

SKILLS FOR LONDONERS CASE STUDY 3 HOTEL ACCOMMODATION FOR ASYLUM SEEKERS AND REFUGEES 11/01/2024

Project: A.R.I.A. Hub
Supporting asylum seekers,
refugees and immigrant
artists

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BACKGROUND, AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

WE RESTART is proud to be a part of the Mayor of London's Skills for Londoners programme, joining 26 other community organizations in fostering educational and skills training opportunities. Our mission aligns with the Mayor's vision of creating a more equitable and prosperous city through increased adult learning participation. More specifically, we support asylum seekers, refugees, and displaced artists. Recognizing the eagerness of migrants to enhance their skills, improve English proficiency, and gain digital skills, our primary goal is to break down barriers to education and training options through the SFL program. By collaborating with adult education providers, we strive to make these opportunities easily accessible for displaced people. Addressing challenges, such as language barriers and mental health issues resulting from the trauma of displacement, remains crucial.

HOW WE HELPED

Through collaboration and support from Brent Council, Brent Health Matters officers, councillors, and hotel staff, we successfully conducted a series of workshops in a large hotel based in Brent. These weekly sessions, totalling 6 hours each, connected with over 100 asylum seekers and refugees from diverse regions like Africa, the Middle East, and Asia. Within this cohort, 8% had never received formal education, 20% completed primary school or its equivalent, and among the remaining 72%, many hadn't attended college. Prior to Christmas, in collaboration with Brent Start and CNWL (College of North West London), we organized several assessments, providing support throughout the challenging process. We also developed a map to guide them to the college, ensuring ease of navigation. Before the assessment, we sent reminders to every participant ensuring they understood the info provided. The individuals engaged in our program are not just seeking an opportunity to learn; for them, it's a pathway out of the hotel routine, a means to integrate into society, understand British culture, and envision themselves as Londoners.

OUTCOMES AND RESULTS

As a result of our collective efforts, participants, despite facing significant challenges, successfully underwent assessments and accessed educational opportunities. The workshops not only provided valuable learning experiences but also served as a catalyst for social integration and cultural understanding. The hunger for education among the participants is evident, reflecting a desire for self-improvement and a genuine commitment to becoming active members of the community. Through collaborative initiatives, we've laid the foundation for a transformative journey, empowering displaced individuals to see education as not only a means of personal growth but also a crucial step toward integration and belonging.

"We've witnessed the transformative power of education and support. As a team, we nurture dreams and aspirations, believing that through our efforts, one day soon, the resilient individuals we support will proudly proclaim themselves as Londoners, woven into the fabric of this diverse and welcoming city."

WE RESTART TEAM

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