

The Refugee Law Clinic (RLC) Giessen is a practice-oriented educational program in asylum law at the Justus University Giessen, in which students offer consultations concerning the asylum procedure for refugees in the area of Gießen free of charge. The consultations are done by students who passed through the educational program of the RLC. For this work, the support of voluntary translators is indispensable. Translators are needed during the weekly information evenings in the primary reception facility for refugees in Gießen and/or single case consultations. During the information evenings at the primary reception facility in Giessen, a group of interested people is introduced to the asylum procedure and informed about their rights and obligations in the asylum procedure. Individual consultations in single cases cover various topics. Mostly, the focus lies on the individual story of flight to prepare the persons seeking protection for their interviews at the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees. (BAMF-Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge)

### **What are our expectations for translators?**

#### *„Only translating“*

For a good consultation it is important and necessary that the communication is transparent for all participants. It is therefore important to us that a translator translates directly and completely. We would ask you to not to answer questions independently, but to translate everything and wait for the reply of the consultants, before you answer the questions of the advised person. We ask that, because most questions can only be answered with expert knowledge that the advising students have acquired during their training. They also take responsibility for ensuring that the answers are correct and helpful for the person being advised.

At the same time, interpreting is a very demanding and complex task, as the situation of asylum seekers is often very difficult or one is confronted with severe tragic life stories. It is therefore very important to know one's own limits and to make them clear. For example, fugitives may ask you for your mobile phone number. If you don't want to pass them on, you can refer to your role as an interpreter at such moments and explain that you only mediate linguistically and don't advise. Instead of handing out your phone number, you can refer to the RLC phone number.

In addition to the main task of translating, the consultants also appreciate the personal impressions of the interpreters very much. We encourage you to share your personal impressions with the consultants so that they can be included and taken into account during the consultation.

#### *Absolute confidentiality of consulting content and independence*

The advice provided by the RLC is of particular importance as it is independent and confidential. What is discussed in the consultations is not passed on to any other third parties. When we exchange information of cases amongst each other and during supervision, the cases are discussed in anonymous form. We expect the same confidentiality and independence from our translators. For this reason, the interpreters and consultants sign a declaration of discretion in which they commit themselves to secrecy.

#### *Further formalities*

In order to guarantee a high-quality and responsible language mediation, we need a police clearance certificate from you. This is also required for the access to the primary reception facility in Gießen. It

is also important to us that our interpreters take part in psychological supervision at least once a semester and in one of the workshops listed below at least once a year.

### **What we offer:**

#### *Participation in various competence workshops*

To ensure that we can always guarantee a high-quality translation, the RLC is offering ongoing competence workshops for our translators from the winter semester 2019/20 onwards.

The workshop "Methodology of Interpreting" covers topics such as differentiation and delimitation of the interpreter's role, interpreting techniques and strategies, principles of interpreting as well as empathy skills and self-protection techniques. A focus is placed on the various factors of interpreting in the context of legal counselling in asylum law.

Furthermore, a workshop on "Self-care, stress management and self-care for volunteer counsellors" will be offered, in which topics such as maintaining professional distance from clients and their fates will be addressed. It also provides information and techniques on self-care and stress management.

In addition, an "anti-racism workshop" takes place every winter semester in December, to which our translators are cordially invited as well as our consultants.

#### *Participation in psychological supervision*

As interpreting can be a very demanding and stressful task, we invite all interpreters to take part in psychological supervision together with the advising students. Psychological supervision takes place once or twice a semester and is open to all non-legal topics related to counselling and translation. However, you are also welcome to contact us if something has happened during a consultation that is too much for you, overwhelms you or that you would like to talk about.

#### *Financial support for participation in advanced training courses and workshops on interpreting*

We very much welcome if translators are interested in further education in translating! If you are interested in further training or workshops outside the RLC, you are welcome to contact us with a concrete proposal and we will support you financially as far as our budget allows or, if possible, take it over completely.

#### *Confirmation of your voluntary support*

We issue certificates stating that you support us in our work by translating on a voluntary basis. Please feel free to contact us if you wish to do so.

**If you have any questions or comments, please feel free to contact us at any time!**

**Emma Weiskopf**

**coordinator of the RLC**

[emma.weiskopf@recht.uni-giessen.de](mailto:emma.weiskopf@recht.uni-giessen.de)

**Jannik Reichel**

**student assistant of the RLC**

[jannik.reichel@recht.uni-giessen.de](mailto:jannik.reichel@recht.uni-giessen.de)