

COVER LETTER FOR ROLE OF IAPSS Secretary General

~ Soumyadeep Chowdhury

"Future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams" ~ Eleanor Roosevelt

The tripartite connections between elections, parties and the political process in the world's largest democracy have long fascinated me. When I was eleven, I had a dream, as I moved towards the dream the dream moved towards me.

From developing my passion in the Social Sciences early on in primary school to pursuing Humanities in high school and topping the state of West Bengal in the CBSE Class 12 exams, my curiosities gradually took the shape of controlled inquiries as I pursued and completed my undergraduate degree with Political Science Honours from St. Xavier's College (Autonomous) under the University of Calcutta emerging as the Vice Chancellor's Gold Medalist Valedictorian in 2022. As an individual whose passions and professional interests genuinely overlap and integrate, I look forward to specialising in the domain of Comparative Politics with a special focus on South Asia and India in particular. Avidly researching and writing on Political Processes, Voting Behaviour (psephology), Party Systems and Governance inspired by works of a host of contemporary scholars including Pradeep Chibber, Rahul Verma, Christophe Jaffrelot, Gilles Vernier's, Sanjay Kumar, Milan Vaishnav, Ashutosh Varshney, Louise Tillin, Suhas Palshikar, K.K. Kailash amongst many others, I describe myself as an 'election nerd' keenly observing and tracking election results around the world, decoding the 'qualitative in the quantitative'. My research internships with a number of prominent organisations previously including the Confederation of Young Leaders, New Delhi, Asiatic Society for Social Science Research, New Delhi and Observer Research Foundation, Kolkata combined with my publications in blogs such as Australian National University's East Asia Forum, ECRP's The Loop, LSE SouthAsia as well as books, national and international journals, my latest publication being a book chapter in Dr. Prothoma Rai Chaudhuri edited 'The Crescent Has Its Own Stories' (ISBN 9789356455191) published by Ukiyoto Publishing, is likely to be followed by 2 more papers awaiting publication in the coming months supported by a strong research score of 9.5 on 10 in my UG Dissertation titled, 'New Enigmatic Coalitions & The Changing Party System in India : Implications for the 2024 General Elections' adjudged as the best in the Department. It has also been my privilege to present papers at International Conferences hosted by UGC, Ministry of Education, Government of India thereafter in April, 2023 at a joint collaboration of the premier Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi and Amity Institute of Public Policy, Noida sponsored by the Erasmus Mundus Fund of the European Union and July, 2023 in the ATINER, Greece Social Science Conference giving back and in turn gaining lot more from the subject I love so very much, my long stint in leadership positions during my high school and college years including as Team Leader for Social Science Excursions and Field Surveys for primary data

collection, Member of the Student Council, the Editor and thereafter as the Chief Editor for the College Political Science Journal as well as the Convener and Chief Organiser for a number of College Fests and Academic Events , many of which had to be hosted virtually given the ravaging Covid - 19 Pandemic, have not only infused the team spirit in me providing the opportunity of interacting and learning not just from Professors and scholars but also peers, juniors and students around the world which I hope to successfully replicate as IAPSS's Secretary General tasked with the overall general administration and IT management including as a representative to negotiate successful agreements with external organisations.

The IAPSS which remains an esteemed platform for students hasn't remained untouched by the Pandemic and as we emerge out of the pandemic, a new leadership which gives new directions to take this organisation to greater heights working not unilaterally but forever together with its members, my long stint in leadership prepare me adequately well for a role as one of the administrative lynchpins. Currently a Master's student aspiring for Doctoral Studies from the USA in the realm of Indian Politics, my engagements currently as a Researcher on the IAPSS SRC, Asia and Oceania also serving as an online instructor for one of their courses on Indian Politics and a Chair for the IAPSS 2023 World Congress besides being a Research Assistant to Dr. Christophe Jaffrelot, one of the seminal minds in my domain of work, Professor of Political Science at King's India Institute, London and Senior Fellow at Sciences Po, Paris have further enhanced my skills as a graduate student, an election enthusiast and an emerging researcher in Political Science to lead the way ahead in collaboration with other esteemed members on the Global Board and the larger team realising the ideal of 'collective leadership for common benefit'.

Hoping to bring to the plate a coveted symbiosis of academic excellence, analytical prowess and extraordinary communication skills aided by technological competence, it shall be a much valued opportunity to formally work, learn and grow through this experience what is likely to prove another milestone as I gear up for my Ph. D applications, motivating me to fly higher and higher in realising my aspirations giving wings to my dream of a career in academics, research and leadership and sticking together and working together in realising the bigger IAPSS dream of a safer, better as well as a more enlightenment and empowered world, I request your whole hearted support during the upcoming elections allowing me a chance to serve you and this organisation to the best of my abilities.