The Displaced Legal Talent Initiative

Gain a talented new employee and demonstrate your corporate values to the world!

Responding to the refugee crisis, law firms will work collaboratively to offer legal and business services roles for displaced talent with the support of Talent Beyond Boundaries – an NGO that specialises in matching skilled displaced individuals with employers.
The Problem

There are thousands of highly skilled refugees with backgrounds in law who are living a precarious existence while waiting for resettlement. For example, under Taliban rule, women are unable to work in professional roles and people who advocated for human rights or worked within the legal system are in danger and seeking safe routes to leave Afghanistan. Except in a limited range of circumstances, it is also very difficult for skilled refugees to obtain work visas. As a result, thousands of highly skilled refugees are living around the world with excellent qualifications in law and business yet are unable to use these skills in their everyday life to support themselves and their families. Skilled refugees need complementary pathways to resettlement.

The Response

A clearer route for skilled refugees to access a durable solution is through labour mobility pathways. Talent Beyond Boundaries (TBB) is a global organisation that matches skilled refugees with employers in need of their talent. In the UK, Australia, Canada, the US, Belgium, Ireland and Portugal, TBB is working with governments to create and expand labour mobility pathways to reduce the administrative barriers of hiring displaced talent and increase equitable access to skill migration pathways.

Law firms, working collaboratively with the support of TBB, have launched the Displaced Legal Talent Initiative (DLTI) to offer legal and other business services roles to displaced talent living around the world. This win-win solution means that legal employers are able to solve critical skill shortages and increase the diversity of the legal sector, while also aiding talented professionals in need of protection to relocate to countries like the UK and work in their chosen profession.

Progress to date

Three law firms (Ashurst, DLA Piper and Fragomen) have welcomed the first group of displaced legal professionals to the UK in both legal and professional support roles. Employers who have hired through the DLTI have witnessed first hand the skills and level of experience that arriving candidates bring to their teams and the invaluable contributions in terms of diversity and international expertise.

Law firms who join the consortium also benefit from a range of perks which include the regular convening of employers in the fields at in-person events, access to a network of partners and legal organisations in the UK and the recognition of being part of an innovative group at the forefront of inclusive and pioneering international recruitment practices.

How the process works

By hiring through TBB, businesses can gain a talented employee whilst demonstrating their corporate values and achieving a positive humanitarian outcome.

We provide a full remote recruitment service:

1. **IDENTIFY ROLE**
   Select a role you need filled in your business and provide us with a job description. We identify suitable candidates, check their visa eligibility, and provide you with a shortlist.

2. **INTERVIEW & RECRUITMENT**
   We facilitate remote recruitment, including video interviews. If a TBB applicant is your preferred candidate, you issue a job offer and contracts are signed.

3. **IMMIGRATION & MOBILITY**
   We support you and the applicant through the visa application process, and connect you with an immigration provider for advice.

4. **MOBILITY**
   We help you prepare for the arrival of your new recruit. Once they’re safely in country, we work with relevant settlement services in your area to ensure they are supported to flourish.

5. **INTEGRATION**
   We provide ongoing support via regular check-ins with your new recruit and their manager for 12 months post-arrival. If necessary, we can also arrange cultural awareness training for your staff.

Costs for employers

The overall cost of hiring a skilled refugee from overseas is comparable with that of any normal international hire.

**RECRUITMENT COSTS = NIL**

TBB is a philanthropically funded nonprofit organisation. Unlike recruitment agencies, we do not charge employers a fee for the services that we provide. However, we do accept mission contributions which allow us to continue to carry out our work.

**VISA-RELATED COSTS (country dependent)**

Visa costs payable include:
- Visa charges for the candidate (i.e. the primary applicant)
- Visa charges for the candidate’s spouse and children (if applicable)

Employers will also need to cover the fees of any immigration providers who assist with the submissions.

Total cost will be dependent on size and circumstances of the chosen candidate and their family.

**RE-LOCATION COSTS - STANDARD RATES**

Businesses are expected to offer TBB candidates the same relocation package they would any comparable international hire.

At a minimum, employers should be prepared to cover:
- Flights for the candidate
- Flights for the candidate’s spouse and children (if applicable)
- Temporary accommodation upon arrival (we recommend 3 months or 1 month with support for a deposit)
Fragomen Case Study

Mehria was living in Kabul with her family when the Taliban took over in 2021. At the time, she worked in humanitarian protection, a field in which she had 10 years experience, and a masters degree in International Relations.

After the Taliban imposed restrictions on women's access to work, Mehria was told to leave her job. Mehria and her family didn't feel safe and wanted to leave the country. Determined to find a way to use her knowledge and experience, Mehria discovered TBB and the Displaced Talent Mobility Pilot. After going through a remote recruitment process, she was hired by the immigration firm Fragomen for a Paralegal role. In February, Mehria, her husband and two children crossed the border to Pakistan, and flew to the UK.

Mehria and her family are settling well into Sheffield. In her role, she has access to professional development opportunities so she can continue to expand her skillset. Mehria is looking forward to developing further professionally and for her children to receive a good education in a safe country.

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