

Position Description

Position Title:	Schools and Community Engagement Officer
Location:	Flexible arrangements – working from home and JRS Office based in Parramatta; with frequent travel to other locations in Sydney for schools and community engagement
Reports to:	Head of Policy, Advocacy and Communications (PAC)
Award:	SCHADS 4.1
Conditions:	Full time Contracted until 31 st December 2025 with possibility for extension

ORGANISATIONAL BACKGROUND

Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) is an international Catholic organisation with a mission to accompany, serve and advocate for the rights of refugees, people seeking asylum and other forcibly displaced people. JRS works in situations of greatest need, where people are most vulnerable, where there are gaps in services and where partnerships can be formed to better serve people seeking safety.

In Australia, JRS works to uphold the rights of refugees, people seeking asylum and migrants in situations of vulnerability and aims to support people to empower themselves, to live meaningful and dignified lives while feeling welcomed and connected to a more fair and just community.

As an independent, not-for-profit, non-government organisation JRS Australia undertakes the following activities:

- Supports and accompanies community-based people seeking asylum, refugees and migrants in vulnerable situations through a holistic programme of casework, financial assistance, community activities, Foodbank, English classes, an employment program, a women's program, workshops and drop-in programs provided through our drop-in centre in Parramatta.
- Supports women seeking asylum and temporary visa holders to increase their understanding of domestic and family violence and sexual and gender-based violence, its drivers and their rights, as well supporting women to access support and referral pathways
- Raises awareness with young people and others in the community through schools, parishes, community centres and other stakeholders about forced displacement, social justice, human rights, the situation of people seeking asylum in Australia, the barriers that they face, and ways to get involved.
- Undertakes research and advocacy with and on behalf of people seeking asylum, refugees and migrants in vulnerable situations in Australia in order to advise government and non-government organisations on policy and program responses.
- Supports JRS projects and activities overseas, for example, through regional and international advocacy and campaigns.

POSITION OVERVIEW

The Schools & Community Engagement Officer plays a key role in advancing JRS Australia's mission to promote the rights, dignity, and well-being of people seeking asylum, refugees, and migrants in vulnerable situations. This role focuses on raising awareness, fostering solidarity, and mobilising support through engagement with schools and the broader community.

As part of the Policy, Advocacy, and Communications (PAC) team, the Officer leads the delivery of our School and Community Engagement Programs which aim to:

- Educate and inspire young people and communities about forced displacement, human rights, and social justice;
- Build solidarity and a culture of welcome;
- Mobilise community members and school communities towards meaningful actions, (including advocacy, campaigning, volunteering, and fundraising) that positively impact the lives of the people JRS serves.

The Officer also works alongside leaders with lived experience and the Refugee Leadership Officer, maintains key partnerships (especially within Jesuit and Catholic school networks, the Catholic Diocese of Parramatta etc), and contributes to developing resources, events, and communications that support deeper engagement and impact of the supporter community.

KEY TASKS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Schools Engagement

- Coordinate and deliver the JRS Schools Engagement Program across Catholic, Independent, and Public Schools.
- Book and organise school engagement events and coordinate all associated administration tasks, including booking forms, maintaining spreadsheets/calendars, and managing invoices in collaboration with the accounts team.
- Work with the Refugee Leadership Officer to schedule refugee speakers, provide support during events, and ensure their contributions are honoured.
- Foster long-term relationships with students, teachers, and parents—particularly within Catholic schools in the Parramatta LGA and Western Sydney.
- Encourage schools to embed regular engagement with JRS to ensure the sustainability of the program.
- Develop and distribute the termly Schools Newsletter via MailChimp.

Community Engagement

- Apply community organising principles to:
 - Identify, train, and support key parish and community leaders.
 - Build and support local Catholic and other community groups advocating for systemic change affecting refugees, people seeking asylum, and vulnerable migrants.
- Co-chair the Diocesan *Walking with Refugees* group, convening monthly.
- Assist parish and community leaders in organising awareness events, MP meetings, and practical or fundraising initiatives such as foodbank drives.

- Identify and implement creative ways to engage community groups in supporting JRS Australia's mission.
- Support the Head of PAC in contributing to sector-wide civil society campaigns focused on refugee and asylum seeker rights.
- Collaborate with Communications and fundraising staff to produce and share content related to events, activities, campaigns and fundraising initiatives.
- Maintain and update an online database of community supporters.

Engage School and Community Groups for Donations

- Implement strategies to achieve positive program outcomes including:
 - Mobilising civil society in support of refugees and people seeking asylum.
 - Supporting refugee speakers through paid speaking engagements.
 - Generating income and donations for JRS Australia.
- Coordinate Foodbank drives and donation drop-offs in collaboration with the JRS Foodbank team.
- Work with school and community contacts, as well as the fundraising and finance team, to track and acknowledge financial donations.

Developing Resources and Educational Materials

- Collaborate with the PAC team to produce educational materials on key advocacy issues for use in schools, communities, and communications.
- Develop and disseminate resources focused on forced displacement, human rights, and Catholic social teaching to raise awareness and promote student- and community-led advocacy.
- Support young people and communities to develop and implement their own projects connected to refugee and asylum issues.

Administrative and Other Tasks:

- Collect and create photos, videos, and written content to contribute to JRS Australia's communications and promotional materials.
- Ensure all communications and resources comply with JRS branding and style guidelines.
- Recruit and support volunteers involved in schools and community programs.
- Seek and document feedback from school events to monitor and evaluate the impact of the program, and identify areas for improvement.

Philosophy, Mission and Values

- Understands and demonstrates the Mission and Values of JRS on a day-to-day basis; respect, hope, dignity, solidarity, hospitality, justice and participation.
- Adheres to the policies and procedures of JRS.
- Adheres to the JRS International and the Australian Jesuit Province Code of Conduct.
- Works closely with the relevant people in all of the Jesuit ministries to ensure that Ignatian spirituality is fostered and lived within those ministries.
- Behaves in a culturally and linguistically sensitive manner that respects everyone regardless of their background, race, religion, gender, sexuality, ethnicity, ability or any other background.
- Provides and promotes an environment of mutual respect, dignity and fairness – free from discrimination, harassment, victimisation, bullying and violence to ensure that

acceptable standards of conduct are maintained at all times and takes appropriate action if unacceptable conduct is observed.

Occupational Health and Safety

- Complies with the requirements of relevant Work, Health and Safety (or Occupational, Health and Safety) Acts and related procedures developed by the Mission and JRS.
- Works in a manner that considers duty of care for self and others and be safety conscious at all times.
- Reports inappropriate behaviours which endanger self or others including bullying and other harassing behaviours / incidents.

Quality Assurance and Continuous Improvement

- Attends relevant meetings, workshops, conferences and training, as required
- Becomes familiar with, and follows JRS and the Province's quality and standard policies, procedures and management instructions.
- Is open to new ways of doing things that enhance working in an environment that subscribes to the Ignatian way.
- Strives for continuous improvement in the quality system and work practices by being alert to opportunities for improvement.
- Maintains confidentiality in relation to clients, staff and volunteer issues.

SELECTION CRITERIA

- **Qualifications and Knowledge**
 - Tertiary qualification, or equivalent professional experience, in education, community development, community organising, human rights, policy or a related field.
 - Demonstrated understanding of the issues faced by people seeking asylum and refugees in Australia, as well as the global displacement context.
 - Understanding of, and commitment to, human rights, gender equality, non-discrimination and social change.
 - Understanding of and sympathy with the mission and values of Jesuit Refugee Service and the Australian Jesuit Province.
- **Community Engagement and Advocacy**
 - Demonstrated experience in community organising, advocacy, campaigning, or community engagement, particularly within civil society, youth, or faith-based settings.
 - Experience working with young people
 - Proven ability to identify, train, and support community leaders and volunteers to achieve defined social justice goals.
 - Experience in developing and delivering workshops, training, or group sessions.
 - Demonstrated experience in developing and coordinating projects or programs, particularly in an educational context.
- **Communication and Relationship Building**
 - Excellent oral, written, interpersonal and cross-cultural communication skills, including public speaking.
 - Experience producing written advocacy and campaign materials (e.g. training documentation, calls to action).

- Outstanding networking and relationship-building skills with a demonstrated ability to engage positively with stakeholders from diverse backgrounds.
- **Event and Program Coordination**
 - Experience coordinating and organising events, with an understanding of the key elements for success.
 - Capacity to mobilise civil society, generate support for social justice initiatives, and coordinate donations or fundraising drives.
- **Teamwork and Administration**
 - Ability to work independently and as part of a team, including with key internal and external stakeholders.
 - Strong time management and organisational skills, with the capacity to manage competing deadlines and priorities.
 - Proficiency in using MS Office, Google Drive, and online database/reporting systems.
 - Driver's Licence and access to a reliable & comprehensively insured vehicle.
- **Compliance**
 - Commitment to working within current Equal Employment Opportunities (EEO), Work Health and Safety (WH&S), and child protection legislation.
 - Current NSW Working With Children Check (WWCC) and Police Check, or willingness to obtain them.

Desirable:

- Direct experience of working with people seeking asylum or refugees.
- Direct experience of working with or in schools and churches.
- Experience of coordinating and supervising volunteers.
- Experienced design skills with use of Canva and MailChimp
- Understanding of Catholic Social Teaching, Catholic Church structure, systems and procedures and experience working in a faith-based organisation.