives Matter movement, MEX together with the Funders Alliance on Race Equality, jointly organised a learning series for funders on race and migration justice. The learning series comprised of three webinars in July, September and October 2021 that provided space for sharing approaches, challenges, and provocations on ways in which trusts and foundations are funding social change efforts by those working on race and migration in the UK. A space was provided for funders committed to working on the intersection between race and migration in the UK to critically discuss the history, current issues, share funder practice and hear from those working in the sector to challenge the ways in which trusts and foundations approach and fund justice work. Staff from over 20 foundations worked with us to co-design the focus, content, and the format of the learning series.

## **About this consultancy work**

**MEX is currently seeking a consultant to explore and document how communities and organisations in the UK refugee and migration sector are being impacted and responding to the war in Gaza and use this information to co-design a learning series aimed at independent funders in the UK.**

MEX shares the demands expressed by human rights and refugee organisations for an immediate ceasefire <sup>1</sup>as UN experts warn two million Palestinians in Gaza are enduring catastrophic living conditions due to Israel's large-scale military attack. The International Court of Justice (ICJ) has found it "plausible" that Israel's action could amount to violating the Genocide Convention<sup>2</sup>.

The war's impact has been felt by both Muslim and Jewish communities in the UK. There has been a worrying increase in both anti-Muslim hate and anti-Semitism.

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<sup>1</sup> [Israel must comply with key ICJ ruling ordering it do all in its power to prevent genocide against Palestinians in Gaza - Amnesty International](#)

<sup>2</sup> [Gaza: ICJ ruling offers hope for protection of civilians enduring apocalyptic conditions, say UN experts | OHCHR](#)

The aim of this learning series is to deepen the understanding of independent funders of the UK migration sector about the impact on UK communities and organisations affected by the ongoing war in Gaza. This is prompted by our commitment to working towards anti-oppression and our goal of shifting power amongst funders to create an equitable, power-aware, and intersectional funding landscape, better able to resource systems change.

To develop this consultancy, we have completed some initial scoping of online responses from refugee and migration sector organisations and funders and had several meetings with our advisory group, and we recently supported a funder briefing on safe routes to the UK for Palestinians from Gaza. Through these engagements we have recognised the need for critical examination and action within the UK migration and refugee funders.

### **Emerging themes to explore in the learning series:**

Building on the scoping work conducted so far, the key questions for the consultant to explore include:

- How can funders develop an understanding of the current and historical context of the occupation of Palestine and how does this link to the UK?
- How can organisations be supported to speak out and take an organisational stance in line with their values, without fear of losing funding or incurring reputational risk?
- How can the sector deal with concerns about and lived experience of threats, violence, racism, Islamophobia, anti- Palestinian racism, and antisemitism?
- How can funders support the well-being of staff, volunteers and beneficiaries in this context?
- What are the specific demands on UK migration and asylum policy, including emergency pathways, facilitated travel, and prioritised asylum cases and advocacy that can be supported by independent funders?

*We expect that further themes will emerge from the research in the consultancy.*

### **Learning objectives for the funder series**

- To facilitate open and constructive dialogue among a peer group of funders.
- To explore key themes and challenges experienced by impacted communities and the migration and refugee sector's response, including issues related to

historical context, humanitarian action, censorship, personal support, and political engagement.

- To identify specific demands and recommendations for UK funders in response to the war.
- To promote learning, reflection, and action aimed at enhancing solidarity, justice, and decolonising approaches.

This consultancy work fits into our recently published [strategic framework](#) and the following delivery and developmental objective:

- **Delivery objective 1:** Share data and analysis on the size and shape of the sector to spark action on key inequalities, gaps and opportunities and provide an evidence base for the sector and funders
- **Developmental objectives 1:** Implement reflective practice and action to deepen anti-racist, feminist, and anti-oppressive understanding across all MEX internal and external work. This is an important to our wider [anti-oppression objectives](#).

The learning series is also informed by the 6 key areas of focus we identified in our review of the [UK refugee and migration sector](#) (June 2023): adapting to external challenges and crises, racial justice, power and lived experience, employee wellbeing and leadership, and alliance and collaboration.

### **Consultancy Scope:**

We are seeking a consultant to work in three key ways:

- **Scoping and briefing:** Gather and analyse the key themes and concerns arising in the UK migration and refugee sector. Synthesise key themes and issues highlighted by organisations working with impacted communities in the UK and produce written outputs highlighting key findings and themes to inform the learning series.
- **Learning series for funders:** Consult on and co-design a learning series regarding the historical context and current challenges in the migration and refugee sector in relation to Palestine. Develop and deliver engaging sessions aimed at increasing awareness, fostering dialogue, and providing a deeper understanding. This includes facilitating the sessions, inviting guest speakers, working with MEX's team to hold relationships with participants and share admin and logistic responsibilities.
- **Recommendations and interventions:** Provide recommendations for how MEX can build on this work to design future potential interventions and actions aligned

with the remit and focus of MEX, and linked to our wider work on anti-oppression and systems change.

### **Output and audience**

We are keen to capture and share learning and reflections in a range of formats that are engaging and accessible. We are open to suggestions in terms of the format for these- however we are looking for at least three 90min online learning sessions for funders.

We aim to share the output of the scoping exercise with charities and funders in the UK migration and refugee sector.

### **Key relationships**

This assignment will be contracted and managed by MEX. We have an advisory group that will support MEX and the consultant with strategic direction and oversight throughout the delivery of the work.

### **Timescale**

The learning series will consist of three learning sessions which we envisage will take place over a period of a few weeks or months. The spacing may be amended depending on input from stakeholders, and the delivery timetable may be extended over a longer period, if there is demand from participants. The consultant team should approach design in a way that recognises and adapts to feedback from the target participants. Therefore, the following timescale is indicative and is subject to change.

- Commissioning - March 2024
- Deadline for receipt of expressions of interest – 24 April 2024, 9am
- Interview – Thursday 16 May 2024 (10-4pm)
- Contract awarded – by end May 2024
- Inception meeting and development of work plan – by mid-June 2024
- Design - June 2024
- Delivery - July-December 2024
- Dissemination – January 2025

### **Consultant qualifications and specifications**

We are looking for a consultant with essential skills and expertise in migration, refugee issues, and a strong understanding of the geopolitical context. Experience in advising

organisations on similar challenges and a commitment to anti-racist, feminist, and anti-oppressive principles are essential as outlined in our [anti-oppression objectives](#).

The ideal candidate for this work will have:

1. **Values:** Alignment with the values of MEX- including, anti-racist, anti-oppression and feminist. Excellent understanding and experience of working in a values-based, co-design, power-aware, and ethical way.
2. **Research and scoping:** Demonstrated excellence in conducting outreach to impacted communities and research and scoping exercises within the UK migration and refugee sector. Ability to identify key themes and concerns through analysis.
3. **Learning series design and facilitation:** Proven ability to design and facilitate learning series or educational programmes, especially focused on funders. Strong facilitation skills to foster dialogue and increase awareness and create safe spaces for all to participate.
4. **Project management:** Strong skills in project management, including the ability to handle multiple tasks, meet deadlines, and manage potential risks effectively.
5. **Adaptability and creativity:** Creativity and flexibility to respond to emerging issues and adjust the approach to our style of delivery. Willingness to adapt strategies based on evolving circumstances.
6. **Stakeholder engagement:** Experience working with a diverse range of stakeholders within the charity sector, including charities, funders, and grassroots organisations. Ability to navigate and understand various perspectives and concerns. Excellent communication skills.
7. **Output preparation:** Demonstrable experience in preparing accessible and engaging outputs, such as reports or recommendations, in various formats.

We welcome applications from those with lived experience of the immigration system.

### **Application instructions:**

Please send expressions of interest to Migration Exchange at [mex@global-dialogue.org](mailto:mex@global-dialogue.org)  
For an informal conversation about the work please get in touch using the same email address. We are happy to receive expressions of interest from individuals, organisations and joint applications. Providers must be based in the UK.

Expressions of interest should include:

- Two-page cover letter highlighting how you meet the above specification.
- Two page high level design of the project plan and design of the programme including a budget breakdown
- CV of each person on the team, including links to at least two examples of previous work

If shortlisted, we will require at least two examples of previous work and a reference.

For the successful consultant(s), we will agree GDPR procedures and a safeguarding approach prior to commencing work.