

# Press release: Lord Chancellor announces drive to increase judicial diversity

- government to fund new judicial education programme
- support from Judiciary, Judicial College and legal professional bodies
- online education platform for potential candidates
- targeted support for underrepresented groups

Talented people from all backgrounds across the legal profession will be given greater support to apply to become a judge, Lord Chancellor David Gauke announced today (25 April 2018).

A new online learning platform will enable candidates from all legal backgrounds to develop their understanding of the role and skills required of a judge, and how their legal experience has prepared them for judicial office, prior to making an application.

The Pre-Application Judicial Education (PAJE) programme is a joint initiative from the Judicial Diversity Forum, which is made up of MOJ, Judiciary, Judicial Appointments Commission, Bar Council, Law Society and Chartered Institute of Legal Executives and coordinates action to remove barriers to candidates from underrepresented groups applying to be judges.

Additional, targeted support will be available to those applicants from groups that are underrepresented in the judiciary via discussion sessions led by judges. This will give potential candidates insight into the realities of the role and offer an opportunity to address any perceptions they may have on barriers to judicial office.

Development of the programme will be funded by the MOJ, with Forum partners contributing to further running costs.

PAJE is the first initiative delivered jointly by all members of the Judicial Diversity Forum and partners will continue to work together on actions to drive diversity.

Lord Chancellor, David Gauke said:

Becoming a judge is a crucial form of public service at the very heart of our society.

From my time as a solicitor I know there are excellent candidates from right across the legal profession, and we want to make it easier for people from all backgrounds to aspire to these roles.

We have seen improvement in diversity in recent years, and it is clear that widening the talent pool from which judges are drawn can

only make our world-renowned justice system even stronger.

Lord Chief Justice, Lord Burnett of Maldon said:

I am committed to working to further improve judicial diversity. This programme of work is an important opportunity to offer practical assistance to underrepresented groups.

I hope that this scheme, which the judiciary and particularly the Judicial College is taking a leading role in devising and delivering, will widen the pool of applicants to ensure that the best candidates, from a wide range of backgrounds, apply for judicial posts.

Lord Kakkar, Chairman of the Judicial Appointments Commission and the Judicial Diversity Forum, said:

The Commission warmly welcomes this initiative which will give candidates from the widest range of backgrounds the opportunity to better understand, prepare and develop themselves for a future judicial role.

We look forward to reporting on its impact in future years and hope that it will encourage talented candidates from underrepresented groups to consider applying for judicial appointment at the right stage in their career.

The online education programme will be available from early 2019, with the discussion groups to follow and MOJ will work with partners to increase awareness amongst practising legal professionals.

The initiative builds on our £1 billion investment to reform our courts service, to modernise processes and improving the environment and working conditions for those who work within it, including judges.

## **Notes to editors**

1. MOJ funding will amount to an estimate of £152,000 over three years. The total cost of the programme will be approximately £300,000 including contributory costs from partners.
2. Places on the discussion sessions will be available by application, details will be available in early 2019. Preference will be given to applicants from underrepresented groups; women lawyers, BAME lawyers, lawyers with disabilities and those from a non-barrister professional background (including solicitors and chartered legal executives).

3. For more information contact the MOJ press office on 02033340185

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## [News story: HMRC calls on online marketplaces to sign agreement tackling VAT fraud](#)

HMRC is today (25 April 2018) asking all online marketplaces operating in the UK to sign [an agreement](#) to help tackle online VAT fraud and errors taking place on their platforms.

Online marketplaces have transformed the way people shop and helped millions of businesses to sell their products and services.

These platforms have a responsibility to ensure their sellers understand the tax rules and prevent fraud from happening on their watch.

To assist HMRC in tackling online VAT fraud and error, the agreement asks online marketplaces to commit to:

- educating online sellers from the UK and abroad about their VAT obligations in the UK either via their own help and support or by directing them to [HMRC's GOV.UK guidance](#)
- responding swiftly when notified by HMRC that sellers are not playing by the VAT rules, and setting up a system to take appropriate action
- finding a suitable and lawful way to provide HMRC with information about their sellers, when requested

HMRC will publish the list of all online marketplaces that sign up to this agreement. If an online marketplace that signs the agreement fails to meet the commitments, HMRC will remove them from the list.

Mel Stride, the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, said:

The growth of online marketplaces has helped many businesses to sell more products across the UK and has contributed greatly to the economy.

However, there is a small minority of sellers not paying their fair share of tax, and we're committed to working with marketplaces on multiple levels to tackle tax evasion.

Jon Thompson, HMRC's Chief Executive, said:

The UK has already led the way in holding online marketplaces accountable for VAT fraud committed on their platforms.

The agreement goes even further to tackle this issue, with online marketplaces committing to helping their sellers understand their tax responsibilities and ensuring we have the information we need to take action against those who do not play by the rules.

This agreement builds on world-leading powers, known by the term joint and several liability (JSL) rules, which hold online marketplaces accountable for VAT fraud committed by sellers on their platforms.

These were first introduced in September 2016 and were strengthened further in March 2018 – they have already gone a long way to ensure businesses selling goods to the UK online pay the VAT that is due.

## **Further information**

HMRC will update the list of signatories regularly.

See measures announced in [Autumn Budget 2017](#) and in [Budget 2016](#).

If you're an online marketplace operator, see [the checks you need to make on sellers](#).

HMRC estimates that the tax loss from VAT fraud and error on online marketplaces was between £1 billion and £1.5 billion in 2016 to 2017.

HMRC has opened about 2,100 investigations into non-compliant overseas businesses selling via online marketplaces in the period since Royal Assent of the JSL measures in September 2016 (up to 31 January 2018). This resulted in it issuing around 1,300 JSL notices to online marketplaces by 31 January.

There is considerable evidence that the measures have been effective in tackling online VAT fraud and error. This includes about 27,550 applications to register for VAT from overseas online retail businesses since the measures were announced in March 2016 (up to 31 January 2018). This compares with about 1,650 for 2015.

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## **[Press release: New space contracts for UK companies as Sentinel satellite lifts off](#)**

The Sentinel-3B satellite, which features systems built in the UK, will join

six other satellites monitoring and measuring the Earth's environment from space.

The majority of information they collect is freely available to anyone in the world so it can be used for anything from agriculture to urban planning, as well as tackling global issues like climate change.

Ahead of the satellite's launch from Russia's Plesetsk Cosmodrome due just before 7pm today (25 April), the European Space Agency announced the UK has secured a number of contracts for future work in the Copernicus programme.

Between Airbus UK and Thales Alenia Space, the UK has secured more than €12 million worth of contracts, including important work on two missions, Land Surface Temperature and the Polar Microwave Imaging.

Sam Gyimah, Science Minister, said:

"The UK space sector is a success story and our capabilities in Earth observation satellite technology are second to none. These latest contracts confirm the vital role of British research, innovation and industry to Copernicus.

"We've been clear that we want our companies and universities to continue participating in key EU space programmes, as long as they can take part on a fair and open basis. Our leading role in the European Space Agency will not change as we leave the EU, and this Government will ensure the UK thrives in the commercial space age through our modern Industrial Strategy."

The UK is also involved in three other missions; the L-band SAR mission, which measures soil moisture and crops for food security and precision farming, the Polar Ice and Snow Topographic Mission and the Anthropogenic CO2 Monitoring Mission.

George Eustice, Agricultural Minister, said:

"I am delighted about today's launch of Sentinel-3B, which will further increase the ability of Copernicus to monitor changes in sea level, marine pollution, and biological productivity. This closely follows the launch of the British-built Sentinel-5P in October, and reflects the growing success of the programme as the world's leading Earth Observation satellite system.

"The UK has one of the largest concentrations of Copernicus data users in Europe. The satellite data is increasingly used by the UK Government, especially the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, to monitor water and air quality, support flood recovery efforts, and deliver farming support, for example. It could also prove to be an immensely valuable tool in the delivery of our 25 year Environment Plan – a strategic priority for the UK Government.

"As the programme looks to the future, it is great to see UK companies and users successfully driving the development of Copernicus as it continues to grow in importance."

Sentinel-3B is the seventh satellite in the Copernicus programme and features several instruments, measuring colour and surface temperature over the land and ocean. It will measure the temperature, colour and height of the sea surface as well as the thickness of sea ice. These measurements are used to monitor changes in sea level, marine pollution and biological productivity.

Ben Olivier, CEO of Thales Alenia Space in the UK, said:

“The importance of the Copernicus missions in securing our ability to understand and help manage the impacts of the climate on our environment, economy and sustainable development cannot be over-stated.

“Thales Alenia Space in the UK is pleased to have secured the lead role in the next expansion mission such as CO2 monitoring. This reflects the engineering and scientific skills that the UK contributes to collective progress and security.”

Over land, this innovative mission provides information to monitor wildfires, map the way land is used, observe vegetation state and measure the height of rivers and lakes – complementing the high-resolution measurements of its Sentinel-2 sister mission.

The satellite features systems built in the UK, including the battery and propulsion system, and draws on UK scientific expertise and experience in helping to calibrate and analyse the data obtained.

Completing the constellation of the first set of Sentinel missions, it follows the launch of Sentinel-5P in October 2017, which was built by Airbus UK, and features state of the art sensors from Teledyne E2V in Chelmsford at the core of the Dutch-built TROPOMI instrument.

Andy Stroomer, UK Business Development Director for space at Airbus, said:

“The Copernicus programme provides a hugely important contribution towards global monitoring of the environment. Airbus in the UK has been a major player in the development of satellites, ground systems and services supporting Copernicus. Contributions include: leadership of the Sentinel-5P atmospheric chemistry mission; the cornerstone radar instrument electronics for Sentinel 1; and cryogenic coolers underpinning the performance of this Sentinel 3 mission. We look forward to continuing to play key roles in future Copernicus missions.”

In orbit Sentinel-3B will join its twin, Sentinel-3A, which was launched in 2016. This pairing of satellites provides the best coverage and data delivery for Copernicus. The two Sentinel-1 radar satellites and two Sentinel-2 optical satellites operate in a similar way. Sentinel-5P is unique in the Copernicus constellation in that it is a single-satellite mission, but its extremely wide swath covers Earth every 24 hours.

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# Statement to Parliament: Tailored Review of Wilton Park: written ministerial statement

I am announcing today the start of a tailored review of Wilton Park, an Executive Agency of the Foreign & Commonwealth Office.

The principal aims of [Tailored Reviews](#) are to ensure public bodies remain fit for purpose, are well governed and properly accountable for what they do.

Wilton Park is an Executive Agency of the FC0, which convenes discreet dialogue on the UK's strategic foreign policy priorities. It has shaped and delivered events since 1946 linking a global network of experts from a range of sectors, including academia, the military, civil society, business, politicians and diplomats.

The Review, the first since 2015, will provide a robust scrutiny of and assurance on the continuing need for Wilton Park – both its function and its form. If this process finds the agency should be retained in its current form and status, it will then consider how Wilton Park can deliver on its core mandate more effectively and efficiently. It will also assess the control and governance arrangements that are in place to ensure that Wilton Park and the FC0 are complying with recognised principles of good corporate governance.

In conducting this Tailored Review, officials will engage with a broad range of stakeholders across the UK and overseas, including staff, management and the Board of Wilton Park. These consultations will include participating and sponsor organisations of Wilton Park events as well as partners from across UK government, foreign governments, international organisations, business, academia and the third sector.

The review will follow guidance published in 2016 by the Cabinet Office: '[Tailored reviews: guidance on reviews of public bodies](#)'. The [Terms of Reference for the review](#) can be found on gov.uk.

I shall inform the House of the outcome of the review when it is completed and copies of the report of the review will be placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

Read the [terms of reference for the Tailored Review of Wilton Park](#).

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# News story: Historic statue of suffragist leader Millicent Fawcett unveiled in Parliament Square

- Millicent Fawcett, created by Turner Prize-winning artist Gillian Wearing, is the first-ever statue in Parliament Square of a woman
- Statue unveiled in a ceremony attended by Prime Minister Theresa May, Communities Secretary Sajid Javid, campaigner Caroline Criado Perez and the Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan

A statue of suffragist leader Millicent Fawcett has been unveiled in Parliament Square in a ceremony attended by the Prime Minister, Communities Secretary Sajid Javid and the Mayor of London today (24 April 2018).

Following Caroline Criado Perez's campaign, the Mayor of London commissioned Turner Prize-winning artist Gillian Wearing OBE to create the statue. It is funded through the government's £5 million Centenary Fund and is the first-ever monument of a woman, and the first created by a woman, to stand within the square.

Marking 100 years since some women won the right to vote, the statue was unveiled by 3 generations of women – Jennifer Loehnis, a descendant of Millicent Fawcett; campaigner and activist Caroline Criado Perez; Deputy Mayor for Culture and Creative Industries, Justine Simons; and 2 schoolgirls, from Millbank Academy in Westminster, and Platanos College, Lambeth.

Prime Minister, Theresa May, said:

I would not be here today as Prime Minister, no female MPs would have taken their seats in Parliament, none of us would have the rights and protections we now enjoy, were it not for Dame Millicent Garrett Fawcett.

The struggle to achieve votes for women was long and arduous and Dame Millicent was there from the beginning. For decade after decade, in the face of often fierce opposition, she travelled the country and the world, campaigning not just for the vote but on a whole range of issues.

I want to thank Gillian Wearing for creating a beautiful and fitting tribute to Dame Millicent and to everyone involved in making this happen.

For generations to come, this statue will serve not just as a reminder of Dame Millicent's extraordinary life and legacy, but as inspiration to all of us who wish to follow in her footsteps.

Communities Secretary, Sajid Javid, said:

Today's unveiling is a landmark moment, a celebration of the legacy of the women that fought tirelessly for equal rights and transformed our nation for the better.

The statue of Millicent Fawcett, now facing Parliament, will remind us all of how we must keep up the fight against inequality and injustice in everything we do.

Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, said:

Today is an historic day. Finally, Parliament Square is no longer a male-only zone for statues. From the very first week of my Mayoralty, I supported Caroline Criado Perez's campaign to put up a statue of a woman in Parliament Square, and I'm so proud that the day of its unveiling is now upon us.

This statue of Millicent Fawcett, the great suffragist leader, will stand near Mahatma Gandhi and Nelson Mandela – 2 other heroic leaders who campaigned for change and equality. There couldn't be a better place to mark the achievements of Millicent Fawcett, in the heart of UK democracy in Parliament Square.

I hope this statue sparks further change across society – driving forward gender equality and inspiring women and girls across the capital and the UK. My huge thanks to Caroline, for her passionate campaigning and to Gillian Wearing – who has brought Millicent Fawcett and her legacy to life through this magnificent work.

Caroline Criado Perez also spoke at the ceremony, talking about her campaign for the statue, which included a change.org petition signed by almost 85,000 people. Following the endorsement of the campaign from both the Prime Minister and the Mayor, the Suffrage Statue Commission selected Turner Prize-winning artist Gillian Wearing to create a statue of suffragist leader Millicent Fawcett.

Artist, Gillian Wearing OBE, said:

I want to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has worked on this sculpture and plinth. It was so heart-warming to see the care and attention that went into the work. I can only say I am truly grateful.

I hope those viewing the work will be able to appreciate this along with being able to celebrate Millicent Fawcett along with all the other suffrage supporters and activists also honoured.

Campaigner, Caroline Criado Perez OBE, said:

When I went for a run in Parliament Square two years ago and first noticed that all the statues there were of men I could never have imagined quite how perfectly the dream would eventually be realised.

Gillian Wearing's design is everything I could ever have wanted – and more – for the first statue of a woman in Parliament Square.

I'm so grateful to everyone who worked so hard on this campaign to make this happen. It's been a brilliant team effort, and one I'm so proud to have played a part in.

The statue unveiling is one of the many events taking place this year to celebrate the centenary year of suffrage. The Government Equalities Office has allocated £5 million to mark the centenary of voting rights for women in 2018. This fund will support projects that raise awareness of this crucial milestone, educate young people about its significance, and inspire people to build a diverse political system that reflects the nation it serves.

So far, over £600,000 has been awarded from the Women's Votes Centenary Grant Scheme to standout schemes across the country, including projects that train women to become leaders in their communities, and events that celebrate the lives of prominent suffragettes.

The unveiling of the Millicent Fawcett statue is a major event in the Mayor of London's [#BehindEveryGreatCity](#) campaign, which celebrates the role of women in the capital. Alongside Fawcett, the names and portraits of 59 women and men who campaigned for women's suffrage are inscribed on the plinth.

The unveiling ceremony was presented by BBC broadcaster Mishal Husain and featured poet Theresa Lola, performances from the cast of *Sylvia* and the Suffragist Singers and an adaptation of Millicent Fawcett's 1918 Victory Speech\* by award-winning actress, Helen McCrory OBE.

The statue was commissioned by the Mayor of London with 14-18 NOW, Firstsite and Iniva to commemorate the centenary of the Representation of the People Act 1918, through the government's national centenary fund.

To mark the day of the statue unveiling, Google Arts & Culture is collaborating with its creator, the artist Gillian Wearing and the Mayor of London to show the spirit and stories of the suffrage campaigners on a new online platform at [g.co/roadtoequality](https://g.co/roadtoequality).

## Further information

\*Adapted for a transcript of Millicent Fawcett's Victory speech in March 1918 published in *The Common Cause* (Newspaper first published in 1909, that supported the policies of the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies,

“the organ of the women’s movement for reform’.) Looking Backwards, by Mrs. Henry Fawcett

## Previous press releases

- 2 April 2017, [Millicent Fawcett to be honoured with first statue of a woman in Parliament Square](#)
- 13 April 2017, [Gillian Wearing announced as artist of Suffragist statue](#)
- 19 September 2017, [Green light for Millicent Fawcett statue in Parliament Square](#)
- 27 December 2017, [Sadiq Khan launches #BehindEveryGreatCity gender equality campaign](#)
- 6 Feb 2018, [Mayor marks centenary of women’s suffrage](#)

## Background on government’s centenary fund

In 2017, the government announced a £5 million Centenary fund to coincide with International Women’s Day.

To date, £1.2 million has been awarded to 7 Centenary Cities and towns in England with a strong suffrage history to help inspire a new generation with the legacy of women’s campaign for equal representation. Manchester has chosen to spend a portion of their funding to commemorate Emmeline Pankhurst, as only the second woman alongside Queen Victoria, to be represented with a statue in the city. The 7 Centenary Cities are Bolton, Bristol, Leeds, Leicester, London, Manchester, and Nottingham.

In February, the Minister for Women and Equalities Amber Rudd announced £1.5 million would make up a Women’s Suffrage Centenary Grant Scheme for bids of up to £125,000 for projects running throughout the centenary year to encourage communities to celebrate and to help make modern politics more accessible. Over 600,000 has been awarded to stand out scheme across the country including projects that train women to become leaders in their communities, and events that celebrate the lives of prominent suffragettes.

A new [Celebrating Votes for Women](#) web page will help people find out more about getting involved in centenary events through the year. The page includes links to information about the history of the suffrage movement and details of how to apply for a grant, as well as an events hub to show what is happening across the country.

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## **Social media – MHCLG**

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