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**Electoral Reform Society**

**LAKEMAN FELLOW**

**The Electoral Reform Society (ERS) is looking to employ a new Lakeman Fellow, as part of the Lakeman Fellowship for Diversity in Politics, on a one-year fixed term (part-time) contract to join our London office from November 2021.**

**The Lakeman Fellowship for Diversity in Politics** is a unique work and training opportunity for those under-represented in UK politics. This year long paid placement aims to provide tailored support to someone who has a passion for politics, particularly those from ethnic minority and working-class backgrounds.

Politics needs opening up (1/5 of MPs attended Oxbridge compared to 1% of the general public). The Lakeman Fellowship is a step towards improving diversity, democracy and personal development and an opportunity for you to learn about working in politics whether that’s talking to politicians, writing articles, or organising events.

No CV or qualifications are needed – just a drive to learn. If you think politics is ‘not for people like me’, this opportunity is probably for you.

### **Who is Enid Lakeman?** The post is named after our legendary former Research Secretary and later Director, Enid Lakeman, who worked for the Society from 1946 to 1980. She dedicated her life to research on the cause of fair votes – and came to dominate the history of the Society in the twentieth century.

She was eventually awarded an OBE for her work – and twice went to Ireland to [successfully defend proportional representation](https://www.electoral-reform.org.uk/50-years-since-fair-votes-defence-in-ireland/) when it came under attack from supporters of the old system. Ireland’s system of proportional representation is now seen as a core part of their democracy, in part thanks to her work.

**BACKGROUND**

**The Electoral Reform Society is the UK’s leading voice for democratic reform.**

We operate on a simple premise - that politics can be better than it is.

We work with everyone – from political parties, civil society groups and academics to our own members and supporters and the wider public – to campaign for a better democracy in the UK.

Our vision is of a democracy fit for the 21st century, where every voice is heard, every vote is valued equally, and every citizen is empowered to take part. We make the case for lasting political reforms, we seek to embed democracy into the heart of public debate, and we foster the democratic spaces which encourage active citizenship.

The ERS is ambitious about far-reaching changes to the way politics works in Britain, working across our three offices in London, Cardiff and Edinburgh to build a better democracy.

**Our Goals**

1. For public authorities in the UK to be **elected by proportional representation**, specifically by the Single Transferable Vote in multi-member constituencies.

1. For the democratic institutions of the UK, its nations and regions and other constituent parts to work in ways that **foster trust, engagement, and power**

**Our Culture**

In all our work, the ERS seeks to be:

1. **Honest** – We aim to build relationships based on trust, to learn from our successes and mistakes, and to operate with integrity.
2. **Responsible** – We aim to ensure all of our work is rooted in evidence and firm foundations.
3. **Broadminded** – We will work across the spectrum to help build a better democracy in the UK, building coalitions, being innovative, and listening to others. The ERS is part of a proud movement for political equality.

**The ERS’ 2021-2024 Strategy**

Over the past five years, the ERS has been pivotal in working to expand democracy across the UK – from successfully campaigning for councils to be able to use the Single Transferable Vote in Wales, to playing a key part in the push for citizens’ assemblies in Scotland and across England, to introducing ‘virtual parliament’ proceedings when the pandemic struck.

Our new strategy builds on this – while recognising the risk of ‘democratic backsliding’, and the need to stand up to protect and expand our existing political freedoms.

Constitutional issues are firmly part of today’s political debate, and the UK government is pushing ahead with plans that run contrary to the ERS’ vision – including rolling back preferential voting for mayors, imposing mandatory voter ID, and undermining the independent Electoral Commission.

Right now, disillusionment, disengagement, and distrust are the words most often associated with people’s relationship to representative politics. The ERS understands that this is enabled by a voting system which hands one party undue power. Westminster’s centralised system is holding this country back.

As we come out of the pandemic, the ERS is working to build coalitions for change this, and reform politics at every level. In the next three years, the ERS will work to increase the salience of vital political reforms – to raise them up the agenda by linking them to the issues people face in their daily lives.

In summer 2021, the ERS will launch a programme of work based on our new strategy for the next three years.We will push for cross-party agreements on proportional representation and wider reform, working within and outside of parties.

**Our route to reform – 2021-2024**

1. **Build an effective network of groups and organisations, including political parties, who are supportive of democratic reform**
2. **Persuade one of the two major parties to back proportional representation.** This is most likely to be the Labour party, but we will continue to work with Conservatives
3. **Increase the salience of our policies for political reform among influential groups of voters** – in other words, to make proportional representation and democracy a vote-winner
4. **Push democratic Institutions to change and innovate to increase long term citizen support and trust.** We aim to increase the use of Citizens’ Assemblies, secure cross-party agreement on Lords reform, and build consensus around principles for devolution across the UK

In all of this, we will work in accordance with our values of equality, freedom and fairness.

The ERS has a significant media profile as a respected and long-standing organisation which produces high-quality commentary, research and materials. We are accountable to our members, elected council and the wider democracy movement.

**EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES**

The ERS is committed to equal opportunities and to encouraging diversity amongst our workforce. We are particularly keen to hear from interested individuals from under-represented communities and we would encourage candidates from all backgrounds to apply for this role. This includes but is not limited to Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) and disabled candidates as BAME people and disabled people are currently underrepresented in our staff.

We pride ourselves on being a flexible employer, with generous arrangements for Time Off in Lieu, working from home and holiday.

Names are removed from applications to ensure the process is as fair and robust as possible.

**JOB DESCRIPTION**

**Job title: Lakeman Fellow**

**Contract: Fixed term one-year, part-time (21 hours per week)**

**Grade: 1 (Assistant)**

**Reporting to: Public Affairs and Campaigns Officer**

**Location:** ERS’ main office is in Central London and we anticipate this post being based mainly there (subject to covid regulations), however we encourage applications from all parts of the UK. Ideally the role will be two days a week in office and one day a week working from home.

**Main duties and responsibilities:**

**PUBLIC AFFAIRS**

**Duties including:**

* Supporting new and existing ERS campaign initiatives across a variety of offices
* Working to raise the profile and understanding of ERS research and reports with policymakers
* Updating public affairs database by conducting research and analysis
* Preparing communications supporting public affairs strategy (i.e blogs)
* Participate in Campaign meetings and attend external events
* Assisting Public Affairs Officer to build and maintain relationships with parliamentarians and stakeholders
* Monitoring parliamentary activity and engaging with parliamentary campaigns, including APPG for Electoral Reform.

**EVENTS/campaigns**

**Duties including:**

* Help deliver the Society’s events programme, including conferences, ERS Westminster reception, launch events, seminars and member gatherings.
* When required, assist colleagues with the planning and delivery of Society events in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.
* Working with the Membership Officer, to organise and deliver the end of year celebration of the work of the Lakeman Fellow.

**ADMINISTRATIVE/ORGANISATIONAL ROLE**

**Duties including:**

* Undertake administrative tasks as required, including supporting campaigns, research, policy operations and media.
* Answer incoming calls to the Society and help colleagues deal with any forms of correspondence that come into the office as required.
* Take notes of weekly team and project meetings, and of quarterly staff meetings and circulate to colleagues in a prompt fashion.

**DIGITAL COMMUNICATION/MEMBERSHIP**

* Write a monthly email update outlining the ongoing of the Lakeman Fellow to send to the sponsors of the scheme. Research, compose and publish blogs on other topics as required and maintain the Lakeman Fellow social media channels.
* Assist the Operations and Fundraising Officer in their ongoing fundraising efforts to ensure the Fellowship continues to be a self-sustaining position in future years.
* Work with colleagues to communicate, market and promote ERS events t our members and supporters through our email bulletins and social media channels, creating and posting content for the specific Lakeman Fellow accounts.

**RESEARCH/POLICY/PROJECTS**

* Contribute to the intellectual capital and development of the ERS via team meetings, blogs, staff meetings and planning/away days and by supporting colleagues as required.
* Assist colleagues in the ERS Research Team as required, on projects such as:
* - Analysis of the 2021 local election results  
  - The [Single Transferable Vote](https://www.electoral-reform.org.uk/voting-systems/types-of-voting-system/single-transferable-vote/) – building the evidence base for fair votes in Westminster  
  - The [inevitable wrong winners](https://www.electoral-reform.org.uk/when-getting-the-most-votes-isnt-enough-englands-2018-local-elections/) and [uncontested seats](https://www.electoral-reform.org.uk/election-cancelled/) in the 2019 local elections  
  - The bloated state of Britain’s unelected House of Lords

**PERSON SPECIFICATION**

The Enid Lakeman Fellowship is open to everyone; therefore we are not looking for specific background or employment experience in any areas.

However, we are looking for the successful applicant to be able demonstrate their abilities or track record in all essential criteria below.

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| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Essential** | **Desirable** |
| Knowledge | Understanding of the issues on which the ERS campaigns  Understanding and commitment to equal opportunities and diversity | Knowledge of the case for electoral reform  Knowledge of British democracy and politics |
| Skills / qualifications | Good team working skills, including understanding the role and demands of working with others in a small team and a flexible approach to collaborative working  Excellent organisation and time keeping skills  Strong communication skills  Ability to multi-task and work on a range of events and projects at any one time  Ability to work under own initiative  Flexibility, patience, reliability and the ability to cope with changing priorities  Problem solving skills  Good eye for detail  Proficient in relevant IT packages including Microsoft Office |  |

**Outline terms of employment**

**Hours:** 21 hours per week (3 days), with the potential for occasional weekend and evening work

**Holidays:** 15 days (pro-rata’d) plus statutory days

**Pension:** 8% employer contribution

**Salary:**  £12,451 plus £2,100 London Weighting Allowance.

(Full-time equivalent (35 hours per week) to £20,751 plus £3,500 LWA).

**Contract:** **Fixed term one-year, 21 hours per week.**

The ERS operates a flexible working policy, with core hours between 10.00-12.00 and 14.00-16.00. Time off in lieu (TOIL) may be taken by arrangement. Some weekend and evening work may be necessary. The ERS is fully supportive of its staff working from home and will ensure that suitable equipment is available for all staff.

The holder of this position is entitled to 15 days paid leave in addition to statutory holiday. Other benefits include a TFL season ticket loan and childcare vouchers.

If you have any queries about this role, please contact [ers@electoral-reform.org.uk](mailto:ers@electoral-reform.org.uk)

**Electoral Reform Society**

**APPLICATION FOR THE POST OF**

**LAKEMAN FELLOW**

Please complete this form and submit via email to [ers@electoral-reform.org.uk](mailto:ers@electoral-reform.org.uk). All applications will receive acknowledgement of their receipt.

The closing date for the receipt of applications is 5pm 10th October

Interviews will take place week via Zoom video call 25th October

**PERSONAL DETAILS**

Surname:

First names:

Address:

Email:

**Telephone number:**

Daytime: Evening:

Do you require a work permit? Yes / No (please delete as appropriate)

**Why do you want this job?**

|  |
| --- |
| Please tell us below why you want this particular job and why you believe you have the skills and experience to do it. Please address the criteria set out in the Person Specification in particular. You may use a continuation sheet if necessary, but you should **not use more than 500 words**. |

**Essay Question**

|  |
| --- |
| Please, in your own words, complete the following task:  **Write to Andrew Bowie MP to make a compelling case for votes at 16, highlighting the political and democratic benefits**.  You may use a continuation sheet if necessary, **but do** **not use more than 500 words** and you may not use charts or diagrams. |

**Where did you hear of this vacancy?**

|  |
| --- |
|  |

**Referees**

Please give names of two referees who know you and can assess your abilities and work (Referees will not be contacted without your consent)

|  |
| --- |
| Name:  Position:  Address:  Email:  Telephone no.:  Capacity in which the referee has known you: |

|  |
| --- |
| Name:  Position:  Address:  Email:  Telephone no.:  Capacity in which the referee has known you: |

**ELECTORAL REFORM SOCIETY**

**EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES MONITORING FORM**

The Electoral Reform Society is an equal opportunities employer and monitors our recruitment procedures to ensure best practice is being followed.

We will separate this part of the form from the application form. It will not form part of the selection process.

Please tick the appropriate boxes:

**Gender**

Male (including trans male)    
Female (including trans female)    
Non-binary   
Prefer not to say   
  
If you are undergoing the process of gender reassignment, please tick the box that applies to your future gender.

**What age group do you belong to?**

18-24   
25-34   
35-44    
45-54    
Over 55    
Prefer not to say

**How would you describe your sexuality?**

Bisexual   
Heterosexual/straight    
Gay man    
Gay woman/lesbian    
Other (please describe)         
Prefer not to say

**Do you consider that you have a disability?**

No    
Yes   
Prefer not to say

**Do you have a disability as defined by the Disability Discrimination Act?**

No    
Yes    
I don't know    
Prefer not to say

**Do you consider that you have a long-term health problem?**

No    
Yes   
Prefer not to say

**How would you describe your ethnic origin?**

Arab / Arab British   
Asian/ Asian British – Bangladeshi   
Asian / Asian British – Chinese   
Asian / Asian British – Indian   
Asian / Asian British – Pakistani   
Any other Asian background, please describe in 'Other'  
  
Black / Black British – African   
Black / Black British – Asian   
Black / Black British – Caribbean   
Black / Black British - Latin American   
Any other Black background, please describe in 'Other'  
  
Gypsy or Traveller   
Roma   
Latin American Indigenous / Indigenous British   
Mixed White and Asian Mixed White and Black Any other Mixed Race/Multiple ethnic background, please describe in 'Other'White European White Irish White Latin American White Welsh/English/Scottish/Northern Irish/British Any other White background, please describe in 'Other'

Any other ethnic group/background, please describe:

Prefer not to say

**Thank you for completing this form. Please return it with your application form.**