

Strategic plan 2020 — 2023



Why Justice Together?

Justice Together was launched in 2020 with a decade-long vision, founded by eleven independent funders and informed by two years of research, development and field consultation. We will invest new resources in legal advice, work with our partners to strengthen immigration sector organisations, and influence wider change to support the lawful and fair functioning of immigration, nationality and asylum processes.

Why now?

Communities are experiencing dire consequences from the current lack of access to legal advice and representation. Brexit and the complex and hostile immigration system, with added pressure from the pandemic have led to unprecedented demand for advice and representation. However, we believe that by working together we can achieve positive change.

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Our vision is that people who use the immigration system can access justice fairly and equally, so that they can get on with their lives.

Our mission is to build a community of people and organisations with diverse backgrounds, strengths, and experience to transform access to justice in the UK immigration system. Through grant-making and collaboration, we will connect lived experience, front-line advice and influencing strategies to create lasting change.

Our values

Equity and human rights

Everybody has the right to access justice fairly and equally.

Collaboration and partnership

The essence of the initiative is partnership and collaboration, with lived experience of the immigration system at its heart.

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Access to justice means a fair and just system where everyone is equal regardless of your circumstance.

Roundtable participant
September 2020

Inclusion

We value the many different perspectives and experiences of all those involved with the immigration system, recognising the importance of listening and working together to affect change.

Anti-racism

We recognise the systemic racism in the immigration system; we will embed an anti-racist approach in all our work and support those we work with to do the same.

Learning

We value the sharing of learning between partners, and will listen, respond and adapt.

Trust

We trust our partners and value their expertise. We stand in solidarity with our partners and recognise that change takes time.

Courage

We will approach complexity with courage and ambition, and be open to new solutions to entrenched problems.

Our goals and the change we want to see

We will build a community bringing together lived and learned experience of the immigration system, frontline evidence and influencing strategies to achieve the following goals:

- 1 A fair, timely and accessible immigration system.
- 2 A more sustainably resourced immigration advice and legal system.
- 3 A more accessible, sustainable, collaborative, and co-ordinated sector to strengthen and increase access to immigration advice and legal provision.

Throughout our work, we will centre two core commitments:

- To learn to be a better anti-racist funder and partner and supporting our partners to be anti-racist.
- To supporting an equitable and proactive approach to the involvement and leadership of people with lived experience of the immigration system and supporting our partners to do the same.

We will create a community of impact with our grant partners. We hope that our work will contribute to change for people, organisations and systems.

Our key activities and outcomes are summarised below.

We are taking a long-term approach over the next decade – we will review and reflect annually, adapting where needed, and will refresh our strategy after three years.

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A wider sense of justice – that appreciates how going through the asylum system restricts every aspect of your life.

Roundtable participant
September 2020

Goal 1 A fair, timely and accessible immigration system

What we hope to achieve

Stronger connections, partnerships and trust between influencing organisations, lawyers, advice organisations, and grassroots and holistic organisations.

Improved use of casework data in wider influencing work.

People with lived experience of the immigration system take a lead in influencing and setting the direction for social change.

Organisations have better awareness and policies and build anti-racist analysis into their strategies.

Policy, campaigning and strategic litigation is developed with a community and movement lawyering approach.¹

Systemic threats to access to justice are identified and strategies developed to address these.

The case for reform better cuts through with both new and established audiences.

Community organisations' influencing strategies at a local level build power and change from the ground up.

People and organisations have an improved understanding of racism and are better placed to tackle systemic racism.

Coalition and coordination structures are embedded in strategy development and continue after individual campaigns.

Improved immigration policy that is fair, timely and accessible.

1 In movement and community lawyering, legal advocates support community groups and their members, those with direct lived experience of the issues, to build power, develop leadership, change systems or social and cultural environments. At its heart is real collaboration with communities with lived experience of the systems that need to change; not just in sharing stories but in developing a true understanding of needs and priorities and determining the best tools to bring about impact.

- Short term
- Medium term
- Long term

Goal 2 A sustainably resourced immigration advice and legal system

What we hope to achieve

Clear and co-ordinated structures into which additional funding can add value and maximise impact by working together.

Philanthropic funding partners co-ordinate approaches across providers and are committed to funding in more long-term sustainable ways.

New funding streams are developed and committed from new sources that cover the range of immigration advice needs from the beginning of a person's journey.

Funding reaches a wider range of organisations, particularly those that are led by people with lived experience of the immigration system.

Pathways for aligned funding exist between the initiative and local authorities or other public sector opportunities.

Improved administration of legal aid.

Funding partners in statutory, private and philanthropic sectors understand and are confident in the rationale for spending on advice and representation.

A solid evidence base shows the benefit of quality immigration legal advice and the impact it has on access to justice and positive and swift outcomes for individuals.

Improved national policy on Legal Aid and advice funding.

- Short term
- Medium term
- Long term

Goal 3 A more accessible, sustainable, collaborative, and co-ordinated sector to strengthen and increase access to immigration advice and legal provision

What we hope to achieve

- People are supported to resolve their immigration matter.
 - Access to immigration legal advice, both free and low-cost, is increased.
 - Immigration advice is more effective at resolving cases and enabling people to get on with their lives, with improved access to more holistic support and advice.
 - Advice organisations feel supported in a network of peers and are able to tackle shared issues together.
 - Regions that have struggled to develop the partnership and supervision infrastructure to take on specialist legal advice have a pathway to addressing this.
- Improved recruitment and retention of legal practitioners and advisors at OISC level 2 and above.
 - Referral routes and partnerships between organisations are improved.
 - Practitioners are less likely to burn out and are supported to cope with the emotional impact of their work.
 - Organisations are able to make the case for the wider impact of their work and sustain and adapt their services.
 - Organisations are supported to be able to prioritise organisational development, such as staff wellbeing, IT infrastructure, management time to build strategic partnerships, good administration.
- As a result of resolving their immigration status, people secure access to mainstream welfare benefits, work and public services.
 - More people are able to access quality immigration advice earlier in their immigration process.
 - Improved quality of legal advice in the immigration system and mechanisms implemented to monitor quality and determine methods that are best for continued improvement.

- Short term
- Medium term
- Long term

Our approach

We are a values-led initiative committed to using a different approach to making long-term impact. The initiative will bring together a wide cohort of organisations and people across the UK to use their collective power to leverage change in the immigration system, and to influence how the sector operates and how immigration advice is funded. Too often there has been a disconnect between legal advice, influencing work and people who have been through the immigration system. Justice Together is rooted in the belief that a better coordinated and more strategic approach that is driven by lived experience will help address systemic challenges.

Our key activities

We have developed this work by listening closely to the experiences of organisations on the ground and drawing on analysis of the current strengths and challenges, as well as an assessment of the current context.

We know that organisations need longer term, flexible funding that fully covers costs and allows capacity to respond to opportunities or threats as they arise. Our grants for influencing and advice partners will reflect these needs.

We will:

Make grants for influencing work to organisations whose work contributes to improving access to justice and the administration of the rule of law. We expect to support a diverse range of approaches to change – community and movement lawyering, community organising, campaigning, communications and public affairs, research and analysis and strategic litigation. Influencing targets can be national or local, and work can take place anywhere in the UK. We want to ensure that vital evidence that is gathered at a local level can feed into national influencing work

We know that the context is rapidly shifting and that opportunities to build public and political support for access to justice, as well as threats to equality and justice, will continue to emerge. Partners receiving influencing grants will also be invited to connect with the community of impact and draw on the shared expertise and assets of the field. Within the limited resources available, we will prioritise work that is led by people with lived experience.

[Make grants for immigration and nationality legal advice and representation](#) to partners across the four nations of the UK. We will invite organisations to apply to be our partners through open grant rounds, phased across regions. Funding will be initially

for three years and there will be an invitation for partners to receive additional costs for management support, staff care and embedding anti-racism strategies. Partners who secure funding will be invited to join and shape the community of impact, connecting regularly to share intelligence, tackle shared issues and build stronger action for change.

We will fund in a way that seeks to

bolster the health, dynamism, sustainability and influencing capacity of the sector over the next decade.

[Invite our partners to join a community of impact, supported by convening, analysis and learning.](#) This will be co-designed but will be founded on the desire to build a stronger and more connected community of organisations able to promote and defend access to justice for people in the immigration system. We aim to be a listening and responsive partner who can support collective action, spot emerging issues and capture the wider impact of the work, in order to amplify demands for change. We are committed to sharing learning with funders so that they can be better partners and collaborators in the long term.

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It's really important to include the human element in legal campaigning and ensure that the communities are involved from the beginning and leading on issues.

Roundtable participant

September 2020

For more information

This top-line document summarises our thinking so that we can invite more in-depth conversations.

We are committed to sharing our goals and strategies openly and discussing where your work fits in.

Please do contact us with any questions or for more information

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- The Legal Education Foundation



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