

FACEWORK FUTURES END OF PROGRAMME REPORT

February 2025 – January 2026. Delivered by Facework Group Social Enterprise CIC



Photos of FF participants are taken and used with informed consent

1 INTRODUCTION

Facework Futures is a dedicated employment training programme for refugees and asylum seekers with the right to work in the Borough of Lewisham. The programme is run by the Facework Group and has been funded by Lewisham Council. The programme operates out of a unique **Makerspace** in New Cross Gate which was previously a high-street pharmacy which was designed and decorated by Facework working with local refugees to provide a warm and welcoming environment for those with lived experience of migration. This Maker Space has been a crucial element in the success of the programme as it has provided a sanctuary and safe, accessible space for refugees (see later).

In this report we summarize some of the successes we have had in working with **77 sanctuary seekers**, against the targets we were set for the year. We also outline some of the challenges and the lessons we have learned as we have had the privilege of working with these individuals.

The programme combines structured employability training, one-to-one coaching, English language support, networking, and employer engagement. It is designed using a person-centered approach which recognises the traumas and very real challenges sanctuary seekers face. The employment training has been built on the IPS-aligned principles to help residents overcome barriers and move confidently towards employment, volunteering, or further education.

Across the year, the programme operated in three terms, each delivering a **10-week curriculum**. In total, **30 group training sessions and 150 one-to-one coaching sessions were delivered**. Participants were able to attend training on one dedicated day a week, but appointments for one-to-one sessions could be held on four days a week. In addition, participants were signposted to educational courses and Facework's community arts and crafts and gardening sessions.

The core team consisted of Tariq Malik, a former businessman from Pakistan with lived experience of migration and fluency in Pashto and Dari and Najiba Rafiel from Afghanistan, a master's student fluent in Farsi, and Abbie Amey a former ESOL teacher with 20 years' experience of working with refugees and asylum seekers. Additional support and expertise were provided by Stephen Carrick-Davies and invited guest speakers and English language speaking volunteers.

2. PARTICIPATION AND ENGAGEMENT

The table below shows the participation and engagement targets and outcomes for the year.

The original target was to recruit, support and train 50 sanctuary seekers. In total we worked with 77 (but had to cut this back as to be careful not to exceed the staff to client case load). Facework used its own resources and other funding to be able to ensure that we had adequate staff to cope with both the numbers, and the wider needs of our participants. In total we employed 3 staff (1.5 FTE) to help us ensure that we were able to provide the quality one-to-one support and care participants need.

3 PARTICIPATION & ENGAGEMENT		
Outcome Area	Target	Achieved
Lewisham residents enrolled	50	60 *
Residents attending 5+ employment sessions	40	40
Residents reporting increased confidence	40	40
Residents starting volunteering	20	10
Residents expanding professional networks	10	30
Residents achieving job start / promotion / career change.	15	16
Residents reporting satisfaction with service	40	40

*Please note that the data for this project was compiled on the Hanlon secure database and was monitored by our commissioning body (Lewisham Council).



We promoted the programme using a flyer which outlined the course features and the 6-model programme (see below). We ran the Tuesday sessions at the Facework Maker Space (providing food on arrival and paying for participants travel).

Tuesdays **FACEWORK FUTURES** **Free**
EMPLOYABILITY TRAINING

Facework Futures is a free job preparation programme for sanctuary seekers living in Lewisham with a *Right to Work*. Every Tuesday we provide food, training in getting a job, one-to-one support and help towards travel.

- ONE-TO-ONE SUPPORT**
by appointment
Personalised individual coaching focused on your goals and needs.
- TRAINING**
4PM - 6PM Tuesday
Workshops on CVs, interview skills, and developing business ideas to help get into work.
- NETWORKING**
Learn about job opportunities, connect with employers expand your professional network.
- ENGLISH SUPPORT**
Conversation practice with native speakers to build workplace language, cultural understanding.

Facework helped me get a job and I would recommend the course to others.
Marion from Afghanistan

I was able to start working as a painter and decorator through the Facework Training.
Payman from Iran

Scan to find out more
www.face.work

FIND OUT MORE
Tariq
07920402614
tariq@face.work
Contact 9-5pm

Abbie
07311447474
abbie@face.work
Contact 9-5pm

WHERE ?
FACEWORK MAKER SPACE
389 QUEENS ROAD,
NEW CROSS
SE14 5HD

Tuesdays **FACEWORK FUTURES** **Free**
EMPLOYABILITY TRAINING

We know it is hard to get a good job when you come to this country. Facework supports all sanctuary seekers every Tuesday to look at these 6 practical steps

- STEP 1**
Recognising your skills and building your confidence.
• Your personality and dream job
• Your transferable skills.
- STEP 2**
Understanding UK work culture and career options.
• What do employers want?
• Diversity in the workplace
- STEP 3**
Tailored CV and help with job applications.
• Where are jobs advertised?
• How to search effectively.
- STEP 4**
Practical help with job search, interviews and self-employment.
• Covering letters
• Interview practice techniques
- STEP 5**
How to create and boost your network and meet employers.
• Using Linked In
• Volunteering.
- STEP 6**
Support once you are in a job.
• Help with challenges
• Your employment rights
• Getting promoted

Tuesdays
Starting from 23 September 2020

One to One help 10-4pm
Group training 4-6pm

FACEWORK MAKER SPACE
389 QUEENS ROAD,
NEW CROSS
SE14 5HD

به آموزش اشتغالزایی خوش آمدید.
د کارموندی روزی که به ما باغلاست.
ماکزمت کی تربیت میں خوش آمدید.
مرحبا بكم في التدريب على التوظيف.
SEE WWW.FACE.WORK/FUTURES

4. GROUP TRAINING

During the year we have run over 30 separate 2–3-hour training sessions across 3 terms in the Maker Space.

Each session has started with food and drink and some warm-up connection activities. Some of these sessions have involved guest speakers and on average we have had around 7 participants to each of these sessions – with some sessions attracting more.

We have used some of the budget to pay £5.00 travel allowance to each of the participants who attend, because we recognised early on that even paying for a bus fare is a lot for some of our participants.

4.1 Group Training (30+ sessions delivered)

The Training themes have been structured in 6 sessions (some with 2 parts) including:

- CV writing & personal branding
- Interview skills & mock interviews
- UK work culture and diversity
- Legal rights and responsibilities in the workplace.
- Networking & employer engagement
- Understanding of transferable and soft skills
- Job search strategies
- Self-employment pathways
- Volunteering & work experience
- Employment rights & workplace policies
- Confidence building
- Individualized career progression planning



4.2 One-to-One Support (150+ sessions delivered)

Participants received personalized coaching on:

- CV development
- Job applications
- Interview preparation
- Career mapping
- Digital literacy, in partnership with Catbytes some participants gained laptops- thus assisting with job and coursework, some participants were also illiterate and received one-to-one mentoring and signposting to appropriate classes.
- Emotional support and confidence building including individual assistance with NHS and Job centre appointments)
- Advocacy and referrals (LRMN, AFRIL, PCNs, Lewisham College, NHS Volunteering)



We also ran combined sessions on meet the employers with the Facework Ukraine programme.

5. KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

5.1 CV & Job-Search Support

- 77 CVs created or professionally revised
- 20 participants received structured mock interview preparation
- 16 participants secured new paid employment
- *Additionally, participants progressed into volunteering, self-employment, or education as stepping-stones to work*
- Participants took part in local job fairs and in partnership with Facework Ukraine engaged in termly 'Meet the Employers' sessions with local and national employers like Axis Europe, the BBC, the NHS.

5.2 Employment Outcomes

Participants secured roles in:

- Healthcare
- Social care
- Hospitality
- Cleaning and facilities management
- Delivery and self-employment
- Retail and customer service
- Public-sector (including Civil Service)



5.3 Volunteering & Education

- Participants supported into volunteering roles at University Hospital Lewisham, *community organisations e.g. Food Cycle* and local charities
- Multiple participants enrolled into ESOL, Functional Skills English & Maths at Lewisham College and Adult Learning Lewisham and small group classes at Besson Street.
- Several participants were supported with ENIC equivalency, Right to Work verification, and digital access

5.4 Psycho/Social Support

Facework runs activities for our refugees which include a weekly Arts and Crafts sessions at the Maker Space, an allotment and a unique Meet Me café programme on Sundays. Many of our Facework Future participants have joined these sessions and greatly valued the opportunity learn new creative skills, exercise (we run weekly Pilates training), grow vegetables and meet local people.

5. PROGRAMME IMPACT

The programmes greatest impact has been restoring confidence, purpose, and direction for sanctuary seekers who often arrive with trauma, isolation, and uncertainty.

Participants reported feeling:

- More confident in their employability
- Better connected to community and employers
- Clearer about their career goals
- Supported emotionally and practically
- Motivated to pursue work, education, or volunteering opportunities.

Good-News Stories - Short Summaries *(Full case studies available upon request)*

	<p>M – From Isolation to Professional Activation <i>M from Afghanistan, a professional interpreter in his native country</i> After two years in the UK with no professional network, M joined Facework Futures lacking confidence and direction. Through networking events, confidence-building workshops, and one-to-one interview coaching, he secured two interviews and eventually got a job in the Council and regained belief in his abilities.</p>
	<p>SU – From Uncertainty to Self-Employment <i>S formerly a successful teacher in Pakistan, arrived in the UK with low confidence and an outdated CV.</i> Having completed a term with FWF, - focusing in particular on self-employment his confidence and vision for his future improved he registered as a self-employed courier and, with support from Lewisham Works, received an electric bike. He is now financially independent and thriving.</p>
	<p>D – From Crisis to a Nursing Pathway <i>A newly arrived refugee from Sri Lanka, D faced emotional distress and confusion.</i> Through sensitive mentoring, ENIC qualification checks, Functional Skills enrolment, CV support, and crisis intervention, and engagement in planned social activities he now has a clear pathway toward nursing and renewed stability.</p>
	<p>C – From Exploitation to Safe, Legal Employment <i>An asylum seeker permitted to work under Para 360, C had been exploited in previous care roles.</i> Facework Futures updated her CV, prepared her for interviews, and supported her into a lawful, stable care job. She also received housing advocacy and emotional support during a crisis.</p>
	<p>S – From 20 Years of Exclusion to Employment <i>After decades without documentation or a bank account, S received step-by-step support to set up her E-Visa, open a bank account, create her first CV, and complete a Zoom interview.</i> She is now working as a self-employed cleaner and financially active for the first time in years.</p>
	<p>Y – From Rejection to a Structured Nursing Roadmap <i>Despite repeated job rejections, Y’s dream was to become a nurse.</i> Facework Futures helped her enroll in Functional Skills course, get a laptop, secure a volunteering role at University Hospital Lewisham, and build a clear long-term plan toward nursing. Her confidence has transformed.</p>

6. CONCLUSION

Across one year, Facework Futures delivered a high-impact, community-rooted employability programme that:

- Engaged **77 residents**
- Delivered **30+ training sessions** and **150+ one-to-one sessions**
- Supported **16 job starts**, multiple volunteering placements, and significant confidence and educational gains

The programme strengthened community cohesion, reduced isolation, and empowered sanctuary seekers to build meaningful futures in Lewisham.

Key success Criteria

There are 3 key success criteria which we believe has made this project so successful.

A) LIVED EXPERIENCE LEADERSHIP

Empowering and employing those with lived experience of migration to run the programmes. The fact that these leaders have had similar experiences from those who we are training and can empathize, communicate with, inspire and support due to their knowledge and lived experience has been crucial to the success of the programme.

B) HOLISTIC APPROACH

Facework runs a 5 P model of employability training which is:

People centered, **P**lace Based, **P**eer-Led, **P**sycho/social support and **P**rogressive
Part of the work of the team was to provide practical support – for example in securing a bike for a refugee needing to cycle to his new job, or organizing members of the group to go ice-skating to meet other people and find ways to interact and share their lives.

C) SANCTUARY SPACE

The Maker Space which we built with refugees from our last cohort has proved to be a crucial to the success of our work. Being on the Highstreet on 3 bus routes means it has been easy for refugees to find. It is purposefully not labelled a 'training or refugee centre' but rather a space to MAKE – making jobs, making networks, making futures !
Our other space (Hatcham House) was too large and impersonal. We were not able to promise confidentiality as other staff and members of the public often came in. The Maker Space was small enough to feel intimate and private, welcoming and safe and we were able to promote the other arts and crafts and Changemaker events which take place in the space every week.



Members of Facework Futures group attending Facework's Arts and Crafts Club, helping build our workspace, working on our allotment and joining members of our FW Ukraine group with their ice-skating excursion.

Challenges

It should be noted that there were some considerable challenges running this programme successfully, that would need to be addressed in future sessions. Many participants reported problems with housing, benefits, disability and depression and the team had to spend considerable time trying to resolve these. Providing a holistic, wrap around support service is necessary if participants are to succeed on their career journey. Some participants who had been victims of torture and others suffering long term depression were unable to avail of any services in the borough.

Women with school age children proved a particularly difficult group to engage - often there were significant language issues (in spite of our polylingual team) and childcare issues meant all attendance had to be carefully timed. Running a course during the period of Ramadan also was an issue as participants focus and retention was not what it was at other times. Providing travel reimbursement and a warm welcome and food for participants proved completely necessary.

It seems appropriate to conclude this report with the words from some of our participants:

P from Iran

"I wanted to take a moment to sincerely thank you for the kindness, time, and support you showed me through the Face Work community. Your willingness to help, guide, and encourage people means a great deal, and I truly appreciate the effort and positive energy you shared with me.

Even beyond practical help, your attitude and generosity made me feel welcomed and supported, and that is something I will always be grateful for".

Patience from Nigeria

"I got to know about Facework from the Citizens Advice Bureau. I had been out of work for a very long time due to my ill health. I wanted to go back to work but was quite rusty! When I joined Face Work, I received tremendous support. I was assisted in making a suitable CV, I attended numerous programs on how to look for employment, how to present one's self during interviews, how to network and its advantages and so many other programs. Through Face Work, I attended job fairs.

It was not only about Jobs and Work. I also attended other sessions like sewing/knitting on weekends which gave me the opportunity to meet, share and get to know other members of our Lewisham community. During these sessions, we talked about everyday things, children, our childhoods, families which gave us the opportunity to learn about other traditions, other people's ways of life and the importance of integration.

All in all, within a short time, I felt confident and ready to re-enter the jobs world. I am now gainfully employed as a Carer/Support Worker and I am enjoying my job. A big thank you to Face Work 👍"

