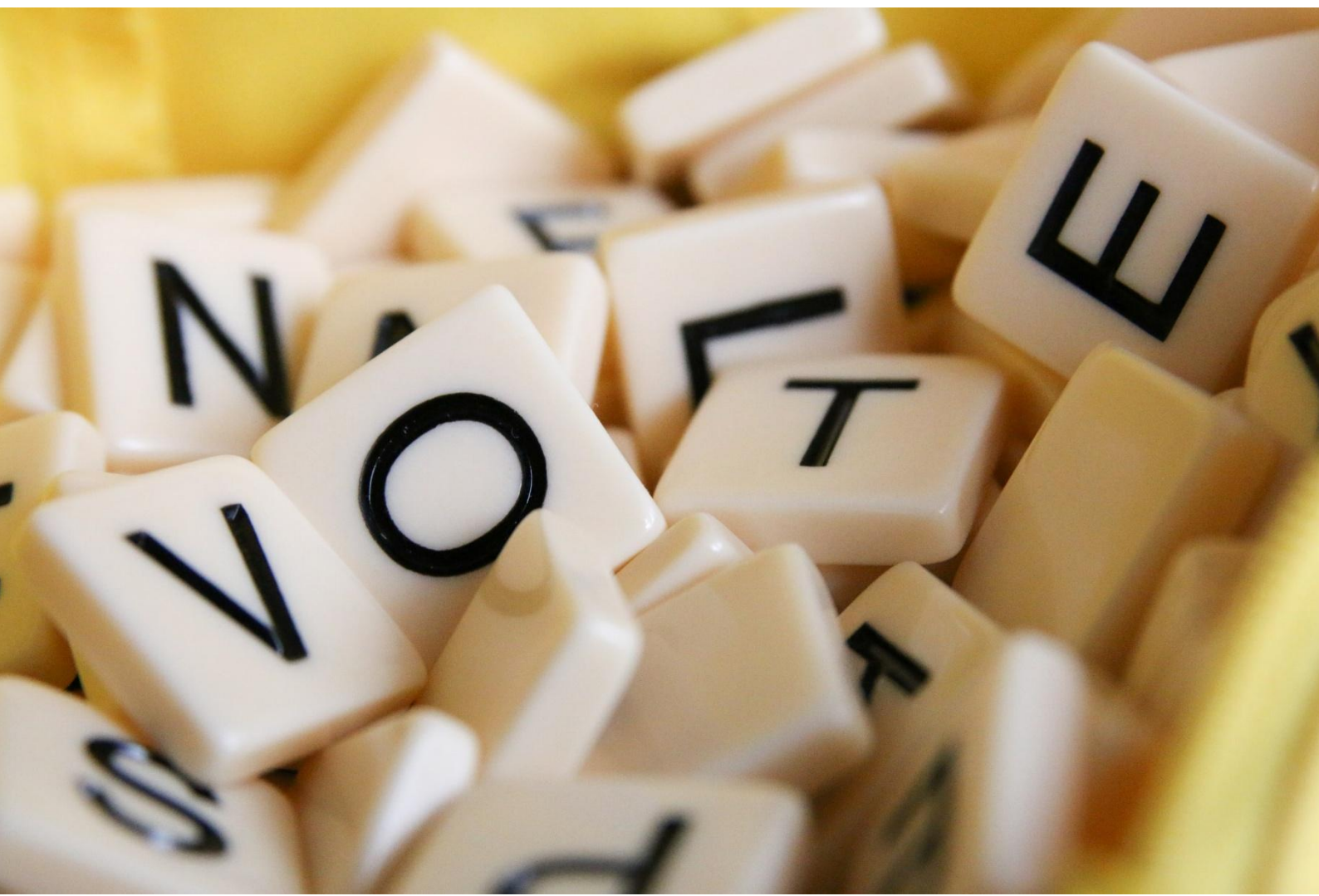


# Chair

## JRSST-CT

*Recruitment information pack*

JRSST Charitable Trust



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# Welcome

## Democracy grant-making trusts JRSST Charitable Trust and the UK Democracy Fund



Thank you for your interest in the role of Chair of JRSST Charitable Trust (JRSST-CT), a democracy grant-making Trust set up in 1955 by the [Joseph Rowntree Reform Trust](#) (JRRT).

It has broad charitable purposes, operating in line with the Quaker and liberal values of JRRT founder, Joseph Rowntree.

JRSST-CT has just agreed on a bold new strategy to resource a programme of work to address the [political inequality](#) which fuels low trust in democracy, disengagement with politics, and the sense that [ordinary people have too little influence](#).

Central to addressing this is the work of the [UK Democracy Fund](#) which works to engage the millions of citizens who do not register or vote – predominantly young, from racialised and minoritised ethnicities, born overseas, renting their homes or living on low incomes – and advocates for system reform that makes voting easier.

JRSST-CT's new strategy, agreed in March 2025 aims to:

- Spend out the Trust's endowment within 10 years, releasing additional funds for grant making on voter engagement, democracy education, participation and diversity of representation.
- Host the [UK Democracy Fund](#), a pooled fund bringing together Trusts and Foundations committed to building a healthy democracy in which everyone can participate and where political power is shared fairly.

Together, the Trust and Fund expect to generate c. £1m pa income, of which c.75% is likely to be spent on grants and projects.

This is an exciting new and final phase for the Trust as it focuses its funding at a time when revitalising democracy and rebalancing power for the wellbeing of society are urgent goals.

If you want to play a role in strengthening the influence of millions of people who feel their needs are unmet and voices unheard, we hope you will consider this wonderful opportunity to join the Board and the small but dedicated Trust staff team.

We look forward to hearing from you.

**Andrew Neal**  
Chair



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# About JRSST Charitable Trust

## Governance

JRSST-CT was set up by the Joseph Rowntree Reform Trust Ltd (JRRT) in 1955 with broad charitable purposes. Operating in line with the Quaker and liberal values of our founder, Joseph Rowntree, JRSST-CT's registered activity with the Charity Commission is: "undertaking or supporting work which relates specifically to supporting the development of an increasingly democratic and socially just society in the United Kingdom".

JRSST-CT's grant making has supported a range of charitable purposes, including the advancement of education and of citizenship. In recent years, its grant making has included work on informed and engaged citizens, including local news deserts and democratic education; open and accountable government; women in politics; and abuse of elected representatives.

JRSST-CT is completely independent of JRRT, and funds activity that supports its charitable purposes, which has included advancing understanding of citizenship, human rights, equality and participation in democracy, and the role of the media. As a "[connected charity](#)" to JRRT, it is governed in line with Charity Commission guidance, including the requirement to operate independently. JRSST-CT benefits from renting out part of its building to, JRRT and sharing staff, expertise and networks JRRT has established. A key role for Trustees is to ensure that the relationship, set out in a Memorandum of Understanding, is always in the Charitable Trust's interests.

## Assets

JRSST-CT was endowed by JRRT and has an equity portfolio currently worth approximately £4.6m. The Trust's investments are made according to its Ethical Investment Policy, which puts an emphasis on sustainability that aims to maximise financial returns while trying to effect positive outcomes for people and the planet. Grant commitments of £182k were made in 2024 (2023: £256k). This will increase substantially following the commitment to spending down. JRSST-CT has shared ownership of the Garden House in York.

## UK Democracy Fund

JRSST-CT plans to take on hosting of the [UK Democracy Fund](#) later this year. The Fund was established by JRRT in 2019 and brings together a committed set of charitable and non-charitable funders focused around three broad 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 right to vote: 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.

Grantees of the Fund achieved an estimated 750,000 voter registrations, predominantly young people, renters and people from minoritised ethnicities, ahead of the 2024 General Election. In its next phase, the immediate focus will be to secure system changes that will transform voter participation, including Votes at 16 and Automatic Voter Registration.

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# Role description

## **Background**

The Board currently consists of four Trustees who are also Directors of JRRT and four Trustees who are not connected with JRRT. Two Trustees are standing down at the end of their terms in October 2025, and we are seeking fresh perspectives to join the Board in their place and for a new Chair to take forward the strategy agreed in March and manage the changing governance.

## **The Role**

### **Key responsibilities:**

- To take a lead in ensuring that good governance is maintained within the Trust, together with the values and ethical standards that we seek to uphold, and that the Trust operates within its charitable purposes, manages conflicts of interest, including the 'connected charity' relationship and provides clear strategic direction.
- To support an inclusive culture, ensuring that all Trustees are able to make a positive contribution; to support the induction and development of new Trustees and to ensure that Board members conduct themselves with integrity.
- To ensure that Trustees receive the information they need to take decisions both long term (strategy) and short term (grants etc) and to monitor progress and key risks, providing the appropriate balance of challenge and support.
- To plan and Chair Board meetings, working with the Chief Executive to set the agenda and implement actions in a timely manner.
- To provide supervision and support to the Chief Executive to ensure they are carrying out their duties effectively and appropriately, and to provide a focal point for business between meetings where the office team requires input.
- To represent JRSST-CT at appropriate events, meetings, or external functions.

This job description is not an exhaustive list of duties and responsibilities but indicates the key responsibilities for the role.

## **Terms of Office**

Trustees will be appointed for an initial three-year term with the possibility of extension for a second three-year term.

## **Expenses and remuneration**

Reasonable expenses (including for travel to Board meetings and overnight accommodation where required) are paid, but the role itself is without remuneration.



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## **Time commitment**

- The time required is estimated to be a combination of 12-15 days a year.
- Attending four Board meetings annually, including preparation/reading time beforehand of Board papers and applications for grants.
- Board meetings are likely to be held alternately online and in person in York. They are typically 2-3 hours in duration, usually including a Board dinner the evening of or the evening before an in-person Board meeting.
- Attending occasional strategy/training workshops as required, or optional attendance at events, e.g. grantee reception, webinars.
- Considering occasional small grant applications between Board meetings.
- Preparatory time ahead of Board meetings to ensure strategy and good governance is maintained.
- To support the induction, development and engagement of Trustees.
- To represent JRSST-CT at external events as required (occasional and largely discretionary).



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# Person specification

## **Essential**

### **Commitment to mission**

- A deep commitment to democratic reform, political inequality and a diverse and inclusive democracy.
- Ability to demonstrate interest in the issues and campaigning. Well informed with the ability to leverage networks that support these interests.

### **Leadership and Governance**

- Demonstrated experience of chairing boards or committees, with a strong understanding of governance in the voluntary sector.
- Ability to lead and inspire the Board and senior leadership team, ensuring accountability and effective decision-making.
- Ability to lead the Board in shaping and overseeing the delivery of the Charity's strategic objectives. Understanding financial oversight, risk management, and sustainability in a charitable context.

### **Communication and Interpersonal Skills**

- Excellent facilitation, listening, and influencing skills, with the ability to build consensus.
- Ability to work effectively with a diverse range of people, ensuring an inclusive culture and collaborative approach.
- Networking and relationship management skills to engage stakeholders, donors, partners, and grantees.

### **Commitment**

- Ability to devote the necessary time to prepare and participate actively and to attend four Board meetings a year, at least two in York.

## **Desirable**

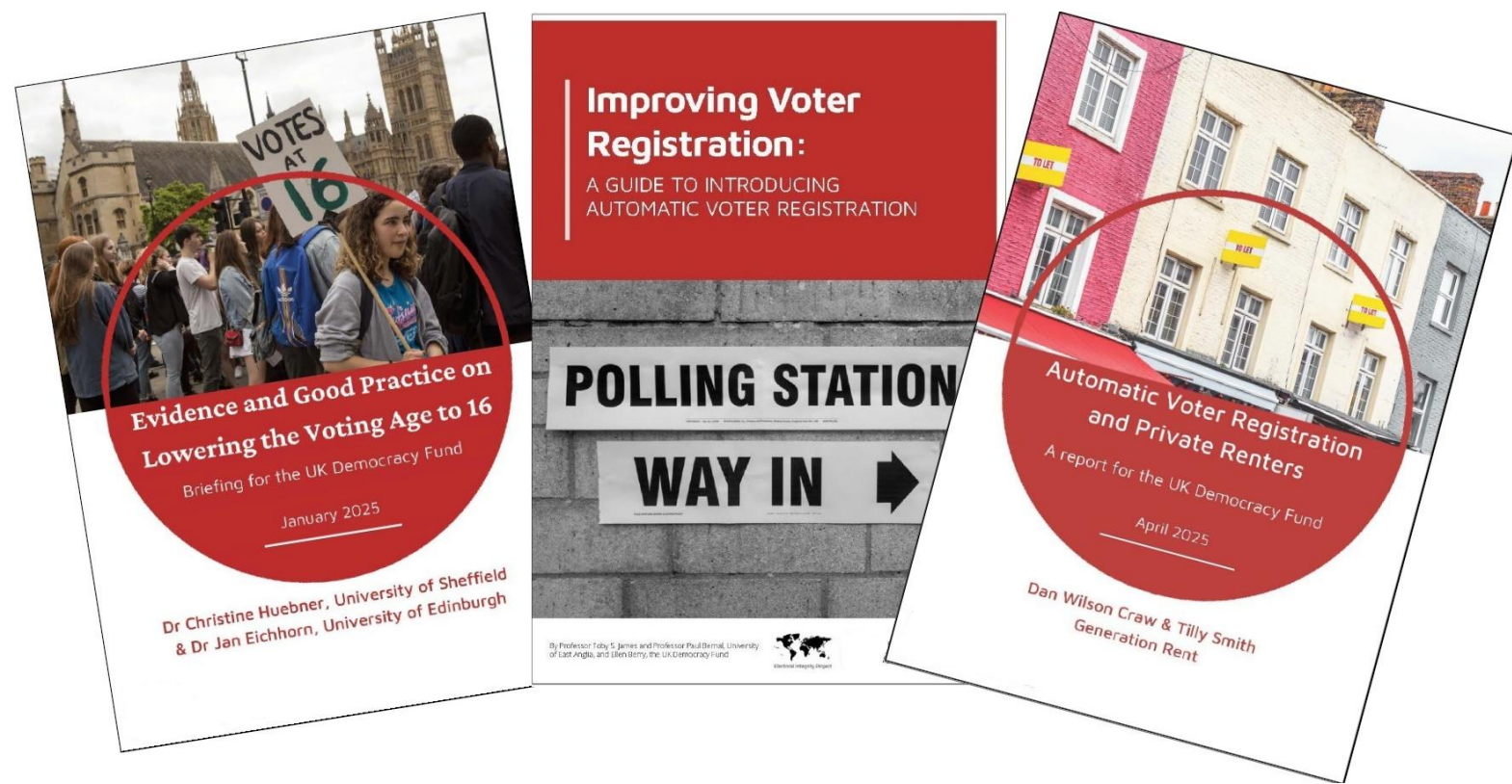
- Knowledge of the democracy issues the Trust works on.
- Experience of working with democratically disengaged demographics and understanding of barriers to participation.
- Understanding endowment management, in particular, specific challenges related to spending down.
- Knowledge/experience of grant making, national campaigning (including for legislative change), policy research, learning, investments, and fundraising from Trusts and Foundations.
- Understanding the issues facing small voluntary organisations.

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## **Diversity**

- We are actively looking to take the opportunity to diversify our Board and are actively seeking applications from individuals from diverse and underrepresented backgrounds and experiences.
- Experience of working with democratically disengaged demographics (including minoritised ethnicity communities, young people, migrants, people with disabilities and low-income communities) and understanding of barriers to participation would be valuable contributions to the Board.

More information about the role and responsibilities of Trustees can be found on the [Charity Commission website](#) in *The Essential Trustee*.





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## How to apply

Peridot is supporting JRSST-CT on this recruitment campaign. We are an executive search recruitment business transforming leadership and inspiring change with organisations that have a social purpose.

**To formally apply**, please submit a CV and a supporting statement letter that clearly outlines your suitability for the role against the criteria, including your interest and motivation in applying. As a guide, ideally this should be around four pages total (two sides of A4, each), and we kindly ask you to combine these into one document and in MS Word format.

If successfully offered the position, you will be required to complete a declaration on Trustee eligibility. You may read more on automatic disqualification rules for charity trustees [here](#).

**Please send your application to:** [response@peridotpartners.co.uk](mailto:response@peridotpartners.co.uk)  
(ensure to insert "Application: JRSST-CT, Chair" into the subject field)

For an informal conversation about this opportunity, you can email our advising consultant at Peridot Partners to arrange a call: James Hunt | [james@peridotpartners.co.uk](mailto:james@peridotpartners.co.uk) | 07711 405444

## Recruitment timetable

<b>Closing date:</b>	9am, Tuesday 26 <sup>th</sup> August 2025
<b>Candidates informed of outcome:</b>	By COB, Thursday 4 <sup>th</sup> September 2025
<b>Interviews (in person - London):</b>	Tuesday 9 <sup>th</sup> September 2025

If you are successfully appointed, below are the immediate upcoming Board meeting dates to note:

Confirmed - Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2025 | Board and legal training, in York

Provisional - Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> (afternoon) & Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> December 2025 (all day) | Board anti-racism training, in York

### Committed to promoting equality and diversity

As a sector-leading executive search consultancy, we know the importance of creating recruitment processes that are fair, inclusive, and free from bias. We are committed to promoting equality and diversity and developing a process that values differences. If you have a disability that meets the definition set out in the Equality Act 2010 and can show that you meet the 'essential' criteria described in the person specification, please let James know. If you require any job information in an alternative format (e.g. large print), please contact Peridot. Please also let us know if you would like to submit your application in an alternative format. Recruitment selection processes are based on evidence of competence stated in the person specification and in relation to our values.

### Equal Opportunities Monitoring

Peridot and JRSST-CT are committed to promoting equality and diversity. To help us raise awareness and support a culture that is diverse and recognises and develops the potential of all, we need to appreciate the profile of candidates who apply for positions. We will send you an equality monitoring survey at the point of receiving your application and at the time of placement. This ensures that our processes remain inclusive and equitable throughout and provides us with important data to help us showcase our impact.

The information will be treated confidentially and anonymously and will help us to support our commitment to fair recruitment practice. All information provided will be held in the strictest confidence and will not be shared with anyone, in line with the new Data Protection Act 2018 launched on 25 May 2018. The information provided does not form part of the decision-making process and will not affect your application. [Learn more about why we collect this data here](#).

### Data Processing, Protection and Privacy Policy

By completing the form to view, or if you have access to this page from an email invitation, Peridot Partners will have processed your personal information. For more information about Peridot Partners' data processing activities and your rights, please read our [Privacy Policy](#).