

Job Description: Director of the European Council on Refugees and Exiles (ECRE)

Job Title: Director, European Council on Refugees and Exiles (ECRE)

Location: ECRE Secretariat, Mundo Madou, Avenue des Arts 7/8, 1210 Brussels, Belgium

Purpose of Job

The ECRE Director provides overall strategic leadership for ECRE. ECRE is the leading pan-European network working on the rights of displaced people in Europe and in Europe's external policies. ECRE has 128 members in 40 European countries. ECRE work covers legal support and litigation, advocacy and communications. The Director coordinates and targets the efforts of the member organizations to obtain maximum influence in European decision-making concerning refugees.

The Director manages all of ECRE's activities in close coordination with the ECRE Board, which is drawn from its membership, and is responsible for the management of ECRE's secretariat in Brussels, currently consisting of 11 staff members. The Director is ECRE's main public spokesperson.

Key Responsibilities

Represent ECRE at a senior level across Europe

- Develop and maintain strong and influential relationships with the European Union, governmental, inter-governmental and nongovernmental organizations and other key stakeholders
- Provide the main public face of ECRE, particularly with the media, and continue raising its profile as the leading body speaking out for the rights of refugees, asylum seekers and displaced persons
- Participate in conferences, training seminars and other events on behalf of ECRE, including presenting ECRE's analysis
- Lead ECRE's policy development and advocacy in order to have the maximum impact on European policies affecting refugees, asylum seekers and displaced persons
- Develop ECRE's strategy and presence in European countries outside the European Union

Work in partnership with the ECRE Board to ensure the active engagement of the membership

- Provide regular information to the ECRE membership on ECRE's work, including via email, in written reports and in-person at ECRE General Assemblies and other events
- Ensure that the membership is enabled to participate in ECRE's work, with opportunities to provide input and suggestions, including through well-functioning working groups, members meetings in Brussels, Annual General Conferences, online forums and other relevant tools
- Support the membership through participation in members' events and activities and regular meetings with members
- Communicate ECRE's goals and achievements to the membership
- Provide motivation for the membership to participate in ECRE and actively engage in activities and networks

- Work with the Secretariat to ensure effective and inspirational events, including the Annual General Conference, training and policy roundtables, and valued member services
- Promote the role of the NGO sector working in European and international fora

Ensure effective overall management of the Secretariat

- Line manage the team leaders (and other staff as required) and ensure efficient and high quality work across the three main activities ECRE carries out (litigation, advocacy and communications)
- Give input into ECRE's activities, contribute to and where relevant lead on ECRE's activities to ensure effective delivery, including drafting or revising ECRE analysis and speaking in ECRE events
- Take responsibility for developing and implementing ECRE's annual and long-term planning, including ensuring a clear and functional strategic plan
- Inspire and lead ECRE's strategic vision and ensure that the overall objectives in the strategic plan are implemented
- Work closely with ECRE's senior management team to set targets, develop the Secretariat and support, monitor and review their work
- Ensure high-caliber staff are recruited, motivated and developed so that they are able to contribute to ECRE's goals through maintaining effective channels of communication, consultation and delegation
- Ensure sound financial management of the ECRE secretariat and wider ECRE network, including working with the Finance and Administration manager to ensure that ECRE respects its legal obligations under Belgian law.
- Ensure that ECRE's publications are high quality and professionally produced, through drafting, reviewing and providing input during development
- Ensure the visibility of ECRE and dissemination of its work through maintaining extensive reach across the website, social media and the press

Financial management: Ensure resources are in place and used effectively to carry out the strategy

- Lead on fundraising for ECRE, including identifying donors, preparing funding applications and ensuring donor reporting
- Maintain strong relationships with key funders and ensure that ECRE has an effective fundraising strategy
- Prepare annual budgets and track expenditure in an easily accessible form for presentation to ECRE Board and the wider membership
- With the Finance and Admin Manager, ensure that ECRE annual audit is carried out and the relevant documents lodged with the Belgian authorities
- Ensure that appropriate resources (staff, finances, property) are secured with which to achieve agreed objectives
- Ensure that internal financial controls, practices and procedures are robust and effective
- Ensure that accurate and timely financial and operational reports are provided to the ECRE Board

Management of the ECRE Board; Advising and supporting the ECRE Board in its governance role

- Organize regular meetings for the ECRE Board (four or five meetings per year). Prepare minutes and reports on the Board.
- Liaise with the Board and ensure the Board is sufficiently informed about ECRE to play its role in governance and oversight
- Provide appropriate advice and guidance to the Board
- Work with the Board and the senior management team to steer organizational development
- Ensure accurate and timely reports and ensure transparency at all times

Other Tasks:

- Ensure representation of people with a refugee background in all areas of ECRE's work, including as staff members, Board members, member organisations, experts at events etc
- Any other task assigned by the Chair of the ECRE Board

Personal Specifications

The Director will be expected to demonstrate the following:

- Committed to working with and for those seeking international protection (candidates with a refugee background are particularly encouraged to apply)
- Committed to equality of opportunities and able to work effectively and sensitively in a multi-cultural environment
- Acts honestly and with the highest levels of integrity
- Ability to respond rapidly and effectively to urgent challenges
- Able to work outside of standard office hours when required, and to travel regularly, mainly in Europe

Leadership

- Substantial experience at senior management level
- Track record of leading a network or an organization
- Identifies strategic challenges and solutions
- Demonstrates vision and creativity in responding to changing situations
- Demonstrates initiative and adaptability
- Utilizes an individual-centered approach to internal and external activities

Political awareness

- Knowledge of policies, laws and conventions applying to refugees, asylum seekers and displaced persons and the politics of refugee policy in Europe

- In-depth knowledge of EU institutions, policy-making dynamics and advocacy strategies to effectively influence decision-making at the European level.
- Sound understanding of national and international political systems and public administration.
- Experience of working within an international context
- Familiarity with the role of civil society and non-governmental organizations
- High level of intellectual and analytical skills necessary for dealing with complex and detailed policy issues

Communication and personal skills

- Confident and persuasive orally with excellent presentation skills
- Sensitive to cultural differences, diplomatic and skilled at negotiating
- Fluent in written and spoken English as the usual working language.
- Knowledge of French is considered important.
- Good knowledge of any other languages is desirable.
- Ability to work under pressure and to deliver under/to tight deadlines
- Strong interpersonal and negotiation skills and the experience of working effectively with committees

Management skills

- Supports achievement of collective goals by setting clear objectives for self and others
- Shows flexibility and can adapt to the needs of the situation
- Solid experience in the effective management of people
- Able to use management information systems and IT effectively

Financial and Resource Management

- An excellent understanding and experience of fundraising
- Experience in resource planning and management
- Experienced and confident in analyzing, managing and explaining complex budgets