

RAMP

Introduction

RAMP's core mission is to provide direct support, through the secondment of policy advisers, to a cross party group of politicians in Westminster and in Mayoral Combined Authorities in order to improve the quality of the political debate on migration and asylum issues, and the subsequent policy outcomes. Part of our advisers' role is to ensure that politicians hear evidence and insights from a wide range of individuals and organisations with lived and professional experience of the immigration and asylum system in the UK. We are keen to share the insights that our political advisers gain from their work with the wider migration field so that their research, communications and campaigning can be as useful and as impactful as possible. When we found that we were increasingly being asked to spend time with organisations to share this learning we created a new role in the team to increase our capacity for doing this work.

The Strategic Engagement Adviser (SEA) role was created in October 2023 to ensure that we are:

1. Aware of, and in relationship with as wide a group of experts as possible to enable us to share and draw on their expertise.
2. Able to join as many relevant coalition and convening spaces as possible to share the insights that we gain
3. Able to provide additional capacity to support organisations with little or no dedicated public affairs and parliamentary engagement capacity, who want to share their lived and learned experience in a constructive way with policymakers.

We felt that this would be a win/win, resulting in better information reaching policymakers, and better influencing strategies from the field.

The offer to organisations

Support from RAMP comes with no guarantee of any introductions to RAMP Parliamentarians, or engagement with the APPG on Migration. Rather, it is an offer of time with an experienced policy professional who is deeply immersed in discussions on migration in and beyond Parliament, who can help organisations to refine their messages and briefing materials, identify interested audiences from across the political spectrum and prioritise the most useful activity..

We can offer 3 different levels of support to individual organisations

- **Small offer:** a meeting/call of approx one hour to discuss the aims of an organisation and to brainstorm ideas for political engagement plus time to read over materials such as letters or stakeholder maps to make suggestions and offer feedback from the RAMP core team and advisers;

- **Medium offer:** a tailor-made workshop for staff with the Strategic Engagement Adviser, which can include an introduction to parliamentary engagement, horizon scanning, power mapping, messaging workshops etc either in person or online;
- **Large offer:** Ongoing support from and engagement with the Strategic Engagement Adviser over a prolonged period of time to develop strategies, tactics, materials, training and events etc; additionally, drawing on wider expertise from other RAMP core team, RAMP board and advisers in the form of workshops, feedback or training sessions. We would typically have capacity to offer this level of support to 3 - 5 organisations per year.

We can also offer bespoke support to funders (political context presentations or reports, workshops for grantees etc) and coalition partners etc, depending on their need.

We see ourselves as an infrastructure organisation which is an integral part of the wider migration field, so much of what we offer (presentations, one-off advice etc) would be a core part of our everyday work and we would not charge for this. We try to provide bespoke support to smaller organisations free to them, but do seek additional funder support for this. We charge £250 per day to cover the employment costs of the Strategic Engagement Adviser who is paid out of our core budget.

Examples of work carried out.

We have so far supported a range of organisations, coalitions and funders, including Reunite Families, the Boaz Trust, RAMFEL, No To Hassockfield, the Eastern European Resource Centre, Social Workers without Borders, Asylum Matters, Bristol Refugee Rights, Redress, Migrants Organise, the Justice Together Initiative and more. For example

- **Reunite Families:**
The Strategic Engagement Adviser has worked with Reunite Families on an ongoing basis for over a year. She hosted an advocacy strategy workshop for the Director and Policy and Comms Manager; and a workshop on how to engage with their local MPs for their community members. She has also provided advice on stakeholder mapping, and on written communications - giving feedback on draft materials such as letters to MPs etc, and has provided regular check-in calls with the team to discuss ongoing strategic priorities.
- **RAMFEL**
The Strategic Engagement Adviser has hosted two workshops with RAMFEL; the first workshop gave an introduction to public affairs to the whole team, including public affairs staff, comms staff and caseworkers. An element of the workshop was focused on identifying issues from casework and turning them into policy and campaign opportunities. The second workshop was just with the public affairs and comms team and the senior leadership of the organisation and focused on the development of their political strategy.
- **NRPF coalition.**
As part of RAMP's engagement with the NRPF partnership, the SEA produced a research report on challenges and opportunities for advocacy around NRPF after the

general election and presented its findings to the Steering Group at one of their early strategy meetings. She is now providing capacity to convene the coalition's policy and advocacy working group, which meets monthly - collaborating to set the agenda, invite speakers etc.

- **Justice Together Initiative**

The Strategic Engagement Adviser has just completed a one-day-per-week secondment to the Justice Together Initiative to cover some elements of the work of the Senior Grants and Influencing Manager while she was on maternity leave. She has also given presentations at various JTI convenings, for example on the future of migration policy under a potential Labour government at the Justice Together Initiative's 2024 residential; on the potential for joint strategic action at the Justice Together Initiative's 2025 residential; and gave a presentation at the Justice Together Initiative/the Legal Education Foundation's strategy day in 2025.

- **RAMP training for the wider field**

The SEA has also organised training webinars for the sector. Alongside RAMP advisers, the team hosted a workshop on how to influence legislation, and a workshop on engaging with MPs offices, with the view to prepare the sector for engagement around immigration legislation.

Our expertise

Sabrina Huck is our Strategic Engagement Adviser. She started her career in a public affairs agency, where she worked with a broad range of clients spanning multinational corporations to not for profit organisations. She has since worked as a freelance consultant with clients in the migrants rights and economic justice field, and worked in Parliament in the office of Nadia Whittome MP and as the RAMP adviser to Olivia Blake, the Labour MP for Sheffield Hallam.. Outside of work, Sabrina is involved in grassroots activism around migrant justice, organising with others in her local community to challenge the hostile environment and build solidarity.

Sabrina can draw on the expertise of the wider RAMP team. Our Mayoral Programme Manager Charlie Winstanley has extensive experience working in local government, including as a political adviser to the Mayor of Salford. Our Executive Director Laura Taylor has also worked in corporate public affairs, and on a wide range of campaigns and public affairs strategies for organisations and coalitions in the climate and international development spheres. Additionally, our parliamentary and mayoral advisers have worked on a broad range of immigration and inclusion policy issues and have a broad range of experience, having worked as local councillors, for think tanks, directly for political parties and for NGOs - and with a ringside seat to the current priorities and concerns of a broad range of current serving politicians and an excellent grasp of our legislation is scrutinised and policies are set.

This blend of skills and experience means that we feel we can go beyond what a normal public affairs agency can offer in terms of support we can provide to the migration field as we've been working in these policy areas many years and have good relationships with

many of the politicians most engaged on these issues. Breadth of relationships across the migration and asylum field also allow us to have a strategic “birds eye view” of common challenges, opportunities; knowledge gaps and trends.

Our goal

We believe that capacity building for advocacy is a key part of ensuring resilience of the migration and asylum sector in the current political climate. We know that many smaller organisations lack the resources to recruit highly experienced public affairs staff and we are keen to use the experience we have as effectively as possible and to share knowledge and learning to build the capacity of the wider field. We are open to providing support in a variety of ways, both one-off inputs and ongoing support, depending on what is most useful to other organisations.