



Prisoners of
Conscience



The Package of Assistance
and Involvement

Practical support for prisoners of conscience across the world since 1962

prisonersofconscience.org

Welcome

Welcome to the Prisoners of Conscience (POC) Package of Assistance and Involvement for beneficiaries. You are helping to change the world to make it a better place and we want to help you carry on doing it. We hope that you will find this package of real benefit and that it will enable you to pursue your dreams and continue making a positive difference to our 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

About Us

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

Our aim is to transform the lives of people who have been persecuted for their acts of conscience to protect and advance human rights around the world.

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.

POC seeks to be a force for positive change for our beneficiaries by providing financial and practical support to enable them provision to live safe, free and self sufficient lives.

Our beneficiaries are at the core of everything we do so we aspire to work for and alongside our beneficiaries. Our aim is to encourage beneficiaries to get involved in our activities and nurture a sense of community, developing a strong network of like minded individuals who come together from different parts of the world working towards a common goal: advancing and promoting human rights for all.

How do we support our beneficiaries?

1. Financial Support*

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

Hardship relief

These emergency 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 recommence their work, thereby becoming self-sufficient and able to contribute back to society.

**POC accepts applications from registered and approved referral agencies that apply to us on behalf of individuals. Occasionally we accept individual applications as well. The application is then considered by a sub-committee of trustees of PoC, with advice from the office. It takes two to four weeks from the moment that the application is received to the receipt of payment by the agency.*

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 and we will link you up. 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 job, 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.

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.

**For more information
please visit**

[Home - Breaking Barriers
\(breaking-barriers.co.uk\)](#)



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 through creating opportunities that support the authenticity and agency of a group whose voices and perspectives struggle to get heard in the mainstream media. Since 2016, we have supported displaced and exiled journalists and storytellers to re-connected with their careers. We have focused on helping them to 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 Daily Mirror.

We will be open to recruit our next cohort in September 2021.

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

Renaisi 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
- in house ESOL (one-to-one tuition and group conversation classes)

**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



3. PoC Alumni Forum

PoC is launching 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 to 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

The forum is intended solely for the use of PoC beneficiaries. Once you contacted 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 own profiles, which can be edited and customised. The forum can be used to communicate with other beneficiaries privately or publicly.

To help keep the forum a welcoming, supportive and caring 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. Our beneficiaries know first hand what it feels like to be persecuted for your beliefs and to be denied fundamental freedoms. They have experienced unimaginable hardship and in many cases have been forced to flee and leave everything behind, including their families.

We would love to see our beneficiaries who are interested in our work and are keen to gain valuable experience

working for a human rights organisation 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, working alongside our beneficiaries we believe that we can achieve 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

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 mind or exposing corruption and autocratic governments.

Prisoners of Conscience provides financial and practical support to help persecuted journalists and others like them rebuild their lives. It is our experience that many of those beneficiaries who have been brave enough to take a stand to uphold human rights are likely to devote all or part of their future lives to changing the world for the better.

By supporting prisoners of conscience during their time of need we enable them

to re-establish their careers and make a positive difference to our world.

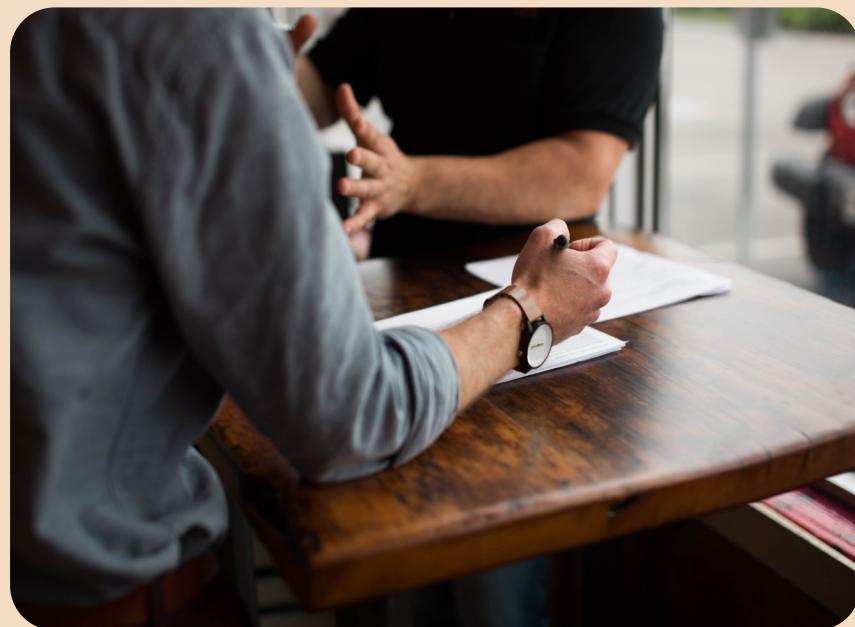
PoC aspires to enable those determined to hold fast to their beliefs to continue doing so even after they have been persecuted for speaking up. We hope that the PoC website and social media channels can serve as a platform where our beneficiaries can share their story, or write about human rights in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



Our mission at PoC is to positively transform the lives of people who have been persecuted for their acts of conscience to protect and advance human rights around the world. To ensure that we are meeting our objectives and addressing our beneficiaries' needs we would really value your feedback.

We conducted our first ever formal impact assessment exploring the overall effectiveness and relevance of PoC. The findings of our evaluation were used internally to develop our theory of change and to guide our future strategies.

Our overriding objective is to ensure our activities are adequately addressing beneficiaries' needs and enable them to live safe, free and self-sufficient lives. If you have any feedback (positive or negative) which you think would be useful in helping

8. 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.

9. Communications and updates

We maintain contact with beneficiaries so that we can send them 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 on our mailing list.

10. Signposting to other NGOs

We provide signposting to other NGOs whose services, such as therapy, refugee assistance and integration and human right campaigning, may be helpful to beneficiaries. You can click on the links below to view our formal lists of NGOs. Please contact us if the following links do not provide the answers to your questions.

[UK list](#)

[Overseas list](#)





Practical support for prisoners of conscience across the world since 1962



020 7407 6644



PO Box 61044, London SE1 1UP



info@prisonersofconscience.org



[@POCappealfund](https://twitter.com/POCappealfund)



[@prisonersofconscience](https://www.facebook.com/prisonersofconscience)



prisonersofconscience.org

© Prisoners of conscience 2019. Registered Charity no. 213766