



Grants Manager: Information pack

Thank you for your interest in this new role at the JRSST Charitable Trust (JRSST-CT).

About JRSST Charitable Trust

JRSST-CT is an independent democracy-focused grant-making charity connected to the Joseph Rowntree Reform Trust. We fund work that supports inclusive political participation, civic education, and reform, with a strong focus on the people who are most excluded from democratic power, such as young people, migrants, renters, and people from racialised and minoritised backgrounds.

In 2025, we committed to spending down our £4.6m endowment over 10 years to accelerate progress on political inclusion and voter participation. By the end of 2025, we plan to host the UK Democracy Fund, a pooled fund that works for a democracy in which everyone can participate, and to make the UK's voting system fairer, more accessible, and fit for the 21st century.

History

JRSST-CT was set up by the [Joseph Rowntree Reform Trust Ltd](#) (JRRT) in 1955 with broad charitable purposes. 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".

JRRT's founder [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.

JRSST-CT 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 affect positive outcomes for people and the planet.

JRSST-CT's new strategy

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.

The [UK Democracy 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.

The Fund's work to date has been very successful, with grantees of the Fund achieving an estimated 750,000 voter registrations, predominantly young people, renters and people from minoritised ethnicities, ahead of the 2024 General Election. More information can be found in our [independent evaluation](#).

In its next phase, the Fund will respond to the opportunity of the forthcoming Elections Bill, to secure system changes that will transform voter participation, including Votes at 16 and Automatic Voter Registration. This builds on the Fund's impact in these areas in recent years, creating real opportunity to see change by the next General Election.

Our Board and staff team

The Trust is led by a voluntary Board of eight Trustees, some of whom are also Directors of JRRT.

This role will join a small team, with one other dedicated member of staff (Head of UK Democracy Fund, who will line manage this role) and support from JRSST-CT staff including Chief Executive (with overall responsibility for JRSST-CT), Finance Manager and Administrator.

Grants Manager: Job description

Role: Permanent

Salary: £45–50,000

Reports to: Head of UK Democracy Fund

Job purpose:

Support JRSST-CT and the UK Democracy Fund to achieve their aims of tackling political inequality and expanding democratic participation. through developing and managing a portfolio of grants, and communication of our work to key stakeholders.

Responsibilities:

- Assess and manage the grant portfolio for the UK Democracy Fund and JRSST-CT, in support of the strategy, to include:
 - Using insight and evidence to provide support to applicants and to assess applications to the Board, their likelihood of success and fit with charitable purposes.
 - Maximising learning across the grant portfolio, assessing grant reports, creating opportunities for grantees to share learning and from time-to-time commissioning external evaluation.
 - Outreach to source new applicants and build a pipeline, ensuring a diverse portfolio of grants supports the Trust's ambition to increase funding to racialised and minoritised communities.
- Lead development of JRSST-CT's written communications, including website, newsletter copy, reporting to Board and funders, copy for fundraising, and case studies.
- Keep up to date with developments relevant to the Trust's work and maintain and improve personal competence through continuous professional development.
- To work flexibly alongside other members of the team and take on reasonable tasks as appropriate over and above those set out above.
- Apply Trust policies as determined by charity, electoral and other legal requirements as well as good grant-making practice.
- To act as a focal point for dissemination of information and respond to enquiries about the Trust's work.
- Represent, and be an effective ambassador for, the Trust externally.
- To develop and maintain partnerships with key stakeholders, including civil society organisations, academics, statutory bodies and civil servants.

Person specification:

- A demonstrable ability to turn strategy into a work plan and deliver it.
- Ability to design, develop, implement and manage a grant giving programme (which may or may not be demonstrated through grant management experience).
- Good project management skills, ability to manage multiple streams of activity simultaneously.
- Demonstrable understanding of how change is made through campaigns and policy influencing.
- Excellent writing skills with the ability to communicate clearly and effectively to internal and external audiences.
- Desk research skills and the ability to spot gaps in own knowledge and bring in the appropriate support or advice.
- Understanding barriers to participation or experience working with people often excluded from democracy, including young people, minoritised and racialised communities, migrants, disabled people and people on low income.
- A robust analytical approach combined with an instinct for a good campaign and when to take a risk on a new initiative.
- Ability to provide clear advice and support, while effectively managing and evaluating grantee performance.
- A track record of developing and maintaining relationships with a range of stakeholders, working flexibly and collaboratively with team members, Trustees, grantees and partners.
- Experience of organising meetings, seminars and public events.
- Ability and motivation to deliver high-quality work to deadline with minimum supervision.
- IT literate with good experience of MS Office and other relevant IT systems as appropriate for the role.
- A deep commitment to democratic reform, political inequality and an inclusive democracy and a sound grasp of UK political context, institutions, and processes including elections.

Diversity

The role involves outreach and engagement with politically under-represented demographic groups (including racialised and minoritised ethnicities, young people, migrants, people with disabilities or on low-income). Candidates with lived experience of, connections to, and understanding of barriers to participation are actively encouraged to apply

Terms and conditions

- Permanent contract
- Salary £45,000–50,000 depending on skills and experience. Our policy is generally to recruit towards the lower end of the scale.
- We are open to discussing flexible working arrangements.
- Hybrid working either remote/home-based with an agreed frequency of travel to York or based in the York office. Occasional co-working with the Head of the UK Democracy Fund in London can be arranged.
- 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 recruitment@jrtr.org.uk with 'Grants Manager 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](#) (these will be anonymised and kept separately from other application documents)

The deadline for applications is **midday on Monday 29 September 2025**.

Interviews will be held on Zoom on **Tuesday 14 October 2025**.