



Research Assistant (intern) – slavery & fossil fuels/climate crisis

Company:	Preventable Surprises
Location:	Home-based with some days in Central London
Salary:	None at present. However, reasonable expenses agreed in advance, will be reimbursed and Preventable Surprises will provide networking and training support.
Industry:	Climate Change, Sustainable Investment, Think Tank, Campaigning Group.
Contract:	Flexible part-time, period by mutual agreement

1. About Preventable Surprises

Preventable Surprises is an ambitious and unusual not-for-profit that aims to be the global 'tough friend' for the investment industry. Operating as a think-tank and campaigning group, our aim is to drive the powerful influence of global investors towards an environmentally sustainable and more socially just global economy.

Using insider knowhow and by working with a network of "positive mavericks" who are inside the investment system, Preventable Surprises punches well above its weight and has made the case that the climate crisis is a systemic risk and that 'forceful stewardship' is the best strategy for investors who want to be considered truly climate aware.

2. The Position

Preventable Surprises is looking to recruit a Research Assistant to assist with a new programme that seeks to draw lessons from the abolition of the UK slave trade for the current climate debate and the place of fossil fuels. This role is a tremendous opportunity for a motivated, enquiring and self-managing individual who is interested in learning about how the investment community is dealing with climate risk. The Research Assistant will work alongside



experienced investment professionals who have a passion and proven track record on this issue.

Preventable Surprises has no funding for this post but is ready to provide the successful candidate with training and also assist with networking and introductions to the sustainable investment industry. If funding is found for the programme, we will, of course, review this situation.

The Research Assistant role is a wide ranging role that is focused on:

- Developing research in key campaign areas, initially the programme on comparing slavery with fossil fuels/the climate crisis,
- Assisting in the creation of relevant communications through a variety of media, and
- Managing outreach using social media to engage the broadest relevant audience.

3. Team and Reporting

The Research Assistant will work with Richard Barker (Senior Associate of Preventable Surprises and Adviser to Iona Capital, a sustainable private equity firm) and Raj Thamotheram (Founder and Executive Chair of Preventable Surprises).

4. Main duties and responsibilities:

- Under direction from Richard, undertaking research into the abolition of slavery in the UK as an analogy to the debate about the fossil fuel industry and its role in the climate crisis, comparing how the US and UK abolitionists operated. Specific research to include:
 - Behaviours of slave owners following the introduction of the Cannings' Resolutions in 1823
 - Actions by slave owners to mitigate their risk positions leading up to the Abolition of Slavery in 1833
 - Organisation of the slave owner lobby group(s)
 - Details of the negotiations between slave owners and the UK Government that arrived at the final compensation agreement
 - Any alternative compensation frameworks/mechanisms that were considered at the time.
 - Development of the alternative slavery abolition narrative in the United States, culminating in the US Civil War.
 - Comparing the economic costs of abolishing slavery and losses expected by investors in fossil fuels.
- Organise workshops and seminars to refine and promote the key messages, converting the dialogues into accessible reports.



- Developing blogs, articles, white papers and presentations to communicate the research findings.
- Developing broad reader engagement and network expansion, both directly but also assisting Richard and Raj with this social media outreach.
- Developing networks and relationships with like-minded organisations.
- Undertaking research on priority ad hoc areas to support Preventable Surprises' strategic opportunistic orientation.
- Assisting with the organisation of Preventable Surprises' meetings and events as required.

5. Key skills & attitudes we are looking for:

- A desire to be part of a meaningful campaign group that focuses on tackling climate change by surfacing a powerful historical analogy.
- Highly reliable, well organised and good on detail with a strong orientation to collaboration.
- Ability to synthesise information into coherent messaging with an ability to communicate clearly and confidently - strong written communication skills essential.
- Ability to deliver with minimal supervision i.e. a self-directed worker who can work independently (PS has no employees i.e. everyone is a volunteer).

6. Qualifications and experience:

- Degree level education in history, social sciences or related field, or an otherwise proven research capability.
- Personal engagement with the climate change debate.
- Social media literacy with evidence of effective use of Twitter, Linked-In, Facebook, YouTube & Instagram.
- Proven intellectual curiosity and an active interest in how the financial sector could better serve society's needs.