



Parliamentary Officer Application Pack

Dear Candidate,

Thank you for your interest in René Cassin and our Parliamentary Officer vacancy.

This application pack includes:

- Some background information on René Cassin, including our vision, mission, and values.
- An outline of our plans for the future.
- A detailed description of the role.
- A person specification with essential and desirable attributes.

The ideal candidate will have:

- a good understanding of, and interest in, UK specific human rights
- in-depth knowledge of the parliamentary system
- excellent networking and relationship building skills.

We are seeking someone with dedication and aptitude to enhance René Cassin's presence and advocacy in the UK parliament, and to support our campaigns to achieve strategic objectives. If you have strong knowledge and experience related to any of the significant parts of this job, such as advocacy work, communications, or human rights, please do consider making an application or get in touch to discuss your background. I will try to give you a steer on the job, what's involved and whether you might be a good candidate. You can email me at mia.hasenson-gross@renecassin.org.

If you have skills, experience and aptitude we are looking for, and want to help a small but dynamic human rights charity grow to meet the challenges ahead, please apply. Send your CV and covering letter to me at mia.hasenson-gross@renecassin.org, with 'PARLIAMENTARY OFFICER' in the subject box.

The deadline for applications is 11.59pm **on Wednesday 6 December 2023**. We intend to **interview shortlisted candidates during the week beginning 11 December 2023**.

We look forward to receiving your application.



Mia Hasenson-Gross
Executive Director
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René Cassin – the Jewish voice for human rights – is named after the French-Jewish co-author of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

René Cassin's **vision** is of a world where everyone fully enjoys all their human rights as enshrined in the Declaration, and in which members of the Jewish community are actively engaged in promoting and protecting these rights.

Our **mission** is to promote and protect the universal rights of all people, drawing on Jewish experience and values.

René Cassin works:

- **within the Jewish community** – by building support for human rights values amongst British Jews
- **in the wider community** – by bringing the authority of a Jewish perspective on issues that resonate with Jewish experience.

We aim to:

- **Remake a compelling case for human rights values** – we believe that those values, which inspired the Universal Declaration, are a direct response to the horrors of the Holocaust. For that reason, we focus on advocating for safeguarding the UK's current human rights framework – particularly the European Convention on Human Rights and the Human Rights Act, which have their origins in the Universal Declaration.
- **Campaign for change on human rights issues** that resonate with Jewish experience, and which **affect other marginalised minorities**, such as:
 - **Genocide** – mobilising support for UK-based exiles demanding action in response to the Chinese repression of Uyghur Muslims
 - **Hostile Environment** – challenging the hostile environment to immigration in the UK by supporting more compassionate and just asylum and immigration policies such as: a time limit on immigration detention and alternatives to detention; introducing safe routes for refugees; and promoting legislation to protect victims of trafficking and modern slavery.
 - **Discrimination and marginalisation** – harnessing Jewish experience of marginalisation and Jewish values of fairness and justice through acts of solidarity and allyship.
 - **Social justice and women's rights** – we address long-standing inequalities and the obstacles vulnerable groups experience in accessing fundamental rights e.g. the rights to safety, healthcare and food.
 - **Protecting human rights in the UK** – emphasising the lineage and legacy of the Human Rights Act and the European Convention on Human Rights; ensuring human rights values inform policies, legislation and in particular manifestos leading up to the 2024 general election (including party manifestos and key communal bodies).
- Lead and grow a **group of committed and knowledgeable Jewish human rights advocates**.

Our **values** – underpinning all the work we do:

- *Solidarity* – human rights belong to us all, so we stand for the rights of everyone, everywhere.
- *Judaism* – we are inspired by Jewish values and experience.
- *Collaboration* – our work is not isolated, but intertwined with the efforts of others, so we nurture and mobilise partnership.
- *Empowerment* – we turn today's Jewish activists into tomorrow's leaders.
- *Legacy* – we are determined to create a legacy worthy of our namesake Monsieur René Cassin

Social justice at a crossroads – a human rights roadmap

Summary

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights was a practical expression of common humanity, in response to nationalism and the inhumanity of war. But the Declaration's vision as an all-encompassing statement of rights was cut short by the politics of the Cold War – as provisions designed to ensure social and economic justice were side-lined.

Today, after a global pandemic has exposed inequalities that climate change and racial injustice threaten to entrench further, we again face a '1945' moment. Civil and political rights alone seem insufficient to provide a remedy, and if 'human rights' remain narrowly defined they risk irrelevance.

René Cassin plans a major project to advocate a thorough overhaul of human rights protections in the UK, to ensure social, economic, cultural, and environmental justice.

Socio-economic, environmental, and racial justice – a 'Sliding Doors' moment?

The Covid-19 crisis has exposed long-existing inequalities that literally determine life or death. And it has presented us with a knife-edge future. We are faced with a broad choice between the status quo – super-sized austerity, inequality, and populist nationalism – or an alternative version that seeks to, in the current jargon, 'build back better'.

Human rights – an incomplete picture?

If human rights are a toolkit, are some of the most useful and necessary tools missing? The Declaration enshrined rights to what most would agree are the fundamental necessities of human existence – food, clothing, housing, medical care, education, and employment. Yet these social and economic rights find little or no expression in the European Convention on Human Rights and the UK's Human Rights Act.

What René Cassin intends to do

We are proposing a paradigm shift in the advocacy of human rights – a return to the original vision of the

Declaration's full panoply of rights, a project that was cut short by Cold War power politics.

Why is René Cassin well placed to drive this debate?

- Our raison d'être is promoting the vision of the Declaration, the foundation document of the modern human rights movement, from the co-author of which we take our name.
- Human rights values mirror Jewish values, and Jews are human rights 'experts by experience' – from ancient slavery and migration, through pogroms and the Holocaust, to the recent upsurge in anti-Jewish racism.
- We have already made progress on these crucial issues. We held a high-level roundtable discussion on social and economic rights and have begun a new programme to promote women's rights.
- We are known and respected in a number of vital contexts: within the disparate elements of the Jewish community; in wider civil society organising around key themes, such as safeguarding human rights, immigration, slavery, genocide, and discrimination; in multi-faith fora; and amongst relevant legal and political experts.

'Shared humanity' – the relevance of human rights

A greater emphasis on social and economic justice will aid a renewed focus on the relevance and importance of human rights. In addition, we believe that the tone of the discussion itself is a vital element in securing a successful outcome.

Conclusion

With populist nationalism on the rise, and economic hardship threatening to increase the lure of demagogues, this is a critical moment for the future health of human rights. As the charity named after its co-author, René Cassin is in a unique position to re-make the case for human rights by arguing for the realisation of the Declaration's original broad vision of what constitutes a just society, and to co-ordinate a Jewish community effort to that end.

Parliamentary Officer

René Cassin, the Jewish voice for human rights, is looking for a new Parliamentary Officer.

We are seeking an experienced individual who believes in the power of advocacy and campaigning to deliver change. The ideal candidate will have:

- a good understanding of, and interest in, UK specific human rights
- in-depth knowledge of the parliamentary system
- excellent networking and relationship building skills.

JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Title:	Parliamentary Officer
Salary:	£28,000-30,000 (FTE) based on experience
Contract:	Part-time (three days per week)
Term:	One-year fixed term contract in the first instance
Location:	Hybrid working (at least 2 days p/week office based, London)
Other entitlements:	20 days annual holiday (+ Jewish festivals); 3% employer pension contribution

Primary roles and responsibilities

- To regularly monitor UK Government and Parliament legislative developments, report on relevant developments to colleagues, and ensure René Cassin is reacting and responding where appropriate.
- To maintain the main overview of René Cassin's political interactions and ensure timely responses to queries from MPs and their staff.
- To develop and maintain good relationships with MPs and their staff, UK Government and other relevant stakeholders and disseminate information about René Cassin's policies and campaign activities.
- To set up and maintain a database of parliamentary contacts.
- To coordinate and assist in drafting briefings for parliamentarians ahead of debates, consultations relevant inquiries and/or other parliamentary mechanisms.
- To coordinate delegation visits in Parliament, including organising meetings.
- To attend relevant conferences and seminars, including party conferences, and make presentations at such events where appropriate.
- To liaise with other NGOs and stakeholders relevant to René Cassin's work, including with advocacy staff in other NGOs directly and through relevant forums and coalitions.
- To assist René Cassin's Communications Officer with relevant media work.
- To assist with other René Cassin campaigns, activism and priorities as required.
- To assist with other reasonable duties as requested by your manager.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Skills and experience needed – Essential

- In-depth knowledge of parliamentary systems and issues including UK Parliament procedures, and the structure and workings of the UK Government.
- Excellent oral and written communications, including networking skills and experience writing reports and briefings.
- Excellent attention to detail and accuracy to ensure quality of research.
- Strong organisational skills and experience of working to tight deadlines.
- Ability to quickly absorb new and complex information.
- Good knowledge of standard IT packages.
- Naturally collaborative and a team player.

Skills and experience needed – Desirable

- Degree or equivalent in political science, human rights, or international law.
- Experience of working in a campaigning organisation.
- Experience of working within coalitions.
- Demonstrable commitment to human rights issues.

To apply

Please send CV and covering letter outlining your suitability to mia.hasenson-gross@renecassin.org

Deadline for applications: 11.59pm, Wednesday 6 December 2023.

Interview date: Week beginning 11 December 2023.

If you have any queries, please contact Mia Hasenson-Gross at mia.hasenson-gross@renecassin.org