WEST MIDLANDS

V.O.I.C.E

VOICE OF INSIGHT, CHANGE & EMPOWERMENT

LIVED EXPERIENCE CONSULTANT FEES

VOICE is committed to ensuring that lived experience expertise is valued as professional expertise and compensated accordingly.

Our rates reflects the specialist expertise provided by Lived Experience Consultants, as well as the significant emotional labour involved in sharing and drawing upon personal experiences of harm and exploitation. It also recognises the preparation time required to participate safely and meaningfully in engagements. The rate has been informed by sector benchmarking and is aligned with national survivor panels and government bodies.

Engagement Type	Description	Hourly fee
Preparational planning sessions	Preparational planning sessions to ensure that Lived Experience Consultants feel informed, confident, and appropriately supported in their contribution.	**£25**
Story-Sharing / Public Testimony	Speaking engagements, filmed interviews, or storytelling sessions requiring significant emotional preparation or vulnerability.	**£50**
Support Fee	Support fee to cover supervision, preparation, and safeguarding.	**15% fee**
Travel Expenses for in-person events	Travel expenses to be covered (receipts or mileage will be provided)	

Lived Experience Consultants bring specialist insight based on direct experience of exploitation, recovery, and navigating support and criminal justice systems. This expertise cannot be replicated through academic, policy, or professional knowledge alone.

Providing appropriate payment is essential to:

- Recognise lived experience as professional expertise
- Avoid exploitation or re-traumatisation through unpaid emotional labour
- Reduce power imbalances between organisations and Consultants
- Enable Consultants to participate safely and sustainably
- Ensure ethical, trauma-informed engagement

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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FAQs for Working with VOICE Lived Experience Consultants of West Midlands Anti Slavery Network.

1 Who are WMASN VOICE Lived Experience Consultants?

Our consultants are individuals with lived experience of modern slavery and exploitation. They are trained, supported, and paid professionals who use their insights to shape services, training, policy, and systems change.

2 How should we refer to someone with lived experience?

Use respectful, person-first language, such as "person with lived experience of modern slavery" or "Lived Experience Consultant." Avoid terms like "victim" or "survivor" unless the person has expressed a preference for that label.

3 Will they be sharing their personal stories?

Not necessarily. We encourage clients to see lived experience involvement as professional insight, not storytelling. Personal stories should only be shared:

- If the consultant has agreed to it in advance
- With appropriate emotional and safeguarding support
- Within a clearly defined purpose

4 What do we need to know about working with survivor consultants?

- Always follow a trauma-informed approach: be respectful, flexible, and sensitive.
- Ensure the purpose of their involvement is clear, meaningful, and valued.
- Avoid asking them to share their story unless this has been explicitly agreed and supported.
- Recognise this is professional consultancy work, not volunteering.

5 What is the preferred method of payment?

Invoices will be issued directly by WMASN, with payment made via BACS transfer in line with the prior agreed arrangement and standard payment terms. please provide a Purchase Order prior to invoicing.

For any queries, you can contact our Finance Officer, Katie Naughton, on katie@westmidlandsantislavery.org.

6 Can we pay VOICE consultants with a token or voucher instead of a fee?

No. While well-intentioned, token payments or vouchers are not appropriate or fair compensation for the professional expertise and lived experience VOICE consultants bring.

7 How are consultants supported?

All VOICE consultants are offered:

- Preparation and debriefing calls
- Emotional and practical support before and after engagements
- Ongoing supervision
- This is coordinated through WMASN's VOICE team.

8 Can we ask them to attend meetings or events at short notice?

Please provide as much notice as possible (at least 2 weeks where feasible). Last-minute requests may not be possible due to availability, wellbeing, or preparation needs.

9 How should we refer to consultants in public or on social media?

Protecting identity and choice is key. If public recognition is requested:

- Use only first names, unless full consent is given
- Otherwise, refer to contributions as from "a VOICE consultant" or "anonymous lived experience input"

Always consult us before publishing anything.

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What should we do if we're unsure about any part of the process?

Get in touch! We're here to help ensure the process is positive, empowering, and safe for everyone involved.

Book a Consultation or Get in Touch

We'd love to hear from you - reach out today to schedule a personalised consultation and discover how VOICE can support you in achieving your goals with tailored advice and expert guidance every step of the way.

Liz Lowther
VOICE Engagement Manager

SCAN ME

Or you may submit an Expression of Interest Form straight away and we will get back to you within 48 hours

Phone	+44 (0)7701380149
Email	vem@westmidlandsantislavery.org
Website	www.westmidlandsantislavery.org/v-o-i-c-e-survivor-panel
Address	Runway East, Arca, Temple Row, Birmingham B2 5AF