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Plumb Lines Project

Research Specification

Summary

Following the success of a pilot project in 2024-25, the purpose of Plumb Lines 2026-28 is to work alongside and support groups of people whose voices are underrepresented in writing and publishing to create and craft anthologies of individuals' new written work. The project is supported by the Katrina Rowan Plumb legacy and Lapidus is privileged to be working with Katrina's family to contribute to her legacy in this field.

An Editor in Chief will lead the development and production of four anthologies of newly created work by participants across 12 groups from 2026-2028. This model reflects upon and extends the successful work undertaken in the pilot phase. To complement the creation of the anthologies we are delighted that the family have agreed to support a research component to the project in 2026-27. In this year the project aims to commence in September 2026 with cohort No 1 of three groups. Cohort No 2 of a further three groups will commence in March 2027 with all deliverables due by September 2027.

To implement the research component we are keen to recruit a suitably qualified person who will lead on investigating and reporting on the impact of the project for participants.

We would like the researcher to use qualitative methodologies, congruent with words and writing for wellbeing and therapeutic purposes. Methodologies included will be poetic and narrative inquiry, alongside simple written and spoken interviews, to complement the richness of participants' material and convey their experiences of being involved.

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Plumb Lines Project Outcomes 2026-2027

i) To have given 6 groups, comprising up to 90 individuals, from communities who have traditionally been under-represented in publishing the opportunity to have their work published in a professional anthology.
ii) To have helped give these individuals the support, tools and confidence they need to be able to further their writing activities beyond their involvement in the Plumb Lines project
iii) To have helped give the organisations sponsoring each writing group the confidence, desire and resources to be able to continue and expand their work in this area beyond their involvement in this phase of the Plumb Lines project
iv) To have delivered a supporting research strand that captures the impact the project has on its participants; enables improvements to be made for future phases; and provides the evidence base needed to prove the benefits provided by the Plumb Lines project, thereby enabling the Plumb Lines philosophy to be sustained and expanded well beyond Katrina Rowan Plumb's initial legacy.

Research Specification

The chosen researcher will be required to:

1. Design an ethical framework for the research, aligned with Lapidus International's ethical code and agreed with the Lapidus Chair
2. Produce clear and accessible research-related information guidance for all participants and their supporting groups
3. Recruit, on a voluntary basis and in consultation with the Plumb Lines Editor-in-Chief, an appropriate cohort of research participants
4. Produce appropriate research-related information and material to enable the Lapidus Co-ordination Team to promote the project to Lapidus members and wider participants and beneficiaries through newsletters, the Lapidus website and other relevant channels
5. Produce the research components of the project toolkit outlining the ethical framework, research prompts and narrative enquiry steps etc.
6. Produce poetic transcription and/or found poems series from research data that represent the collective voice of participants

7. Conduct and write up at least three in-depth impact narratives to explore a challenge-contribution-change structure
8. Present their project research process and findings to both project participants and the broader Lapidus membership through a tailored event forming part of the broader Lapidus events programme
9. Produce a final report, which both delivers the desired outcome (iv) above and is suitable for publication in the LIRIC Journal to publicise the benefits of Plumb Lines to a broad international and academic audience.
10. Use the academic research outputs as the basis of a chapter in the project How-To guide, suitable and accessible for a general audience.

Team Support

Reports to: Chair of Lapidus Board of Directors,

Works in conjunction with: Plumb Lines Editor in Chief,

Works alongside: Other members of Lapidus and Plumb Lines teams

Application Process

We welcome applications from all over the world. As a highly collaborative team, we ask that applicants are mindful of time zones and willing to schedule virtual meetings and check-ins at times that work for the Plumb Lines participants and team.

The offered fee is up to £4,900. The successful candidate will be contracted on a freelance basis, with responsibility for their own tax deductions and professional insurance. We expect this fee to cover up to 17.5 days or 140 hours.

Please send a letter of application of up to 2 pages setting out the following:

- How you would meet the requirements
- Your fee, with estimated working days/hours clearly shown
- Summary of key attributes and relevant experience
- Confirmation that you hold or will obtain the necessary insurances and documentation, such as a DBS check.

Applications should be sent to chair@lapidus.org.uk by **9:00 am UK time (GMT) on Monday 23 November 2026.**