Faiths Stream of Sanctuary Award
Generic Guidelines

Introduction

The Faiths Stream of Sanctuary is being developed to specifically celebrate and promote the good practice of different faiths that are fostering a culture of welcome and inclusion for all, especially people seeking sanctuary and their families. The call to ‘welcome the stranger’, through protection and hospitality, and to honor the stranger or those of other faiths with respect and equality, is deeply rooted in many religions (see Theology of Sanctuary for further information).

What are Sanctuary Awards?

Sanctuary Awards are provided by the network of local groups and City of Sanctuary UK to recognise and celebrate mainstream organisations’ commitment to our values and vision of welcome and inclusivity and enabling them to become active participants in the City of Sanctuary UK network.

City of Sanctuary UK is promoting the Faiths Stream of Sanctuary award as it offers an opportunity to educate people about the right to sanctuary and to further engage with people seeking sanctuary and their families in their local communities. The aim of working towards the award is to create a safe environment that welcomes people seeking sanctuary and support faith communities to learn about sanctuary in the UK and extend welcome in their wider communities.

City of Sanctuary UK recognises that every faith settings will vary in their contexts; there is no expectation that every setting will follow the exact same path to embedding the ethos of welcome to all and achieving an award. The faith, location and size will necessarily influence the way as setting develops a culture of welcome. Each place will demonstrate sanctuary differently based on their location and demographics and award applicants should be able to demonstrate commitment to both engaging in the theology of sanctuary, as well as to taking practical activities to welcome people seeking sanctuary.

City of Sanctuary is made up of people from all faiths and none. We are working to build more and more welcoming places of sanctuary and would encourage the promotion of the generic minimum awards criteria for non-faith settings. Please note that we have specific Church of Sanctuary award guidelines that were developed in partnership with Churches Together in Britain and Ireland, and built upon the work undertaken by the City of Sanctuary founding Patron Inderjit Bhogal. We would encourage any faith or interfaith organisation to get in touch if they would like to work in partnership with us to develop specific guidelines, or to discuss any amendment to these generic guidelines (including any suggestions on use of language).
Why get involved?

Across our network, faith groups support the City of Sanctuary movement and welcome people seeking sanctuary, often providing significant practical support that makes a real difference to their lives. Through the Faiths Stream of Sanctuary we want to celebrate and promote this incredible work and working towards the Award is one way of doing this.

The procedure

Award applications usually start with a conversation with your local City of Sanctuary group or a City of Sanctuary UK officer if no local group is available. Here is a step by step guide:-

Step 1 – Contact the local group to pledge support and connect with their / your shared vision

Step 2 – Pledge to work towards a culture of welcome through endorsing the City of Sanctuary Charter and sign the Organisation pledge.

Step 3 – If you have already made progress towards creating a welcoming place of safety you can use the self-assessment tool (Appendix A) to find out where you are in the sanctuary journey and support planning for further development. This self-assessment tool is a useful and adaptable tool for action planning and portfolio building.

Step 4 - Produce a plan (you can contact your local group or City of Sanctuary UK for support to develop a plan if required but capacity is limited) using the process of LEARN, EMBED, SHARE.

Include how you will meet the City of Sanctuary UK minimum criteria within the plan and what can be appropriately embedded within your context. We suggest that you consider the creation of a portfolio of activities to evidence progress as you work towards an award.

Step 5 – Then when you feel you are ready, you can apply for the award. You can submit a written application for an award using the Awards Application form.

Step 6 – The nomination will be appraised by a Sanctuary Recognition panel which will normally include as a minimum, a local member of City of Sanctuary, someone who has experience of seeking sanctuary and an expert in the field. The panel may request a visit to the nominated organisation during the appraisal, and will usually involve a conversation between key members of staff, members of the congregation and the panel.

Step 7 – Once the award is agreed, plans to be made for its presentation to include a celebratory event/ media statements etc. You are making a public declaration of support for people seeking sanctuary and City of Sanctuary.
Step 8 – The conversations begun during appraisal will continue throughout the three year award period and will inform a review at the end of the three years, when an updated certificate of recognition can be issued.

What are the award criteria?

This guidance document aims to outline the process and minimum criteria required for the award. We would encourage faith settings to build on the minimum criteria in a way that best reflects their unique situation and aim to get everyone involved. We are also developing the Faiths Stream of Sanctuary website which will contain case studies which will highlight good practice.

The Core Processes: Learn, Embed & Share

A faith setting can attain an award if they are able to provide evidence that they have integrated our three core processes:

- **Learn**: learning about what it means to be seeking sanctuary, both in general, and specifically.
- **Embed**: taking positive action to embed concepts of welcome, safety and inclusion. To take steps to ensure this progress remains sustainable.
- **Share**: sharing your vision, achievements, what you have learned, and good practice with people from other faiths, the local community and beyond.

The criteria have been structured to fit into the three overarching processes of Learn, Embed, and Share, which are used for all sanctuary awards. Please provide evidence of meeting each of the criteria in the relevant section of the [generic award application](#).

Learn Criteria

In this section of the application, we will be looking for examples of work which signals the commitment of your faith setting to learn about what it means to be seeking sanctuary. It is also important that you include people seeking sanctuary in those learning opportunities if at all possible. We recognise that this may be challenging in certain locations and situations, and City of Sanctuary UK and via its local groups will try to assist.

To receive an Award, a faith setting must meet these minimum criteria:

- Criterion 1: **Awareness raising opportunities** are provided, and opportunities for discussion around the theme of welcome and sanctuary are facilitated.
- Criterion 2: **Evidence of refugee/asylum/migration awareness raising** is included into everyday life of the faith setting.
- Criterion 3: Commitment to supporting **the voices of people seeking sanctuary to be heard**.
**Embed Criteria**
The second process used by City of Sanctuary UK for its awards is Embed. Embed means that the faith setting is taking positive action to implement welcome, safety and inclusion. City of Sanctuary UK would like details on how the faith setting will ensure a continuation of support for sanctuary on an ongoing basis.

To receive an award, the faith setting must meet the following minimum criteria:

- **Criterion 4:** The faith setting must demonstrate how it has embedded the concept of welcome and inclusion and provide practical examples of how people have been made to feel welcome e.g. sign at the door. This should show how the place will continue to develop and sustain a culture of welcome beyond the award.
- **Criterion 5:** Recognition of/participation in the annual Refugee Week event, more information about the annual event can be found here: [http://refugeeweek.org.uk](http://refugeeweek.org.uk).
- **Criterion 6:** Commitment to supporting a practical project/initiative that embeds welcome and fosters solidarity between receiving communities and people seeking sanctuary e.g. supporting a destitution project.

**Share Criteria**
The third and final process in the City of Sanctuary UK model is Share. City of Sanctuary UK will be seeking evidence that the faith setting is seeking to share its experience of sanctuary and welcome with the wider community, local organisations and spreading the word about their welcoming efforts.

To receive an award, a faith setting must meet the following minimum criteria:

- **Criterion 7:** A public commitment to the City of Sanctuary vision of welcome including the endorsement of the City of Sanctuary charter through signing the Organisation Pledge, and if applicable the signing of a local groups pledge.
- **Criterion 8:** The place publicly highlights its activities in support of welcome and inclusion by making it visible on noticeboards and websites.
  
  NB. Once the sanctuary award is received, we would expect the logo and a link to the webpage on the website.
- ** Criterion 9:** Commitment to on-going engagement with the Faiths of Sanctuary stream. This may include sharing resources, ideas and achievements via the website or the City of Sanctuary UK website, and/or with other faiths/interfaith collaborations.
- **Criterion 10:** Where appropriate supporting relevant campaigns which call for improvements to the asylum system.

**How to complete your application form?**

Your written application needs to include:
Evidence which demonstrates how your faith setting has used the three step process of learn, embed and share and how through following the process the values and principles in the charter are being upheld.

Evidence can be collected in a variety of ways and can include self-evaluation, photos and testimony, strategic plans, training records, policies and procedures and through consulting with people seeking sanctuary.

Applications should be no longer than 4 pages, including supporting evidence. Only photos or organisational documents can be submitted in addition to these 4 pages.

As you complete the application, here are some suggestions to support you in replying to each of the sections.

**Q: Please provide a summary of how your faith setting engages with people seeking sanctuary.**

In this section, outline the ways you have engaged with people seeking sanctuary. How has your faith setting sought to build relationships with local people seeking sanctuary? Has it formed partnerships with any local support organisations? What about members - have members who have sought sanctuary themselves been consulted, if applicable/appropriate? Is there a mechanism for feedback from and support to them?

**Q: Using the 3 processes of the sanctuary award, please reflect on how you have achieved these principles attaching evidence to support your answer.**

Here we are looking for evidence of your initiatives, projects, policies and progress. Even if something is ongoing, include it as it helps to build a picture of how the faith setting is developing its culture of welcome. Try to be concise but don’t assume that the recognition team will have the requisite knowledge (so please explain all acronyms and give context where necessary).

**Q: Please identify how people seeking sanctuary have been involved in helping you achieve these principles.**

All applications for a Sanctuary Award are expected to involve people seeking sanctuary in the planning, delivery and/or evaluation of activities for each of the principles, where appropriate. Building on the examples you have given, identify the ways in which people seeking sanctuary have contributed to these successes.

**Q: How do you intend to build on your achievements over the next 3 years in order that your award is renewed?**

We want to acknowledge and celebrate a faith setting which show a commitment to the principles in the long-term and which have a forward-looking approach; receipt of the sanctuary award is just the beginning! Each award is valid for 3 years and a procedure for renewal is in place which will vary according to local circumstances. So, use this section of the application form as an opportunity to share information about your planning.

Questions to ask yourself as you complete this section include: Have you demonstrated a sustainable commitment to sanctuary in the long-term? How will your re-evaluate and adapt to
continue to demonstrate sanctuary, welcome and inclusion? Can you provide evidence that this commitment will continue after the award is granted?

**Additional points to include where relevant:**

**Evidence of self-evaluation**
Do your members feel that the faith setting has met the principles? How do you know?

**Feedback from others involved**
Has feedback from the local community or the refugee & migrant support sector has been taken into account? Have there been any changes or actions arising from the activities?

**Feedback from refugee/migrant involvement**
It is always useful to include quotes or comments from an asylum seeker, refugee or other migrant who has engaged with any aspect of the welcoming endeavours.

**Permission to use information**

If you give permission City of Sanctuary UK by ticking the appropriate box on the application we may use any of the information supplied to share best practice or for publicity / presentations. We would encourage all applicants to give permission as it helps us to further build the welcome movement. However if you include quotes / photographs, please confirm that this is acceptable to persons concerned (we’ll check with you if photo permissions are not made clear).
## APPENDIX A - Self-Assessment Tool

*RAG: Red = not developed; Amber = being developed; Green = fully developed and implemented*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Leadership</th>
<th>LEARN about what it means to be seeking sanctuary</th>
<th>RAG</th>
<th>Evidence</th>
<th>Next Steps</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All leaders, staff and volunteers are aware of what becoming a Place of Sanctuary means.</td>
<td>What are we doing already?</td>
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<tr>
<td>All staff, volunteers and wider faith community are aware of what becoming a Place of Sanctuary means.</td>
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<td>Whole faith setting approach in working towards recognition. All involved in the self-evaluation process.</td>
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<td>Identify ‘Sanctuary Ambassadors’ who will work together to help you to learn about sanctuary and help to raise awareness.</td>
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<td>Be aware of safeguarding of issues surrounding people seeking sanctuary.</td>
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### Opportunities for awareness raising

Create awareness about:
- Why people become refugees;
- Where refugees come from;

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<th>RAG</th>
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- The differences between refugees and asylum seekers and other migrants;
- Why some refugees come to the UK and to your city;
- Why some refugees are destitute;
- Why refugees and asylum-seekers need protection.
- What individuals can do to provide practical support?

Opportunities/awareness raising sessions are created to enable members of the community to meet people seeking sanctuary and hear their stories e.g. invite people seeking sanctuary to speak.

<p>| TAKE positive action to embed concepts of welcome, safety and inclusion. |
|---|---|---|---|
| <strong>Create a welcoming environment</strong> | What are we doing already? | Evidence | Next Steps |
| Develop a welcoming, hospitable, inclusive environment in which strangers feel genuinely welcome. | | | |
| People seeking sanctuary within the faith community feel welcomed and included e.g. | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Notes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>offering opportunities for volunteering and engagement.</td>
<td>Ensure vulnerable people seeking sanctuary are able to participate. Where this is not the case identify ways to support enhanced engagement.</td>
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<td>Work to build relationships of mutual respect and trust within the faith community in all its diversity.</td>
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<td>Ensure there is a system/procedures in place to safeguard people seeking sanctuary.</td>
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<td>Ensure the learning is related to the theology of sanctuary of that specific faith.</td>
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<td>Recognition of/participation in the annual Refugee Week event and celebrate the contributions of people seeking sanctuary</td>
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<td>Commit to supporting a local project or initiative and encourage the faith community to take positive action e.g. destitution, hosting</td>
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<td>Link to local CoS group or streams (universities, schools, libraries) where applicable</td>
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Or – seek to encourage your village, town, city to become a welcoming place of safety.

Offer premises to be used for people seeking sanctuary e.g. meetings, English classes.

Involve refugees and asylum seekers. in the day to day life of the faith setting.

Ensure people seeking sanctuary are safeguarding e.g. they may not wish to identify themselves as asylum seekers or refugees.

Monitor parental participation, to ensure that vulnerable parents are able to participate. Where this is not the case identify ways to support enhanced engagement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SHARE your vision and achievements</th>
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<td><strong>What are we doing already?</strong></td>
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- Arrange joint visits or projects with faith settings;
- Hold exhibition/performance around the sanctuary theme;

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<td>- Contribute to wider Faith Stream of Sanctuary network, through contributing case studies.</td>
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<td>Share what you are doing with other faith groups and seek to work collaboratively e.g. through interfaith networks/collaborations</td>
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<td>Provide up to date information via newsletters and on your website about the award and your work towards recognition.</td>
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<td>Showcase your work with the local community.</td>
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<td>Make a public commitment to the City of Sanctuary vision of welcome include endorsement of City of Sanctuary charter and if applicable the signing of a local groups pledge</td>
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<td>Publicly highlight the activities in support of welcome and inclusion by making it visible on noticeboards and websites</td>
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<td>Hold events and/or exhibitions on the theme of sanctuary for the local community (ensuring that people seeking sanctuary are involved in the planning and are able to actively participate)</td>
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