



Committee: Funding Committee of the City Bridge Foundation Board	Date: 9 June 2025
Subject: Strategic Initiative: Migration Exchange (Global Dialogue) 23048	Public
Report of: Sacha Rose-Smith CBF Chief Funding Director	For Decision
Report author: Maria Hughes, CBF Funding Manager	

Summary

Whilst this proposal can be considered under Delegated Authority, in consultation with the Chair and Deputy Chair, queries were raised during the Delegated Authority process. As such the proposal is being referred to the Funding Committee for further consideration. Whilst this proposal can be considered under Delegated Authority, in consultation with the Chair and Deputy Chair queries were raised during the Delegated Authority process.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Funding Committee of the City Bridge Foundation Board, in the discharge of functions for the City Corporation as Trustee of CBF and solely in the charity's best interests:

- i) Award Migration Exchange (Global Dialogue) £300,000 over three years (3 x £100,000) to contribute towards the End NRPf (No Recourse to Public Funds) Partnership. This grant will contribute towards convening, facilitation and learning, participation for different working groups, communication costs as well as capacity building and leadership development for the organisations involved in this Partnership.**

Main Report

Background

1. Global Dialogue is a registered charity (1122052) founded in 2007. As a charity it hosts donor networks, funder collaboratives and pooled funds. It also hosts the Ariadne network (for European-wide funders) as well as the Funders Initiative for Civil Society. Migration Exchange is a pooled fund sitting within Global Dialogue which oversees financial management and governance of Migration Exchange, the financial assessment is therefore carried out on Global Dialogue for this assessment.
2. Migration Exchange is a funder network and pooled fund under Global Dialogue, set up in 2010. Its overall goal is for an equitable, power aware and intersectional funding landscape which can better resource systems change in the migration sector. Migration Exchange collaborates with organisations in the refugee and migration field, as well as funders in co-designing interventions on strategic communications and public attitudes, emergency funding responses, crisis-preparedness, and influencing funders in the migration field for systemic change.



Previous work includes [Respond and Adapt](#), which distributed over £2.4m to 130 organisations across the UK in 2020-2021 and [Leading Beyond Borders](#) programme (2018-2022).

Current Position

3. No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF) is a condition attached to work, study and family visas that denies people access to most of the welfare safety net in the UK including universal credit, social housing, and child benefit. There are around 1.3 million people in the UK with an imposed NRPF condition, and an additional one million people in the UK who do not have a regular immigration status and access to any public funds¹. The NRPF policy makes both individuals and families very vulnerable to homelessness, poverty, and exploitation. The NRPF policy can also exacerbate existing inequalities including racism and discrimination, and against women and children who may be unable to access basic services or support – such as domestic abuse survivors accessing live-saving support².
4. With people seeking asylum receiving a living allowance of around £5 a day, they are unable to access the welfare safety net in the UK, driving families and individuals into cycles of poverty. As people with asylum seeker status do not have the right to work in the UK, this adds further to the risk of not only poverty and destitution, but also the risks of modern slavery and exploitation in informal work. The issue of NRPF has clear links to migration issues in the UK, Joseph Rowntree Trust also estimates more than a quarter (27%) of destitute households in the UK in 2022 were headed by someone who was not born in the UK, and the risk of destitution for migrants is 35% higher than the average rate³.
5. The impact of the NRPF condition is not short-term. Those who have permission to stay on a “route to settlement” (i.e. a visa pathway that can lead to permanent residency in the UK) can be subject to NRPF conditions for 5 years, 10 years or even longer, depending on which type of route to settlement they are on⁴. The NRPF condition further reinforces social exclusion based on race and immigration status.
6. Until now, many organisations in the migrant and refugee sector have found collective work to end NRPF a challenge for many years, with no fully coordinated response to tackle this. This is largely due to the lack of time, funding and the sector working against constant crises to have space to work on long-term strategic issues. Furthermore, funder practices in the sector for many years have leant away from long-term, overarching strategic visions collectively. The legal language used around NRPF can often be overcomplicated as well as bureaucratic, making it difficult for both organisations and individuals affected by this to understand what change is needed and where. There is a clear need for the NRPF condition to be reviewed, and a strong call across both funders and the sector to end this. A report by Trust for London and New Centre for Social Policy Studies (November 2024)

¹ [Migration Observatory: deprivation and the no recourse to public-funds nrpf condition](#)

² [Praxis: Living With Dignity](#)

³ [Joseph Rowntree Foundation Report Protection for everyone in our communities](#)

⁴ [Free Movement: what is the no recourse to public funds condition](#)



further highlights the clear links between NRPF and Poverty, both in London and UK-wide, and the calls to action to remove this⁵.

7. Furthermore, the impacts the NRPF has are most felt in Greater London. It is estimated that 120,000 households in London subject to an NRPF condition are at risk of destitution, and 36,900 households already are in poverty whilst subject to the NRPF condition.⁶
8. Through Migration Exchange carrying out extensive consultation and research with frontline organisations working on NRPF, and people with lived experience of the UK asylum system, there is a demonstrable need and demand to bring about a coordinated response to address the systemic issues of NRPF.

Proposal

9. Migration Exchange has initiated a Partnership to end No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF) in the UK, across the next 4 years in partnerships with Praxis and Citizens UK. These two organisations have been chosen by Migration Exchange due to their strong ties to both organisations in the migration and refugee sector, and people with lived experience of the asylum system in the UK. Citizens UK also have a strong background in strategizing for campaigning and systemic change (such as the successful Living Wage campaign). Together, the Partnership is creating a movement to end NRPF and build collaboration across organisations working in this area, as well as build power to create change.
10. Migration Exchange will ensure all the strands of this Partnership will work intersectionally across the multiple issues that are affected by the NRPF condition, as well as ensure this work is also led by and for individuals and organisations with lived experience of migration and the NRPF issue. This is already demonstrated in collaboration of the design of the Partnership, as well as the individuals and organisations involved in the differing working groups (described below) to deliver this work.
11. Collaboratively, the movement is working across five years towards the following aims across the UK:
 - Putting decision making power in the hands of experts
 - Facilitate the coordination of organisations
 - Establish a strategic pooled resource, this will ensure the steering group has a sufficient budget to guide the collaboration, act, identify and seize opportunities, as well as facilitate equitable participation for all those involved.
12. To carry out these aims, the following delivery mechanisms are being put in place:

⁵ Trust for London/Centre for Social Policy: No reason for no recourse: Why reform of 'No Recourse to Public Funds' conditions would be good for London and the UK

⁶ Trust for London/Centre for Social Policy No reason for no recourse: Why reform of 'No Recourse to Public Funds' conditions would be good for London and the UK



- I. **Steering Group** – This is to provide governance and to establish the initial infrastructure and strategy to facilitate collaboration between groups. The steering group will ensure leadership, direction and support to ensure there is a shared vision and overarching focus to achieving this change (Organisations taking part on the steering group will be paid £10,000 for participation). As of February 2025, the Partnership has appointed 13 people from around the UK to this group who bring vast expertise in campaigning, organising, research, politics, legal advice, grassroots activism alongside their shared values of equity and a commitment to building power to end NRPF. The SG also delivered a Reference Group meeting in January 2025, attended by over 90 people from across the sector as well as funders.
 - II. **Working Groups** – these are co-designed with partners (also paid up to £10,000 a year for participation) to deliver the strategy developed from the steering group.
 - III. **Coordination Backbone Group** – Organisational leads will ensure that there is a broader ecosystem of partners who remain engaged in the ending NRPF movement as well as continue to deliver on shared aims. So far, the CBG has focused on delivering strong communication across the Partnership, information management as well as establishing safeguarding processes and coordinating emerging work from the Partnership's priorities.
13. Migration Exchange is looking to raise £4.63 million over 5 years to resource ending NRPF in the migration and refugee sector. Funding has already been secured from other prominent funders in this sector including Joseph Rowntree Foundation, AB Charitable Trust, Barrow Cadbury and Unbound Philanthropy amounting to around £1,305,000 over 5 years (currently around 15 months into this work) with £600,000 additionally nearly confirmed for this year. City Bridge Foundation funding will focus on organisations working with people affected by NRPF within London only, with around half of the £4.63million budget for the Partnership overall amounting to work within London. Funding from CBF will go towards funding for convening, facilitation and learning, participation for different working groups as above, communication costs as well as capacity building and leadership development for the organisations involved. Core costs for salaries are covered by Migration Exchange for this work.
14. Migration Exchange are ensuring there is a robust approach to impact and learning for this Partnership. In December 2024, Migration Exchange appointed Just Economics and Purpose Union as its learning partners who will lead the monitoring and impact evaluation for this work. Key priorities for the NRPF Partnership have been identified for this year as follows:
- 1) Influencing the child poverty strategy: This will be an opportunity to influence the Child Poverty Strategy the UK government have announced would be developed in 2025. Migration Exchange and its partners were invited to a meeting with the Child Poverty Unit in February 2025, demonstrating a positive relationship with HM Government.



- 2) Public Affairs: Organisations in the Steering Group will meet every week as well as work with Principle Consulting to support its policy and public affairs work. This work will develop the NRPF Partnership's strategy to working with Parliament on this issue, as well as how the NRPF condition intersects with other policy areas such as violence against women and girls and housing and homelessness.

15. It is important to highlight that the aim of ending the NRPF condition over 5 years would be a significant achievement. Whilst this is the overarching aim, Migration Exchange and the Partnership acknowledge this as the best-case outcome. The Partnership has identified smaller 'wins' within the NRPF issue (such as how child poverty can be alleviated) which would also identify success for this work. Furthermore, building a collaborative fund on such a scale to ensure diverse organisations working collectively across this issue, as well as intersectionally is a large achievement. This will be able to contribute towards a more cohesive sector equipped to tackle such a difficult issue as NRPF, where it hasn't before.

Financial Information

Year end as at 30 April	2023 Signed Accounts £	2024 Signed Accounts £	2025 Forecast £
Income & expenditure:			
Income	4,772,602	6,084,317	6,099,701
Expenditure	(3,696,907)	(5,186,170)	(7,143,419)
Gains/(losses)	35,908	6,195	0
Surplus/(deficit)	1,111,603	904,342	(1,043,718)
Reserves:			
Total restricted	4,528,477	5,340,216	4,282,347
Total unrestricted	127,676	220,279	234,430
Total reserves	4,656,153	5,560,495	4,516,777
Of which: free unrestricted	117,985	210,588	224,739
Reserves policy target	91,280	116,954	157,245
Free reserves over/(under) target	26,706	93,635	67,494

16. The financial assessment is carried out on Global Dialogue, as Migration Exchange is not an independent charity but rather a subsidiary project of Global Dialogue. Due to the various subsidiary projects it hosts, Global Dialogue's unrestricted reserves are calculated from its core costs only and are well within its target levels of 3-8 months of core expenditure. Global Dialogue is a financially robust organisation, with over 30 current foundations contributing to its subsidiary projects and core costs over multiple year periods.
17. The large deficit for Global Dialogue for F/Y 2025 is attributable to a large project with Oak Foundation and Global Dialogue called 'Issues Affecting Women' ending with income received for this in the previous financial year. This is a restricted deficit relating to another of the hosted funds under Global Dialogue, rather than the Migration Exchange restricted fund. The MEX fund balance as at 30/4/2024 was £295k. Whilst Migration Exchange's current work is not only attributed to the NRPF project, it has already raised over £1.3million for at least 3 years for this work separate to its proposal to CBF. The Funding Manager is confident of Migration Exchange and Global Dialogue's financial sustainability and management.



Conclusion

18. The NRPF Partnership has been strategically thought out and planned. Not only would funding the NRPF Partnership place CBF among other prominent funders in the migration, racial and economic justice sectors, ensuring this collaborative fund not only has sufficient funding for the work proposed, but also supports a more cohesive environment not seen before for both funders and civil society to work together on the significant issue of NRPF impacting millions of people both in London and UK-wide.
19. Funding Migration Exchange's NRPF Partnership fits both well with the Support for refugees, asylum seekers and migrants strand within the *Bridging Divides* strategy, whilst also aligns strongly across CBF's new Standing with Londoners (SwL) policy seeking to 'change the systems that keep people marginalised'. In particular, this Partnership fits intersectionally across Economic Justice, Racial Justice and Access to Justice arms of the SwL Policy, as well as ensures a 'field-building approach to deliver social justice for all' as referenced in the SwL framework for change. Those affected by NRPF disproportionately reside in London compared to the rest of the UK, and as such would support many Londoners alleviated from poverty and destitution. The further impacts of funding this Partnership will seek to embolden civil society in London and across the UK, and ensure a more equitable power balance between funders, civil society and individuals through its approach.

References

- [Migration Observatory: deprivation and the no recourse to public-funds nrpf condition](#)
- [Praxis: Living With Dignity](#)
- [Joseph Rowntree Foundation Report Protection for everyone in our communities](#)
- [Free Movement: what is the no recourse to public funds condition](#)
- [Trust for London/Centre for Social Policy: No reason for no recourse: Why reform of 'No Recourse to Public Funds' conditions would be good for London and the UK](#)

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