

Senior Research Fellow in Parliaments and the Rule of Law

Background

1. The Bingham Centre for the Rule of Law exists to advance the Rule of Law worldwide. It aims to do so proactively, and to have a direct and practical impact on law, policy and decision-making. In 2018 the Bingham Centre will be publishing its new five-year Strategy. A specific strategic aim of the Centre is to democratise the Rule of Law: to take it into the heart of the political process and to embed it in democratic institutions, including parliaments.
2. The Centre believes that parliaments have a vital role to play in relation to the Rule of Law. Their law-making function makes them ideally placed to ensure that a country's legal frameworks provide the necessary protections for the Rule of Law, and their oversight function enables them to monitor and scrutinise Governments' compliance with the Rule of Law in its policies and actions. However, informed discussion of the Rule of Law in political debate remains the exception rather than the norm. There is an urgent need to mainstream the Rule of Law across the entire range of a parliament's activities and functions. In the UK the Rule of Law challenges posed by Brexit make this especially urgent.
3. The Bingham Centre is therefore looking to appoint an outstanding candidate as a Senior Research Fellow in Parliaments and the Rule of Law to lead and develop its programme of work in this important area of its new Strategy.
4. The Centre engages closely with a very wide range of people and organisations, and the post will provide an opportunity to work directly with parliaments and parliamentarians from all parties and in a variety of countries; ministers and civil servants; judges; the legal profession; international organisations such as the UN, the EU, the Council of Europe and the Commonwealth; international bodies such as the Inter-Parliamentary Union; other civil society groups; and academics working in this field. The post-holder will work closely with the All Party Parliamentary Group on the Rule of Law in the UK Parliament, for which the Bingham Centre provides the secretariat.
5. The Bingham Centre is part of the British Institute of International and Comparative Law.

Job Description

6. The main task of the Senior Research Fellow will be to lead and develop the Centre's five year programme of research on Parliaments and the Rule of Law.

The Senior Research Fellow in Parliaments and the Rule of Law will have the following specific tasks in close consultation with, and under the supervision of, the Centre Director:

- Devise an ambitious 5 year Strategy for mainstreaming the Rule of Law in parliaments, drawing on academic research about the role of parliaments in protecting and promoting the Rule of Law and best practice from around the world, and identifying practical and achievable ways to better institutionalise the Rule of Law in parliaments;
- Undertake and publish high quality research in relevant areas;

- Lead, develop and manage the research projects, public events and capacity building in those areas, including supervising the work of research fellows and research assistants on projects and co-ordinating the input of researchers with relevant expertise in the rest of BIICL;
- Lead the implementation of the mainstreaming Strategy proactively by identifying opportunities for strategic initiatives in parliaments, including the UK Parliament, on significant Rule of Law issues and for promoting parliamentary consideration of Rule of Law issues;
- Work closely with the All Party Parliamentary Group on the Rule of Law, and in particular its Chair, Co-Chair, Officers, Members and advisers; advise and support the Centre's Director in relation to the APPG, including by ensuring that the Centre provides the necessary secretariat support to the APPG's activities;
- Oversee the administrative support necessary for at least 4 dedicated APPG events per year on topical issues providing opportunities for parliamentarians to learn about what the Rule of Law means in practice; providing expert background briefing explaining the Rule of Law issues at stake; and supervising the writing of a report of the meeting;
- Strengthen the UK Parliament's Rule of Law capacity, e.g. by providing briefings to parliamentarians on the Rule of Law dimension of forthcoming business where such briefing would not otherwise be available; liaising closely with the House of Commons and House of Lords Libraries of the UK Parliament to ensure that high quality, independent briefing and advice is available to parliamentarians on significant Rule of Law issues; overseeing the compiling of regular "Rule of Law Newsletters" for parliamentarians and following up on such bulletins with members of the APPG;
- Identify opportunities for other researchers in the Bingham Centre and the rest of BIICL to achieve impact for their research by identifying parliamentary opportunities for engagement;
- Develop a methodology for assessing the impact of the Centre's work on mainstreaming the Rule of Law in parliaments against the project's targets, including by searching and analysis of parliamentary material and by interviews with key stakeholders.
- Produce Reports on the Rule of Law in the UK Parliament for each parliamentary session (beginning with the 2017-19 session).
- Assist the Director and Deputy Director in seeking funding to make the Centre's work on Parliaments and the Rule of Law sustainable and to increase its research capacity in this area;
- Develop Rule of Law guidance materials for UK parliamentarians and exploring the scope for such guidance for use internationally.

Person Specification

7. It is expected that the successful applicant will provide evidence of all of the following attributes and achievements:
 - A strong academic record with expertise in public law (including constitutional and administrative law), together with relevant practical

experience of working in a parliament, or expertise in how parliaments work, and in particular of legal issues which arise when a parliament is exercising its constitutional functions of legislating and holding the Government to account;

- A record of some published research in the public law field and ideally in the area of parliaments and the Rule of Law, and of knowledge of and engagement with such research;
 - A proven understanding of the Rule of Law as a practical concept;
 - A record of producing high quality legal research in areas of relevance to the Rule of Law and parliaments, with a good publication record in the field being an advantage;
 - An ability to undertake and co-ordinate research activity in this area, to work under limited supervision, to draft papers rapidly and to a high standard, and to meet deadlines;
 - An ability to interact appropriately with parliamentarians, practitioners, scholars and others working in the field, including an ability to organise seminars, conferences and other events;
 - An ability and willingness to undertake, and deal effectively, efficiently and appropriately with administrative responsibilities; and
 - An ability and willingness to work collaboratively and collegially with colleagues.
8. This is a full-time post, although consideration will be given to a slightly less than full-time role, if requested. Secondments will also be considered. A salary package in the range of £55,000 - £60,000 pa is expected, depending on qualifications and experience. It is hoped that the person appointed will commence as soon as possible.
9. Informal enquiries may be addressed to officemanager@biicl.org
10. Applicants should send the following by **29 January 2018** by email to parliamentsruleoflawsrf@biicl.org
- A full curriculum vitae, including a list of publications and the names and addresses including email addresses of three referees, at least two of whom may be contacted prior to interview; and
 - A covering letter setting out their reasons for applying and how they consider that they meet the person specification for this post.
11. It is expected that interviews will take place in February 2018.
12. In order to be considered for this role, all applicants must currently have the right to work in the UK or will have the right to work in the UK by the date of commencement of employment.
13. Applicants are encouraged to find out more about the Centre, its members of staff and activities at <http://binghamcentre.biicl.org/>