



HOUSE OF LORDS APPOINTMENTS COMMISSION

PRESS RELEASE

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Two new non-party-political peers – House of Lords Appointments Commission

Two new non-party-political peers recommended by the **independent House of Lords Appointments Commission** were announced today.

The new peers are:

- **Dr Alexandra Freeman**, a filmmaker, and expert in the communication of science, evidence and risk
- **Professor Lionel Tarassenko CBE**, a British engineer and academic, who is an expert in the application of signal processing and machine learning to healthcare

They will sit on the crossbenches.

Notes to Editors

1. **Media enquiries about the work of the House of Lords Appointments Commission should go to Maggie O'Boyle on 07880 740627.**
2. **Dr Alexandra Freeman** was until recently the Executive Director of Winton Centre for Risk and Evidence Communication at the University of Cambridge, with a focus on improving how professionals such as doctors, journalists or legal professionals communicate numbers and uncertainty. Alexandra's career has a dual focus on communication and science: As a filmmaker she won a BAFTA (for *Walking with Beasts Interactive*), a Prix Europa, an RTS award and the AAAS Kavli Gold Award for science journalism (for *Climate Change by Numbers*, which she produced & directed) and was Series Producer of *Trust Me, I'm a Doctor*. As a scientist, she led a team at the University of Cambridge and has written research papers and widely read articles designed to help communicate research evidence to a broader audience. She helped communicate the evidence around Covid-19 transmission and the benefits and risks of vaccination during the pandemic. She was a member of the Scientific Advisory Group to the Grenfell Tower soil contamination investigation, and part of an Expert Advisory Group helping with public health reform in Ireland. Her combination of experience in academia and communication led her to create a new platform for sharing research findings, called Octopus.ac, funded by UK Research & Innovation. Alexandra was born in Maryland, USA and now lives near Abingdon in Oxfordshire.
3. **Professor Lionel Tarassenko** is the founding President of Reuben College and Research Professor in the Department of Engineering Science at the University of Oxford. He held the Statutory Chair of Electrical Engineering for 22 years, during which time he was also the Director of the Institute of Biomedical Engineering and

the Head of the Department of Engineering Science from 2014 to 2019. He is internationally recognised for being amongst the first to apply machine learning to real-world problems in the early 1990s, winning a British Computer Society Medal in 1996. Most of his research has been concerned with the application of AI to safety-critical systems, working on jet engine health monitoring (with Rolls-Royce) and on patient monitoring and treatment in the NHS, to improve outcomes from intensive care to community settings. He is passionate about technology transfer from universities, having founded four spin-out companies, and he has served on the Board of Oxford University Innovation since 2012. He was the Scientific co-ordinator for the Foresight Project on Cognitive Systems (Office of Science and Technology), and the Editor-in-Chief of the Topol Review (2017-19) for the NHS “Preparing the healthcare workforce to deliver the digital future”. He is a Fellow of both the Royal Academy of Engineering and the Academy of Medical Sciences and was made a CBE for services to Engineering in 2012.

4. The **House of Lords Appointments Commission** is an independent non-statutory advisory body set up by the Prime Minister to make recommendations for non-party-political peerages. The Commission's remit is to find people of distinction who will bring authority and expertise to the House of Lords. The Commission recommends individuals on merit and their ability to contribute effectively to the work of the House.
5. The Commission [also vets nominations for life peers, including those nominated by the UK political parties, for propriety.](#)
6. The [House of Lords Appointments Commission](#) has recommended a total of 76 non-party-political peerages (since 2000) to the Prime Minister, drawn from approximately 5900 nominations. The Commission last recommended non-party-political peers in May 2022.
7. Further information on the Appointments Commission can be obtained from: <http://lordsappointments.independent.gov.uk>. The Commission's [annual report](#) covering its work from 2023 – 2024 has also been published today.
8. The membership of the House of Lords Appointments Commission currently comprises five independent members Baroness (Ruth) Deech DBE (Chair), Rt Rev and Rt Hon Lord Richard Chartres KCVO, Dame Fionnuala Jay-O'Boyle DBE, Wayne Reynolds, Rt Hon Sir Hugh Robertson and three members nominated by the political parties: Baroness (Ann) Taylor (Labour), Baroness (Sheila) Noakes DBE (Conservative) and Baroness (Kate) Parminter (Liberal Democrat).