

INVOLVE APPOINTS COORDINATOR OF NEW DEMOCRACY NETWORK

We are excited to announce that Jessie Joe Jacobs has been appointed as Coordinator of the Democracy Network.

The Democracy Network is a new initiative to bring together people and projects from across the UK who are passionate about democracy. The aim is to strengthen the collective power, influence and voice of those that care about democracy, encourage collaboration, and ultimately work towards a society where power is more equally shared.

Jessie is a social entrepreneur with eighteen years' experience of network development, charity and project management, service development, PR & marketing, campaigning and fundraising. Jessie has been director of Northern Inclusion Consortium, the CEO of an award winning women and young people's charity, regional director for Britain Stronger In Europe and campaigns officer TUC.

We are particularly excited about Jessie's ability to ensure a diverse range of organisations participate in the Network, including both those that consider themselves a part of the democracy sector, and those doing the hard work of strengthening democracy and addressing issues of power, influence and voice in their communities.

The priorities and activities of the network will be developed openly and collaboratively with its membership, but as we start out developing the Democracy Network we have three aims in mind:

- Connecting: Developing a trusted, strong, diverse and well-functioning democracy network, with high engagement in network activities and an expanding reach to new groups;
- Information sharing and capacity building: Increasing the knowledge, skills, resources and impact of members; and,
- Vision and influence: Expanding the collective influence of the network and its members, including receiving increased media and political attention.

Following a call for proposals, Involve has been awarded a three-year grant of £350,000 to incubate, expand and coordinate the Democracy Network. This grant was made from a £300,000 and £50,000 grant from the Joseph Rowntree Reform Trust (JRRT) and the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust (JRCT) respectively.

Find out more about the Democracy Network:

<https://www.involve.org.uk/resources/blog/project-updates/democracy-network-what-it-how-itll-work-and-answers-other-fqs>

Calum Green, Director of Advocacy and Communications at Involve, said:

“Jessie brings a wealth of experience not only of building networks and coalitions across different interests, but also in working to build a more just society in her home in the north-east and across the country. We are thrilled to have Jessie in position, and are looking forward to working with others to strengthen the collective power, influence and voice of those that care about democracy.

Jessie-Joe Jacobs said

“UK democracy is in crisis, trust in politicians and political institutions is at an all time low and those who most need change, are often those furthest away from power. Yet there are people and projects all across the UK seeking to address this. From young people’s political education charities, women’s political leadership programmes to national organisations seeking to change the voting system or reform parliament itself. I am excited to be able to support these initiatives and pioneer a new network that will strengthen the sector’s power and voice, and work towards an improved democracy in the UK and a society where power is more equally shared.”

Notes to editors

1. Involve is the UK’s leading public participation charity, with a mission to develop, support and campaign for new ways to involve people in decisions that affect their lives. The organisation works across the UK and internationally, with offices in Belfast, Edinburgh and London. More information about the organisation can be found at:

<https://www.involve.org.uk/about/about-involve>

2. Involve works with national and local government, parliaments, civil society, academics and the public to create and deliver new forms of public participation that re-vitalise democracy and improve decision-making. More information about who we have worked with can be found at: <https://www.involve.org.uk/our-work/who-we-work>

3. Involve has run a number of high profile projects, including Climate Assembly UK, Scotland’s Climate Assembly, and the Innovation in Democracy Programme. More information about our projects can be found at:

<https://www.involve.org.uk/our-work/our-projects>

4. For further information, contact: Calum Green, Director of Advocacy and Communications, Involve, calum@involve.org.uk