

PARLIAMENTARY WRITER-IN-RESIDENCE

The British Slave Trade: Abolition, Parliament and People

Project outline/brief

To commemorate the bicentenary of the Act of Parliament to abolish the British Slave Trade Parliament will hold an exhibition in Westminster Hall from May-September 2007. We are seeking to establish a writer's residency to support the exhibition, an online learning resource and, most importantly, the schools programme.

The aim of this project is to provide an opportunity to explore fresh perspectives on how the histories of the transatlantic slave trade, resistance and abolition relate to contemporary life. To support this aim, Parliament, for the first time in its history, will commission a writer-in-residence to help interpret these issues, using creative and critical processes to communicate them to schools and young audiences. We want the residency to be a genuine dialogue that helps to provoke debate.

The key objectives of the residency are, first, to produce for the public a piece of work based on the exhibition themes. Secondly, to work closely with two inner London schools to encourage pupils to engage with the themes of the exhibition; providing them with the opportunity to work with a practising writer. We hope that the successful applicant will explore as diverse a range of genres as possible.

In addition to this the writer will work closely with the Parliamentary Education Unit to develop learning packs and associated INSET training. It is likely that this will be targeted at Key Stages 3 and 4. The writer will also support the online learning resource that is currently being developed by the Parliamentary Archives which will feature and encourage interactivity with archival materials.

We anticipate that at the end of the project there will be an exhibition of pupils' work at Parliament with some work also being included on the Parliamentary website.

This residency will provide an excellent personal and professional development opportunity for a writer with an active interest in, and knowledge of, the history of the transatlantic slave trade, resistance and abolition.

Outcomes

- ◇ **Production of new work for the public**
- ◇ **Production of content for school learning packs**
- ◇ **Exhibition of work by two London schools**
- ◇ **Publication of work resulting from the project on the Parliamentary Education Unit's website and the Parliamentary Archives' online learning resource relating to Parliament and the Slave Trade.**

Residency

The writer will be contracted to work for 40 days during the period November 2006 to June 2007. The pattern for the residency is entirely flexible within that framework and will depend on the successful proposal. We expect that a substantial amount of time will be spent by the writer in or around the chosen schools, working with pupils and on the Parliamentary Estate developing learning resources. The successful applicant must also be available to assist with the preparation and installation of the end of project exhibition, as required.

Working space/office accommodation is available on a part-time basis on the Parliamentary Estate if required but no dedicated studio space is provided.

The Writer

The writer will be a professional working in the broad fields of literature, digital art, the visual arts or other art forms with some experience of developing educational programmes.

We are keen to encourage critical dialogue and challenge existing preconceptions of enslaved Africans, abolitionists and slave traders. The nature of the topics and themes that could be raised will mean that we will need a practitioner of sufficient intellectual rigour, sensitivity and maturity, to recognise and engage with the issues and communicate them to a young audience.

For this reason we are looking for a writer with experience of working with schools with a track record of working to deadlines and as part of a project team.

It is important that the writer has good communication skills and enjoys working with people.

Experience of working in a diverse, multicultural environment is essential.

Good IT skills are essential.

The residency will be conditional on the applicant successfully clearing Parliamentary Security and CRB checks for working in schools.

Fees and Expenses

The writer will be paid a fee of £8,000 (inc VAT). In addition a budget of £500 will be available to cover agreed expenses and materials. The fee will be paid in monthly stage payments against an invoice.

Management

The writer will be contracted by the House of Commons, managed by the Parliamentary Education Unit, and will report periodically to the Exhibition Project and Advisory Boards.

Timetable

Interviews	Wednesday 4 October 2006
Residency period	Nov 2006- June 2007
Schools exhibition	May - Sept 2007

Application procedure

Applications should include a two page (maximum) curriculum vitae and two page letter of application that outlines:

- Your initial ideas of how to deliver the project;
- why you think you are right for this residency;

You should also include up to six examples of recent work. ***Work can only be returned if accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope.***

Please also include the name and address of two referees, at least one of whom should be a professional contact.

Please supply an email contact address.

Submit Applications to: Melanie Unwin
 Curatorial Office
 Palace of Westminster
 1 Canon Row
 London SW1A 2JN

The deadline for applications is Friday 15 September 2006. Applicants selected for interview will be contacted by 26th September if they have been selected for interview. Interviews will be held on Wednesday 4 October.