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November 2007

Dear Applicant,

**Researcher – Hansard Society Parliament & Government Programme**

Thank you for your enquiry. I enclose an application pack for the post of Researcher for the Parliament & Government Programme. Further information on the Hansard Society can be found on: [www.hansardsociety.org.uk](http://www.hansardsociety.org.uk).

To apply for this post please send:

- a) Your CV (max two sides of A4), including your current salary;
- b) A letter detailing your experience, qualifications and skills in relation to the areas outlined in the job description and person specification, including successful examples (max two sides of A4);
- c) The names of two referees (who will only be contacted with your permission).

You may send your application by email to [l.willsher@hansard.lse.ac.uk](mailto:l.willsher@hansard.lse.ac.uk) or post to: Lisa Willsher, Parliament & Government Researcher Recruitment, Hansard Society, 40-43 Chancery Lane, London WC2A 1JA.

The deadline for applications is 13 December 2007 at 9am. Interviews will take place in the week commencing 7 January 2008.

We will contact you by email to inform you as to whether you have been short listed. If you have not heard from us by 19 December 2007, please assume that you have not been short listed on this occasion. Also, please ensure you have provided us with a contact phone number and email address.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Yours faithfully,



Fiona Booth  
Chief Executive



**HANSARD  
SOCIETY**

PROMOTING DEMOCRACY • STRENGTHENING PARLIAMENT

Chair Peter Riddell Honorary Treasurer John Sharkey Chief Executive Fiona Booth

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## **Job Description for Researcher, Parliament & Government Programme**

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**Job Title:**

Researcher, Parliament & Government Programme

**Responsible to:**

Director, Parliament & Government Programme, who will provide support and supervision.

**Responsible for:**

Any interns or volunteers assisting with the Parliament & Government programme, under supervision of the Research Fellow and the Programme Director.

**Summary:**

To undertake work on research projects and produce briefings and papers; help organise seminars, conferences and events; and assist in the general operation of the Parliament & Government Programme. To be responsible together with the Programme Director for carrying out functions as agreed.

**Main tasks and responsibilities:**

- Research, writing and production of reports on agreed projects;
- Taking responsibility for or assisting with organisation of seminars, events and conferences;
- Liaise with partner organisations, individuals, MPs, peers and parliamentary staff;
- Assist with relevant press and PR work;
- Assist with providing material for the Society's website;
- Work with other members of the Parliament & Government Programme to plan work and develop strategies for new projects;
- Assist in identifying project funders and in preparing applications for funding;
- Production of a weekly information digest on parliamentary and political issues to be circulated to all Society staff;
- Maintenance of relevant databases.

The Hansard Society is a small charity and from time to time all staff may be required to assist with other activities by agreement with the Programme Director or Chief Executive.



## **Person Specification for Researcher, Parliament & Government Programme**

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### **Essential:**

- Good knowledge of the parliamentary system – ideally from first hand experience of working in Parliament or closely with it;
- A keen interest in Parliament and wider political issues;
- Knowledge and experience of research methods;
- A willingness to develop detailed knowledge of issues, such as the legislative process, relevant to Parliament and the political process;
- Experience of project work and development;
- Excellent organisational, communication and administrative skills;
- Ability to communicate, both verbally and in writing, to high profile public figures;
- Good IT skills;
- Ability to work independently and as part of a team.

### **Desirable:**

- Relevant postgraduate qualification;
- Fundraising experience;
- Events organisation experience.

### **Additional Information:**

This is a full-time post. The usual office hours will be Monday to Friday, 9.30am – 5.30pm but flexibility (for example, for evening events) may be required.

The salary range for this position is £20,400-£23,000 with a 7% employer pension available after 3 months of employment. The Hansard Society holiday entitlement is 25 days per annum, plus the days from Christmas Eve until 2 January.



## **Parliament & Government Programme Overview**

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The Hansard Society is an independent, non-partisan political research and education charity that works to strengthen parliamentary democracy and encourage greater public involvement in politics. The Parliament & Government Programme, one of the Society's main programmes of work, undertakes research to stimulate reform of political institutions and the parliamentary process and provide a forum for discussion of these issues. We work closely with parliamentarians, government, the media and the public to consider a range of issues relevant to parliamentary democracy.

The Programme has made many influential recommendations for parliamentary reform as part of our original studies, reports and evidence papers. Our current research continues to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the political system and make the case for change. In recent years, our work has focused on the following areas:

- Parliamentary scrutiny and government accountability;
- Political representation;
- Law making;
- Public engagement.

The Parliament & Government Programme has a central role in both advising the Society's programmes and contributing to the strategic planning of the organisation.

Over the last year our work has encompassed the following:

Publications:

- ***Law in the Making: A Discussion Paper*** – An initial discussion paper from the Programme's flagship research project looking at how laws are made and the influences that are brought to bear on the legislative process;
- ***An Audit of Political Engagement 4*** – The Audit series provides a statistical context to everyday speculation about the state of political engagement. The fourth Audit considers the barriers to greater political participation; what people want from MPs and from political parties; and what, if anything, people are prepared to do to be involved in politics;

- **Democracy Series:** *Democracy and Islam, Democracy and Voting, Democracy and Capitalism, Democracy and Political Parties and Democracy and Intervention.* The pamphlets in the Democracy Series feature essays and commentaries by leading figures from politics, the media and academia on the key questions facing democracy in the 21st century;
- **A Year in the Life: from member of public to Member of Parliament** – A report considering the experiences of newly elected MPs during their first year in Parliament;
- **Parliament in the Public Eye: Coming into Focus?** – The follow-up report to the Commission on the Communication of Parliamentary Democracy, *Parliament in the Public Eye*, chaired by Lord Puttnam;
- **The Fiscal Maze: Parliament, Government and Public Money** – A report advocating changes to the way that Parliament scrutinises public finance.

Other key projects:

- **House of Lords Reform** – We published a briefing paper on public attitudes to Lords reform that was sent to all MPs and peers on the eve of a key parliamentary vote on the subject;
- **Responses to government and Parliament** – The Programme provided written responses to Government consultations on constitutional reform and consultation, and a range of responses to and parliamentary select committee inquiries, for example on the role of the backbencher, petitions and written questions. We also provided oral evidence to the House of Commons Modernisation Committee and the Liaison Committee.

At present the following projects are being undertaken:

- **Law in the Making** – The Programme's major project research project is looking at Parliament's impact on legislation, how laws are made and the various influences that affect their passage through Parliament. The final report will be published in June 2008;
- **Audit of Political Engagement 5** – The fifth Audit will focus on public attitudes to constitutional reform and will be published in March 2008;
- **No Overall Control** – A project bringing together a group of varied and distinguished commentators from across the political spectrum to discuss what impact a hung parliament might have on British politics. A book with chapters by parliamentarians, academics and political commentators from the media and civil society will be published in March 2008;
- **Participation Partners** – An evaluation of how government departments are using engagement tools to consult with the public;
- **Removing Barriers to Engagement** – A project examining how Parliament is perceived and understood by the public. The final report will assess the nature and extent of the barriers that exist in informing the public about the work of Parliament and promoting Parliament as an institution.
- **Evidence to parliamentary inquiries** – The Programme is frequently asked to provide evidence (written or oral) to inquiries by select committees;

- **Public events** – The Programme organises a wide range of public events to stimulate debate about the major issues facing our political system.

The Researcher will be expected to take a major role in the existing and planned projects of the Programme but there will be scope for developing new ideas and projects, in conjunction with the Programme Director, on which the Researcher will lead.

**For more information on projects and publications please see [www.hansardsociety.org.uk](http://www.hansardsociety.org.uk)**