



JOB DESCRIPTION PARLIAMENTARY OFFICER

ABOUT THE APPG FOR FREEDOM OF RELIGION OR BELIEF:

The All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) for International Freedom of Religion or Belief (FoRB) is a group of over 120 British Parliamentarians from across the political and belief spectrum. Our goal is to achieve the global realisation of Article 18 of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights which states that “everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion”.

Unfortunately, according to Pew Centre research, approximately 4 out of every 5 people on the planet live in countries where there are significant restrictions of their right to think and believe whatever they wish. These restrictions come in many different forms. They range from exclusion from basic services and social harassment to torture, unlawful detention, sexual violence and even death. From the detention of upwards of a million Muslims in concentration camps in China to the genocide of the Yazidi peoples by Daesh in Iraq, or the kidnapping and forced marriage of thousands of young Hindu and Christian girls in Pakistan every year, failure to protect this right has devastating consequences.

Furthermore, Covid-19 has exacerbated the problems faced by minority religious and belief communities globally. For example, many communities have been blamed for the virus resulting in worsening persecution. The economic impacts of lockdown have also devastated what are often already marginalised communities. Our APPG is on the frontlines of the fight to ensure that these communities, and all people everywhere, are guaranteed their right to freedom of religion or belief.

THE ROLE:

We are looking for a Parliamentary Officer to support APPG Members to raise awareness about FoRB violations and to help encourage the development and implementation of policy that will bring about positive changes to the lives of persecuted religious and belief communities.

WHY APPLY:

This role offers an opportunity to work inside Parliament and to support one of the largest, most prominent APPGs to achieve substantial policy changes to help some of the world’s most persecuted and vulnerable people.

The successful candidate will have an opportunity to acquire the highest quality experience of human rights work, politics and research through working with British and international parliamentarians, ministers, NGOs, academics, ambassadors and UN senior officials.

The successful candidate will help to implement research and advocacy strategies, help to organise debates, parliamentary inquiries, meetings and events and write a wide range of content including speeches, briefings and reports. Through this work, the successful candidate will play a key role in policy changes that affect countless lives. For example, the Home Office's restructuring of how it processes religion or belief-based asylum claims and the Prime Minister's appointment of a Special Envoy for FoRB.

THE PERSON:

This opportunity offers the chance to have a high degree of input into the APPG's activities. Therefore, the right person will be highly self-motivated, self-reliant, organised, creative, passionate about human rights and able to work to a high standard without intensive supervision.

The right person will be an excellent writer, capable of distilling complex information into easily accessible and concise formats. The right person will be able to write for a wide range of different audiences, often at short notice in accordance with the Parliamentary schedule.

The right person will be politically aware. They will be familiar with both domestic and international politics and have an understanding of international human rights instruments and the workings of multi-lateral institutions such as the UN.

This opportunity requires working with a very wide range of individuals and organisations across the political and belief spectrum. Therefore, the right person will be empathetic, open-minded and always respectful and polite. The right person will understand that achieving long-term, sustainable progress requires working collaboratively and putting yourself in the other people's shoes.

EMPLOYMENT DETAILS:

- **STARTING DATE:** As soon as possible.
- **PROBATION PERIOD:** 3 months.
- **SALARY:** £25,000 per annum
- **HOURS:** 35 per week (10am – 6pm Monday to Friday)
- **CONTRACT LENGTH:** 2-year contract with the possibility for extension
- **LOCATION:** House of Commons (Work from Home initially due to Covid-19)
- **ANNUAL LEAVE:** 25 days holiday per annum + 8 bank holiday days
- **TRAVEL:** Occasional international travel may be required.

Any offer of employment will be contingent on the candidate having the right to live and work in the UK and having passed a parliamentary security clearance check.

APPLICATION INFORMATION:

- **DEADLINE FOR APPLICATIONS:** 6pm; 11 November, but applications will be considered as received and an earlier appointment may be made.
- **HOW TO APPLY:** Please send a cover letter and CV as one document (maximum 3-pages) to the APPG Director Amro Hussain at amro.hussain@parliament.uk. The APPG would be grateful if you can also indicate where you heard about the position. A shortlist will then be made, and selected participants will be invited to complete a written exercise which will be followed by interviews with the Director and the APPG Chairman. Due to limited staff capacity, we are only able to contact shortlisted candidates and will be unable to provide feedback on applications not shortlisted for interview.

JOB SPECIFICATION:

Research and Writing

- Research FoRB issues and keep abreast of FoRB news and political developments in APPG priority countries.
- Respond, often at short notice, to requests from Parliamentarians for information on FoRB topics.
- Suggest FoRB topics, based on research, for APPG members to raise in Parliament and strategies to raise those topics effectively.
- Write briefings, speeches, early-day motions, advocacy letters, parliamentary inquiry submissions and parliamentary questions for Parliamentarians, often at short notice.
- Support APPG Director to write reports on priority FoRB issues.
- Write press releases and public statements for the APPG.

Events

- Organise and support APPG inquiries on priority FoRB issues.
- Organise and support parliamentary meetings between the APPG and domestic and international Government representatives.
- Organise and support parliamentary and external events for the APPG, often in conjunction with a range of partners such as domestic and international civil society and academics.
- Attend parliamentary and online debates and events to promote APPG and to research FoRB issues.

Administration

- Monitor parliamentary activity to be aware of relevant events, debates, legislation, questions and select Committee inquiries and encourage and support APPG members to participate in this activity.
- Manage enquires from parliamentarians, stakeholders or members of the public, by phone, email or twitter.

REQUIREMENTS:

Experience:

- Experience of conducting high quality research.
- Experience of producing high quality, accessible, written content for a wide variety of audiences and in different styles such as briefings, reports, and speeches.
- Experience of working in time-pressurised environments.
- Experience of successfully representing organisations externally at public events.
- Experience of organising meetings and public events.

Skills:

- Excellent oral and written communication skills with the ability to communicate complex ideas in a clear and accessible way to a wide range of audiences.
- Excellent organisational skills and attention to detail.
- Strong interpersonal skills with an ability to work with a wide range of actors from diverse cultures, beliefs and political viewpoints.
- Outstanding people skills and the ability to connect quickly and effectively with people inside and outside the APPG.

Knowledge:

- Demonstrable understanding of British politics and British political system.
- Demonstrable understanding of international politics, international human rights instruments and multi-lateral organisations like the UN Human Rights Council.
- Astute political judgment and an understanding of how to frame information effectively.

Attributes:

- Passion for human rights and improving the welfare of persecuted groups.
- The ability to analyse and distil large amounts of complex information into brief documents using clear, concise language.
- High levels of self-motivation with the ability to work under pressure, manage competing deadlines, and prioritise work.
- The ability to work with a high degree of autonomy within the bounds of the role's portfolio.
- The ability to think creatively and strategically to generate ideas for APPG activities.
- The ability to see issues from many different perspectives and appeal to specific needs and wants.

EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

At the APPG FoRB, we believe in equality, diversity and inclusion. As well as this being an issue of fairness, we recognise that diverse and inclusive organisations are some of the most productive and impactful. As an organisation, we are aware of the underrepresentation of certain groups and communities in both the political and human rights sectors. These include - but are certainly not limited to - people from Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME), refugee and lower socio-economic backgrounds. We want to change this and are committed to playing our part as an organisation. As a committed equal opportunities employer, we actively welcome applications from people of a wide range of backgrounds, skills and abilities, recognising the value that these different perspectives bring to our organisation.