



## ***The Canary***

*The Canary* is a progressive news website. Our business model focuses on rewarding those who create content, and all writers receive a substantial share of net profits.

We started on a shoestring and have quickly grown to be one of the most important sources of news in the UK. This is thanks to a cohesive team of extraordinary people whose commitment to change is second to none.

A description for the position of Writer (UK) follows. First, here's a bit about us.

### **Why does *The Canary* exist?**

Today, a handful of individuals control our mainstream media. Mass media coverage is largely conservative. We are an important part of the counterpoint - the other side of a conversation that has been running in the halls of Westminster and the mainstream media for many years. *The Canary* is not afraid to challenge the status quo, to ask the hard questions and to have an opinion.

We are an independent media outlet, producing campaigning journalism with the aim of building a free and fair society where we nurture people and planet. We connect and engage people by providing readers with high-quality, well-researched and incisive journalism that tells the stories of ordinary people, as well as holding power to account.

At our heart, we are progressive, open and rigorous. We work with respect, courage and generosity – values that are at the front and centre of everything we do. We inform and empower people to change their world and believe that fostering a connection is key to achieving our aims.

Our content focuses on news, ideas, and key developments that impact freedom, democracy, equality, and fairness.

The UK section focuses on UK news and politics - from short, sharp news and 'trending' stories to analysis and longer opinion pieces. We also run occasional investigations.

Overall, our aim is to tell the unreported, under-reported, and misreported stories of our time. We cover stories from across the UK and are keen to increase our coverage of Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales.

## **Who runs *The Canary*?**

*The Canary* is led by Kerry-Anne Mendoza, Drew Rose and Nancy Mendoza.

Kerry-Anne, our Editor-in-Chief, is a former management consultant in banking, local government and the NHS who left her job to join the Occupy movement in 2011. She went on to set up one of the UK's top independent political blogs, *Scriptonite Daily*. She is the author of *Austerity: The Demolition of the Welfare State and the Rise of the Zombie Economy*. Her passion is the Middle East and she reported independently from Gaza during Operation Protective Edge in 2014, producing the documentary film *Palestine: What hope peace?* on her return to the UK.

Drew Rose, our Director of Operations, has over twenty years' experience campaigning on social and environmental justice issues. He helped to found *The Bristol Cable* media co-operative before becoming the founding UK Editor of *The Canary*.

Nancy Mendoza, our Director of Communications and Membership, is a Chartered Public Relations Practitioner with over a decade of experience in media relations, public and community engagement, and policy and parliamentary affairs. She is passionate about creating media that is a vehicle for positive social, political, economic and technological change to create a world that works for everyone.

## **How is *The Canary* different?**

*The Canary* has created a strong team of writers by establishing a fair business model and cooperative working practices.

Our editorial process is among the most rigorous in today's media landscape.

Around twenty freelance writers contribute articles to the site, in return for 45% of net profit (after minimal costs and tax are accounted for). This is allocated as an equal share per article from donations and membership subscriptions, and from advertising revenue as a proportion of the traffic generated.

Our Directors, Editors, and Sub-Editor are the shareholders of *The Canary* and also receive a percentage of net profit in return for their work. We receive no outside investment and maintain an agile and responsive approach to the business, changing in response to both external and internal factors, when required.

We also channel revenue into an Investigative Journalism Fund. This enables the kind of longform, original, investigative journalism that has become a rarity in the cash-strapped mainstream.

We believe that the people who generate our content should be rewarded fairly. At *The Canary*, the writers and editors are not beholden to any corporate owner or to the interests of shareholders. Our business model also encourages real team work – we win or lose together.

We are regulated by IMPRESS and take our commitment to the regulator’s code of practice seriously. It is our policy to own up to our mistakes and correct them publicly, with at least as much prominence as we give our articles on social media.

We see *The Canary* as an important part of building a new media in the UK – and around the world – which helps us to move towards a fairer, more just, and more equal world.

## Writer (UK) – Role Description

Thank you for your interest in being a part of *The Canary*. Please have a read and get back to us with any questions. This is a freelance position. We particularly welcome applications from BME candidates. Application details are at the end.

### Responsibilities:

- Write 5 - 10 articles per week, on week days.
- Articles will be roughly 300 words (50%), 500 words (30%), and 800 words (20%).
- Search out the most interesting and engaging stories.
- Select striking Featured Images.
- Write powerful, shareable headlines.
- Write clean, concise copy to deadlines.
- Provide robust references in stories, using hyperlinks to link to original sources and also to link internally to previous *Canary* articles.
- Adopt an appropriate tone, lacking pretence and using accessible but elegant prose.
- Pitch articles to, arrange work schedule with, and take editorial direction from your Editor.
- Be available to attend virtual or face-to-face editorial or organisational meetings as required.

### Skills and Competencies

- Excellent ability to source and select news stories.
- Excellent ability to identify new angles and contexts to, and relationships between, stories.
- Previous online journalism experience.
- Fully confident in referencing/ fact checking.
- Excellent time management and ability to meet daily deadlines.
- Integrity – doing what you say you will do, when you say you will do it, or communicating in advance if unable to do so.
- The technical ability to edit and manipulate images via Paint, Powerpoint or Photoshop.
- A cooperative attitude to sharing information and news with other sections and writers.
- Shares the visions and values of *The Canary*.

**Desirable:** The ability to work mornings.

***If you do not have the above skills and competencies, do not apply for this role. The Newsroom is a very high-paced and challenging environment. All of these attributes are essential to any applicant being successful in our team.***

## Pay

Writers will receive 45% of the profit generated by the articles they write, after tax and costs. This is calculated in two ways. Firstly, all articles receive an equal share of 45% of profits from donations. So each article receives a fixed base rate each month. Then, each article also earns a percentage of 45% of profits in relation to the number of hits it attracts.

All the Directors, Editors and Writers at *The Canary* are on a percentage, so we all win or lose together

## Application

To apply for the role of Writer (UK) at *The Canary*, please email [editors@thecanary.co](mailto:editors@thecanary.co) with the following by **12 noon on 25 May 2018**. With **APPLICATION UK (Full Name)** in email subject header. Only full applications with all of the following elements will be considered.

1. CV
2. A covering letter explaining why you would like to write for *The Canary*.
3. A document including:
  - a) Links to 5 articles written by you which have been published online.
  - b) A critique of the following article:  
<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2018/jan/30/uk-mass-digital-surveillance-regime-ruled-unlawful-appeal-ruling-snoopers-charter>  
How would you write it differently? Include your revised headline, featured image, angle, and a maximum 50-word summary of the changes you would make.
  - c) From one day during the application process, outline the four stories you would select if writing for *The Canary*. One should be news, one 'trending', one opinion and one analysis. See note below for more information about these categories. For each, provide your headline, image, subheading (the text that appears below the image on Facebook posts) and a maximum of three sentences explaining why it would attract readers and the angle you would take.

The four categories for 3c are:

**Analysis:** editorialised news, analysis of an issue/policy/decision etc.

**Trending:** video-, image-, audio- or tweet-led articles. They include some colour and opinion.

**News:** straight news pieces without editorialising/opinion. The headline should also follow a news format.

**Opinion** is forthright, brash opinion. The headline should reflect that.

*Only successful applicants will be notified – by 1 June 2018.*