

**Helen Mountfield KC**, chair of the Panel Discussion: *How can sanctuary work today?*

Principle of Mansfield College, Oxford, since 2018

Helen Mountfield is a British barrister based at [Matrix chambers](#) whose practice is in administrative, human rights and equality law. Helen is on the Equality & Human Rights Commission's panel, and was on the Treasury A Panel before taking silk. As a highly regarded public law specialist, Helen has appeared in many significant cases. Particular areas of expertise include regulatory work, equality law, terrorism and national security, education law, social welfare and election law. Helen is particularly well-known for cases concerning discrimination and equality questions as they arise in public law, employment, commercial and other contexts. She is the co-author of seven editions of *Blackstone's Guide to the Human Rights Act 1998*, a monograph concerning the [Human Rights Act 1998](#).

**Dr Nadina Christopoulou**, Panel Discussion: *How can sanctuary work today?*

Nadina Christopoulou is the director and co-founder of [Melissa Network](#), and has previously served as the vice-president of the Greek Council for Refugees. She studied anthropology and politics at McGill University, in Montréal, Canada, and did her M.Phil and Ph.D. at Cambridge University. Her doctoral research focused on Roma storytelling and collective memory practices, based on extensive fieldwork with settled and semi-nomadic communities in Greece. Her subsequent research work focuses further on diaspora narratives, migration and childhood, as well as migrant and refugee women's solidarity networks. On the basis of the latter, together with migrant and refugee women leaders in Greece, she co-founded Melissa Network, an award-winning organization with women members from over 50 countries. Melissa -the Greek word for bee- was envisioned as an open beehive of sharing and coexistence, bringing together women of diverse origins and providing a safe space for healing and learning. It works on developing pathways towards integration through education, art, advocacy, mental health support and community engagement, promoting agency, solidarity and the ethics of care. Melissa is actively networking with grassroots organizations around the Mediterranean and the Middle East, and has taken a leading role in supporting women human rights defenders from crisis zones, including Afghanistan & Ukraine.

**Clelia Bartoli**, Panel Discussion: *How can sanctuary work today?*

Clelia Bartoli is the coordinator of the master's degree in "Migrations, Rights, Integration" and Professor of Sociology and Critics of Law, Politics of migration and Human Rights at the Law Department, University of Palermo (Italy).

In her research - e.g. on Dalits in India, during the uprising in Chile, with migrants and various marginalised groups in Italy - she combines philosophy with ethnographic investigation and creative activism. She devised an educational approach called 'Humble Academy'. It consists of generating learning communities in which knowledge/power relationships are radically rewritten. For example, working with an informal flea market in Palermo, she invited students to learn the law from those outlaws. She is co-founder of Giocherenda, a collective of young refugees that invents and builds cooperative games based on storytelling to teach solidarity. She is developing the Otherwise Method, a political imagination workshop to shape unorthodox institutions. Therefore, she invented a system of participatory bottom-up law-writing, involving students, people with addictions, their families and social workers. This group drafted a comprehensive law called 'From dependence to Interdependence' to regulate prevention, treatment and harm reduction services for people with addictions. On 25 September 2024, the Sicilian Parliament made it executive.

Clelia Bartoli is author of several publications. Among her books: "Razzisti per legge. L'Italia che discrimina" (2012), "Inchiesta a Ballarò. Il diritto visto dal margine" (2019), "Chile Revolts: from the Uprisings Toward the Constitutional Process" (2022).

**Esa Aldegheri**, Panel Discussion: *How can sanctuary work today?*

Dr Esa Aldegheri holds a [Leverhulme Early Career Fellowship](#) at the University of Glasgow, investigating how unequal narratives and borderings of refugee journeys affect integration, with a focus on Scotland as an internationally relevant case study. This interdisciplinary and multilingual research project uses a combination of qualitative, narrative-based and multilingual research methods, linking academic research with Esa's work as a creative writer and facilitator of community education and integration projects.

Esa previously worked as a Research Associate with the UNESCO Chair for refugee integration through language and the arts (RILA) in the School of Education at the University of Glasgow. In this role she collaborated with the Scottish Government, COSLA and the Scottish Refugee Council to evaluate and develop the latest iteration of the New Scots Refugee Integration Strategy. Her ESRC-funded PhD analysed the influence of narrative exchange on the intercultural encounter between forced migrants and receiving communities in Edinburgh (Scotland) and Torino (Italy).

Esa is the author of *Free To Go* (John Murray 2022), a travel book exploring the limits of freedom and non-freedom, motorbike journeys, motherhood and more. She is editing a forthcoming anthology of women's travel writing, *There She Goes*, due to be published by Saraband in 2025. She also co-ordinates and facilitates community arts-based integration projects. One such project (Making it Home, delivered in collaboration with Maryhill Integration Network) was commended by the Scottish Parliament and recently included in the National Library of Scotland Moving Image Archive.

Prior to being a scholar and writer, Esa worked in the third sector for organisations supporting forced migrants in Italy, Lebanon and Scotland. Her roles include community education, support and advocacy for detainees, language teaching, fundraising, project management and interpreting between English, Italian, Arabic, French and Spanish.

She is currently Chair of Edinburgh City of Sanctuary.

**David Herd**, Panel Discussion: *How can sanctuary work today?*

David Herd is a poet, critic and co-organiser of the project Refugee Tales. His critical history, [Writing Against Expulsion in the Post-War World: Making Space for the Human](#) (OUP 2023) is shortlisted for the 2024 MSA (Modernist Studies Association) Book Prize. His most recent collection of poetry, [Walk Song](#) (2022), was a Book of the Year in the Australian Review of Books. In collaboration with Anna Pincus and colleagues at Gatwick Detainees Welfare Group, he has co-organised [Refugee Tales](#) since 2014. Through that work he has helped articulate the call for a future without detention. He teaches in the School of English at the University of St Andrews where he is Berry Chair of Literature and Human Rights.

**Mark Goldring CBE**, response to Panel Discussion: *How can sanctuary work today?*

Director of Asylum Welcome, Oxford.

Before joining Asylum Welcome in April 2020, Mark Goldring was the chief executive of [Oxfam](#) (2013-2018), [Mencap](#) (2008-2013) and [Voluntary Service Overseas](#) (1999-2008). Mark has worked as a trustee of and consultant to charities of all sizes. His working life has been focused on tackling exclusion, lack of opportunity and poverty, spending many years working on global issues, including with refugees and displaced people across Africa, Asia and the Middle East. He was appointed a CBE in 2008 for his services to tackling poverty. He began his work at VSO as a volunteer, teaching in a small town in Borneo for two years, before moving to and setting up operations for VSO in Bhutan. Mark studied law at Oxford and has a Masters in Social Policy from LSE.