



STRENGTHENING DEMOCRACY CAMPAIGN COORDINATOR - POSITION DESCRIPTION

Mission

Tasmanian 2018 Election Inquiry Ltd was formed in March 2018 by a group of concerned Tasmanian citizens to safeguard and strengthen democracy in Tasmania.

Aims

1. To secure significant electoral reform in Tasmania that includes a cap on political donations and real time disclosure, bans on overseas donations and bans on corporate donations.
2. To see the introduction of Electoral Reform legislation, promoting our goals, to be introduced into the parliament in early 2020.

Purpose of Position

- To raise awareness in the Tasmanian community and key stakeholders about the opportunity to strengthen our democracy through electoral reform.
- To engage with key stakeholders and political parties regarding the threats to, and best outcomes for, electoral reform.
- To harness the high level of community concern for the lack of transparency in politics and the massive undisclosed contributions to the Liberal party in 2018.

Location: Hobart – home office

Contract: \$40,000 including superannuation contributions of 9.5%

Hours: 3 days/week (22.8hrs) negotiable

Contract period: 6 months starting in February 2020. Potentially renewable.

Accountability: Tasmanian 2018 Election Inquiry Board

Primary Tasks and Responsibilities

- Campaign for disclosure of the Bill on electoral reform which the Tasmanian Liberal Government has promised since the March 2018 election
- Re-activate and develop a coalition of NGOs to support our campaign
- Engage as needed with political decision makers.
- Tie this campaign in with other relevant bills coming forward
- Deliver a program of public activities for the campaign.
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- Bring new voices and unlikely allies into the movement and maintain civil society relationships.
- Undertake local media engagement for the campaign, including acting as a spokesperson for the campaign.
- Activate and equip others to be active in the media including through letters to the editor, social media and media comment.
- Remain abreast of campaign news and developments and identify campaign and organising opportunities.
- Undertake general campaign activities as required, including drafting e-mails and social media posts.

Selection Criteria

- An understanding of community organising principles and practice and demonstrated community organising experience.
- An understanding of the Tasmanian political and electoral system and experience in lobbying.
- An understanding of best practice in electoral funding disclosure and limitations on electoral donations.
- Excellent communication skills including written and oral communication and social media.
- Experience in media presentation and public speaking.
- Demonstrated project management and volunteer leadership skills, supported by excellent organisational skills and attention to detail.
- A demonstrated ability to work autonomously, with limited supervision.
- Passion for strengthening our democracy.

Background

The March 2018 Tasmanian state election saw an unprecedented amount of undisclosed money spent on promoting the Liberal Party. Advertising estimates are between \$2-6 million. The source of the obvious massive injection of funds remains hidden behind the weakest state election donation laws in the country.

Beyond wanting better disclosure of donations and limits on donations, we are concerned with lobby groups donating money to political parties and expecting (and gaining) something in return.

We focus on the Liberal Party as they won the election following a huge spend. But no party in Tasmania is required to disclose funding under Tasmanian law, though the Tasmanian Greens have a policy of disclosure of donations of over \$1,500 annually.



In summary, during the Tasmanian 2018 election the Liberal Party:

- Took hidden dollars from the gambling and pokies industry to promote their agenda;
- Secretly granted an exploration licence for an un-approved cable car on the face of kunanyi / Mt Wellington;
- Covered up a mass fish kill of 1.3 million salmon in Macquarie Harbour; and
- Did a secret deal with the gun lobby to weaken our firearm laws.

These key factors led to a tainted election outcome which fostered a sense of grievance in the broader community. Our weak political donation laws, hidden deals with powerful lobby groups and subsequent erosion of our democracy has made electoral reform one of the biggest issues of concern for Tasmanians.

Whilst our group exposed the serious implications of our weak electoral laws, raised awareness and widespread concern, our questions about funding sources and deals remain unanswered. A recent UTAS report has shown the source of over 75% of the March 2018 election donations remain undisclosed.

The government has launched a review of the Electoral Act, with the final report on the review of the Electoral Act is due by the end of 2019. It does not look promising, however, as the government says the review:

“will be guided by two governing principles; protecting freedom of speech, with note to Constitutional implications, and minimal cost to the taxpayer.”

Since 2011, all mainland states of Australia have introduced state-level political donations reforms. We have an opportunity to bring Tasmania into line with New South Wales, Victoria and Queensland if we adopt the UTAS report recommendations.