

## Head of UK Democracy Fund: Information pack

### About JRRT

Joseph Rowntree (1836-1925) was a Quaker, liberal and successful businessman in York. The Rowntree business, built around the cocoa factory, flourished, and in 1904 he transferred a substantial part of his wealth to a number of Trusts with which his name is still associated. These include the Joseph Rowntree Foundation (JRF), the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust (JRCT), and the Joseph Rowntree Reform Trust (JRRT). The three Trusts are entirely independent of each other.

JRRT works for democratic and political reform through our activities and the campaigns we fund. Our values are rooted in liberalism and Quakerism. Our strategic vision is to bring about significant changes in the political system, making it more accountable, democratic and transparent, and to rebalance power for the well-being of society. Established as a company, not a charity, JRRT pays tax on its income, which makes it possible to award grants for political, campaigning or lobbying purposes that are ineligible for charitable funding.

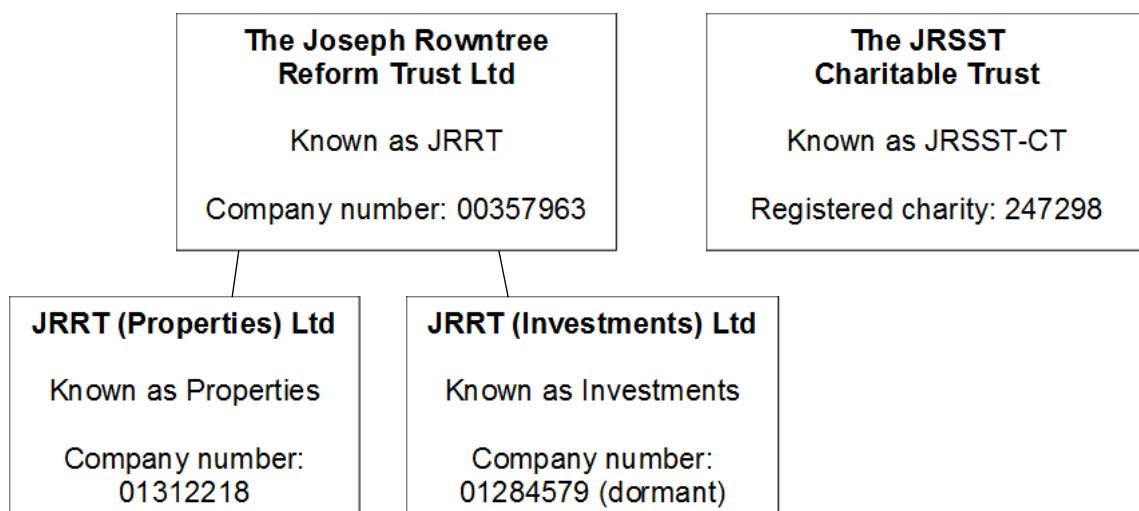
### Company structure and finance

The Joseph Rowntree Reform Trust Ltd is a Company Limited by Guarantee which pays corporation tax, enabling it to fund or undertake political and non-charitable campaigning.

The Trust's wholly owned subsidiary company, JRRT (Properties) Limited holds a small portfolio of commercial retail properties. The other subsidiary, JRRT (Investments) Limited no longer trades.

The JRSST Charitable Trust was endowed by JRRT in 1955. JRSST-CT is independent of JRRT and funds activity that supports its charitable purposes.

### Structure



## **UK Democracy Fund: goals and how we operate**

The UK Democracy Fund is a pooled fund set up within the Joseph Rowntree Reform Trust Ltd (JRRT) to strengthen the integrity and vibrancy of democracy. Its focus is on participation in elections.

The Fund operates on a strictly independent and non-partisan basis and aims to tackle political inequality, improving voter participation and the representativeness of the electorate. It is working for a healthy democracy in which everyone can participate and where political power is shared fairly. The Fund has three overarching goals:

- Enabling everyone to vote. Building support for reforms to ensure a simple, seamless and accessible voting system fit for the 21st Century.
- Extending the franchise. Advocating in support of expanding the franchise for 16 and 17 year-olds and settled UK residents from overseas.
- Increasing participation of everyone in our elections. Making an effort to raise the turnout of low-propensity voters to improve fairness in our democracy.

The Democracy Fund is supported by a committed group of charitable and non-charitable funders and operates on a strictly non-partisan basis. The Fund will not seek to influence the outcome of an election and takes active steps to obviate the risk of any of its activities unintentionally threatening this principle.

JRRT's website lists all contributors to the Fund and all grants made by the Fund.

## **Why the UK Democracy Fund?**

The huge gap in political inequality in the UK is a key factor driving deep-seated inequalities and injustice in the UK today. The gap in democratic and electoral participation results in millions having no say over who represents them or the consequent decisions and policies that shape their lives. Millions are missing from the electoral register – the Electoral Commission estimated that 17% of eligible voters, [up to 9.4 million people](#) – were not registered ahead of the 2019 General Election. These people are [not spread evenly across the population](#). They are more likely to have been born overseas, be from a minority ethnic community, rent their home, and have a lower income and fewer qualifications. They are also predominantly younger: the registration gap for all young people is significant. This has a long-term impact given the importance of democratic engagement as an essential part of a strong and [sustainable intergenerational contract](#).

These figures have remained stubbornly high for decades, and there has been insufficient ambition and momentum to break through this pattern to shape a fairer, more inclusive democracy for all. Whilst there is broad political consensus on the need to improve political participation, initiatives that are intended to respond to this at sufficient scale, such as the government's [Every Voice Matters](#) agenda, appear to

have stalled. Furthermore, [researchers](#) and [parliamentary committees](#) have shared evidence that requirements such as the voter identification measures in the Elections Act 2022 could further exacerbate, rather than address, the core challenges of inclusion.

To address these challenges, there needs to be a step change in how we close the participation gap and create a fairer, more just and inclusive democracy for all. **The time to address this is now:** there is a window of opportunity to plan early to achieve an ambitious shift in electoral participation in the UK at the next general election, which is anticipated to take place by May 2024, but may, of course, happen earlier.

### **UK Democracy Fund strategy**

Having proven its concept in Phase One of the UK Democracy Fund (2019-2021), the Fund has developed an ambitious strategy, grounded in [evidence and learning](#). This provides us with a basis to target interventions where we have higher confidence of impact including a) ambitious interventions likely to achieve scale that use evidence and practice of what works, and systematically experiment to increase participation and b) approaches that reach smaller numbers in harder-to-reach communities but are able to generate useful learning. Together these strands aim to reach the most marginalised and underrepresented demographics, building voice, agency and power through participation in elections.

The outreach, engagement and voter participation efforts will run alongside and strengthen support for efforts to introduce system reforms with lasting sustained impact, such as automatic voter registration systems in the devolved nations or across the UK.

As our activities seek to address political inequality at scale, we focus on large populations that are highly underrepresented. All younger voters remain a priority and, within this demographic, we will be targeting students at university. Private renters, those who move home frequently and those who are vulnerably housed, remain a priority. We will prioritise efforts that reach out to electors from the ethnicities and nationalities least likely to vote: people of African or Caribbean heritage, Commonwealth citizens, people of South Asian heritage, and EU citizens, particularly from racialised minorities. An additional focus on low-income voters and those without educational qualifications opens up space for outreach to organisations that work with these groups, and the opportunity to work with funders with expertise in the area.

The Fund's current [funding framework and funding priorities](#) are based on learning generated from previous grants, commissioned research, multiple sessions with grantees, as well as feedback sought during the [Fund's conference](#) in November 2021, which brought together campaigners, academics, regulators and funders. Many of the grantees consulted are led by people with lived experience from underrepresented groups or strong links into these communities (eg young people, European citizens, migrants or ethnic minorities).

## **Outcomes**

Our key outcomes for the current strategy up to 2024 are:

- Increased registration and turnout of a 'Million More' voters from low-propensity voting groups at the next General Election – achieved through building a 'Million More' campaign, combining individual and collective efforts by a coalition of democracy and civil society organisations and new institutional partners.
- Progress towards the Fund's system reform goals – reform of the registration system and extension of the franchise – weaving these through all our initiatives and pursuing specific opportunities for change including in the devolved nations.
- Progress towards the longer-term goal of establishing a democratic participation evidence centre – through collaboration between researchers and practitioners to further develop the evidence agenda and advance understanding of "what works".

## **Outputs**

To register a million more people from lower-propensity voting groups and progress the Fund's system reform goals, the main outputs of the Fund will be grants funding work in the areas listed below:

- Ambitious non-partisan digital campaigns reaching and engaging key underrepresented communities at scale.
- Ambitious non-partisan campaigns harnessing institutional partnerships, for example with universities and colleges, to design easier routes for people to register and participate.
- Coordination capacity to connect, network and facilitate learning – these may be by demographic group, geography or linked to targeted institutional partners.
- Generation of new insights to reach and engage underrepresented communities, recognising that some communities may require deeper work, and that further experimentation may be needed to develop evidence and practice that works.
- Campaigning for the modernisation of the electoral system and franchise to increase inclusion by addressing the systemic roots of issues.

More detail on each area can be found in the Fund's funding framework [here](#).

## **Additional outputs**

Examples of additional outputs the Fund is planning to deliver include:

- Published research addressing knowledge gaps to inform more efficient and effective interventions by democracy activists and wider civil society (see [here](#) for a list of recent research commissioned and published by the Fund ahead of its November 2021 conference).
- An electoral map, using new 2022 census data and updated registration data, to show where low-propensity voting groups are concentrated and not registered to enable better geographical targeting and achieve wider use across civil society and the funding community.
- Partnerships with key institutions (eg universities, trade unions, mosques, social media companies) and appropriate resources to support voter registration of respective target audiences.
- Capacity support interventions co-designed with grantees and informed by results of digital testing at local elections in local authority areas with high drop off in voter registration numbers.
- Data access research linked to a programme of advocacy to influence regulators to take forward research recommendations, alongside a tool for grantees and support for measuring impact on participation at the General Election.
- Case studies from three South Asian community pilots with an assessment of replicable learning for other grassroots networks with longer-term potential to reach scale via a "mass localism" model. These may be supplemented by further community-based projects linking the Fund's voter participation work to partners' initiatives to strengthen community organising capacity.

## **Head of UK Democracy Fund: Job Description**

### **Job purpose**

To develop, manage and deliver the UK Democracy Fund strategy to register and turnout a million people from low-voting groups at the next General Election, build support for a modern voting system and franchise reform. This will be achieved by building institutional and funding partnerships, grant making, commissioning research and campaign initiatives, mobilising civil society support, and developing learning and evidence on "what works".

**Salary:** £56,000-65,000, two-year contract

**Reports to:** Chief Executive.

## **Responsibilities**

- develop and implement the strategy and plan to register and turnout a million voters from low-voting groups at the next General Election, building a 'Million More' campaign, to mobilise and combine individual and collective efforts by democracy and civil society organisations and new institutional partners. See the funding framework [here](#).
- build partnerships with key institutions (universities, mosques, social media, civil society organisations working with key demographic groups) to catalyse scaling up of voter participation activity ahead of the General Election.
- progress the Fund's advocacy objectives, building support for franchise reform and modernising the voting system, funding campaigning, mobilisation and engagement, and pursuing opportunities for change including in the devolved nations.
- progress the longer-term goal of establishing a democratic participation evidence centre – cultivating collaboration between researchers and practitioners to further develop the evidence agenda, and commission priority research to advance understanding of barriers to participation by low-voting groups and learning about “what works”.
- build new funding partnerships and manage existing funder relations, organising meetings of the Fund's contributors including agendas, quarterly updates and annual reporting.
- ensure that the Board of JRRT is supported to make strategic decisions and facilitate the work of the Project Board.
- oversee the work of the Programme Manager, Grants and Learning, to develop the grants portfolio, support applicants and assess and review applications based on the Fund's learning and manage the work of consultants taking forward specific projects for the Fund.
- ensure plan milestones are set and met and manage the budget effectively.
- ensure that the Fund complies with electoral and charity law and operates on a non-partisan basis.
- stay abreast of political and policy developments in the Fund's areas of interest and be alert to new developments, ideas, movements, organisations and people.

## **Person specification**

This is a senior role that demands a wide range of skills and experience. These are most likely to be drawn from a mix of senior programme management, campaigning, policy, influencing, grant-making, and fundraising roles.

We are looking for someone who shows:

1. Significant experience achieving impact through campaigning, mobilisation or engagement; policy and influencing; or grant making.
2. Experience of managing complex projects, able to plan and drive forward the scale and mix of grant making, campaign initiatives, research commissioning, convening, outreach, capacity building and influencing required to achieve the Fund's objectives<sup>1</sup>.
3. Experience of building relationships with senior stakeholders and partners. Highly developed ability to develop and maintain networks and build productive partnerships.
4. A good understanding of UK democracy, in particular elections – the intricacies of the UK voting system and activities that increase voter participation – with a network of relevant contacts, and ability to command respect in the democracy field.
5. Excellent strategic thinking and clear planning, able to turn long-term commitment to a goal into practical, immediate steps and effective campaigns.
6. The ability to make good decisions and to spot new opportunities combined with resilience, good political instincts and a flexible approach.
7. A clear, persuasive and compelling communicator. Excellent writing, speaking and listening skills at every level.
8. Extremely well organised, managing competing priorities, able to deliver to deadline, with good IT skills, handling logistics and organising meetings while working remotely much of the time (unless based near York).
9. Experience managing experienced consultants and matrix management of posts (Programme Manager, Grants and Learning)
10. Understanding of approaches to evaluation and learning and use of data to inform assessments of campaign effectiveness
11. Commitment to working flexibly and collaboratively with team members, Directors, grantees and external partners.
12. Demonstrate commitment to the Trust's liberal and Quaker values, to equal opportunities and democratic reform objectives.

The role involves outreach and engagement with politically under-represented demographic groups. Candidates with lived experience of, or connections to, these groups are encouraged to apply.

Applicants will need permission to live and work in the UK.

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<sup>1</sup> On the ground experience campaigning/administering elections would be highly desirable as would experience of building in depth knowledge of systems and policy in new areas.

## Terms and conditions

- Initial two-year contract
- Full time
- Salary £56,000-65,000 depending on skills and experience
- Open to discussing options for flexible working arrangements
- Hybrid working – mainly remote/home-based (unless live near York) with a minimum level of travel to York to work with the team and Board required
- Leave 25 days plus Bank Holidays (and three days office closure at Christmas)
- Pension 10% employer contribution, 5% employee contribution, salary sacrifice option and life assurance
- On-site parking in York
- Professional subscription fees
- The job may require some UK travel

## Application process

Send the following documents by email to [info@jrrt.org.uk](mailto:info@jrrt.org.uk) with 'Head of UK Democracy Fund application' in the subject line of your email:

- Supporting statement drawing out how your skills and experience would contribute to this role (two sides A4 max)
- CV specifying qualifications, education and relevant experience
- [Personal details form](#)
- [Diversity monitoring form](#)

The deadline for applications is **midday on Wednesday 17 August 2022**

Applicants are strongly encouraged to apply early as we may schedule rolling interviews before the final closing date.

First interviews will be held on **Thursday 25 August** with second interviews on **Wednesday 31 August**.