



Common of Houses

ELECTORAL REFORM



RULES AND REGULATIONS

1. ABOUT

When we received the entries for our previous competition (Common of Houses: No Expense Spared) we noticed that most entrants were keen not just to see changes in the rules governing MPs' expenses but also to see major changes in the way in which Government is actually formed and operates.

We started to think about other aspects of Government policy/ procedures that could do with a creative redesign. If we were to start again, what, and how would designers change the way that politics runs in this country? With the election guaranteed to be coming up in May 2010 there seemed like only one sensible place to start – the vote.

"In a representative democracy, voting commonly implies election: a way for an electorate to select among candidates for office. In politics voting is the method by which the electorate of a democracy appoints representatives in its government." Voting - Wikipedia

Voting is a bit of a hot topic at the moment, not just because of the forthcoming election but also as "reform" has become a bit of a political toy in the wake of the MPs' expense fiasco with each of the main parties trying to outdo each other in the drastic measures they advise are required to fix the "broken" system. One of these measures being electoral reform, but despite all their chatter, how enthusiastic are the main parties really, to change a system which has served them so well for so long?

Some are happy to stick to the current First past the post system (FPTP) which saw Labour regain power in 2005 despite only being supported by 36% of the nation. Alternatively there is the Single Transferable Vote (STV) but some claim this is too confusing for the public to understand. Surely there is a system in the mix somewhere, one that represents all the votes but which is designed clearly enough that even us simple minded members of the public can understand how it works?

2. BRIEF

This is where we need you, the creative minds of the UK (and elsewhere). Basically the challenge is to suggest how you would redesign the voting system. This could be through:

1. Redesigning the voting forms for the current system.
2. Designing voting forms for an alternative voting.
3. Come up with a whole new method of gathering votes altogether.
4. Or a poster encouraging people to actually vote in the first place.

Exactly how this works is up to you. It could be a fold out origami style form, a dating agency style political match-up questionnaire, an explanation poster or it could be a large jar of coloured marbles which get dropped into slots. Any system that you think could work to choose our MP's.

3. BACKGROUND

For more information on the history of voting and alternative systems we suggest reading.

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Voting>

<http://www.voteforachange.co.uk/>

<http://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/>

<http://www.electoral-reform.org.uk/article.php?id=5>

4. ELIGIBILITY

The contest is being widely advertised in the UK art and design press but is open to everyone, anywhere. If you have a good idea, we want to know about it.

5. JURY

Jury members are still to be confirmed and will be announced at www.commonofhouses.co.uk

Judging criteria will be as follows :

- inspiration and creativity
- response to and understanding of brief

6. DATES AND ENTRY SPECIFICATIONS

a) Contest Dates

The contest will be open for entries from 22 March, 2010 and entries can be received until midnight 19 April, 2010 GMT.

b) Entry specifications

An entry to the competition must consist of four parts:

1. Up to a max of three A3 sheets which graphically explain your idea. The content of these sheets is left to the entrant's discretion and may include drawings, illustrations, scribbles or artistic visualisations – basically any image(s) which you feel helps to sell your idea. These sheets should be emailed in a (200DPI) RGB JPG format. You don't need to fill three sheets, just show whatever you think explains your idea. If you can do it in one sheet then that is fine.
2. A completed submission form. (Can be downloaded from www.commonofhouses.co.uk)
3. A nomination suggestion for a prize you'd like to win.
4. A brief explanation of the concept behind your design. This could take the form of a short essay, a quotation or anything that inspired the author to produce the design. This can be up to 500 words long.

If an entry does not consist of all four parts, it may not be considered for entry. All applications are to be emailed to info@commonofhouses.co.uk and emails must be no larger than 5MB.

c) Selection

All valid entries from eligible participants will be submitted to the jury for selection. A valid entry is one that matches all the technical and content requirements and has been submitted via the info@commonofhouses.co.uk email. Designs not matching these criteria might be excluded from the competition, at the discretion of the jury.

7. ANONYMITY

a) Copyrighted material

By submitting an entry the participant confirms compliance to the competition rules, that the design has not been published prior to the contest and that it is their personal work.

b) Anonymous entries

No designs submitted should be signed by the author or bear any other distinguishing mark. The design, name and address of the participant will be numbered and personal data will be stored separately and reunited only after jury selection.

8. RESTRICTIONS

a) Delays

A design shall be excluded from the competition if it is received after midnight (GMT) 19 April, 2010, unless it has been delayed by a malfunction in the submission system, in which case it may be included at the jury's discretion.

b) Clauses

A design shall be excluded from the competition if it does not fulfil the clauses laid out in this document.

9. SHORTLISTED ENTRIES

a) Nominated prize

The main prize will be chosen by the public. Each entrant is asked to nominate a prize they would like to win. At the end of the competition these nominations will be open to the public vote using the FPTP. The one with the most votes will win. (Please bear in mind that there is limited budget for the prize and there will be a great deal of artistic license used in the representation of your prize.)

b) Main prizes (TBC)

We are currently in discussion with a number of partner organisations and prizes will be announced as the competition progresses.

c) Additional prizes

The Jury, at their discretion, may choose to award more than one prize or a special prize if they deem it necessary.

d) Shortlisted entries for further development

At the juries discretion a shortlist of entries which they feel could benefit from further development *may* be drawn up and the designers may be commissioned to explore their idea to a deeper level. This will be entirely down to jury discretion and the individual merits of the entries received. The issuing or non-issuing of this further development will have no bearing on the award of the main prize.

e) Exhibition and catalogue

The competition organisers hope to feature prize winning and selected competition entries in a high profile exhibition. Details about the exhibition location and dates will be announced through the contest website as soon as a definitive arrangement has been made.

10. COPYRIGHT

Participants retain ownership of their entry. Participants agree to grant Common of Houses, Hole in my Pocket, an irrevocable, perpetual, non-exclusive, transferable, royalty-free, worldwide licence to use, copy, exhibit, publicly display, publish and distribute their submitted entry for any activity hosted by Hole in my Pocket.

Every participant is granted and guaranteed the right to be credited every time their entry is published or displayed.

11. DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

a) Design Production

If a design entry requires further development and its designer does not possess the necessary experience or facilities available for the successful completion or is unable to undertake such work within a reasonable period, then a consultant or design organisation may be recommended by the jury to collaborate with the participant. The issuing or non-issuing of this further development will have no bearing on the award of the main prize.

12. CREDITS

Common of Houses: Electoral Reform is a **Hole in my Pocket** project
www.holeinmypocket.com

13. COMPETITION PARTNERS:

Vote for a Change – www.voteforachange.co.uk

14. MORE INFORMATION:

If you have any questions then please send an email to:

www.commonofhouses.co.uk
info@commonofhouses.co.uk

