

Job description

Job title: Communications Officer, (Programme Strategy Communications)

Job location: Haywards Heath

Reports to: Communications Manager (Programme Strategy Communications)

Responsible for: N/A

Department: Policy and Programme Strategy (Programme Strategy Communications)

Job purpose

As a key member of the policy and Programme Strategy Communications team, the Communications Officer will play a crucial role in raising the profile and awareness of Sightsavers' eye health and social inclusion policy, research and programmatic work to a diverse range of audiences. Working closely with colleagues from across various teams including research, institutional funding, policy and advocacy and collaborating closely with other communication teams and colleagues, the post holder will design and deliver effective and engaging communication plans and support the development of on and offline communication products.

Principal accountabilities:

1. Provide effective communications support to the policy and programme strategy department

- Act as the initial point of contact for communication requirements and requests from the policy and programme strategy department.
- Offer strategic communications guidance and advice to PS2 colleagues including supporting them to identify objectives, audiences and messages and make recommendations for appropriate communications approaches, tactics and/or products needed to deliver.
- Develop communications plans for bespoke projects or areas of work and be responsible for delivering them.
- Manage the briefing, scheduling and delivery of communication jobs from the department factoring in time and support needed from other colleagues, implications on other activity and budget implications.
- Provide communications support for Sightsavers' policy campaign, Put Us in the Picture, as directed by the cross-organisational campaigns working group.
- Provide communications support for Sightsavers' donor funded programmes to ensure we are promoting programmes and ensure we are meeting donor visibility and profile requirements.

- Build knowledge and understanding of the department and its work and take the initiative in identifying communications opportunities that raise awareness and the profile of Sightsavers.
- Evaluate communications activities to ensure they meet objectives, identify lessons learned and make recommendations to support and improve future communications activities.
- With the support of the Communications Manager, develop, manage and maintain systems and processes to support the team and its ways of working.
- Work with colleagues to identify and mitigate any communications risks.

2. Create engaging and creative content and communication products for use across on and offline channels

- Develop creative briefs where necessary in order to commission in-house designer or external freelance creative support.
- Work with Sightsavers' content team to identify and collect content needed to support communications activities and products.
- Design and manage the delivery of communication products that build Sightsavers' brand, are on message and meet strategic objectives including developing content for websites, blogs, case studies, news stories, picture stories, presentations, social media or other digital assets, printed materials including leaflets, banners, posters, videos, audio stories; commissioning and briefing designers/ freelancers and reviewing/ testing materials where necessary.
- Ensure appropriate plans are in place to share new content/ communication products with relevant audiences to maximise potential and reach
- Work with the PS2 communications team and online team to identify content updates to website pages and implement changes ensure the website reflects the range of Sightsavers' policy and programme work.
- Write and publish case studies to support different areas of Sightsavers' work.
- Support the development of a communications toolkit to provide guidance and support for colleagues across the organisation to improve their communications.
- Keep up to date with creative communication trends and contribute to creative brainstorming to enable Sightsavers to raise its profile and innovate.

3. Support communications for Sightsavers' research team

- Working with research colleagues and the online team, manage ongoing design and development requirements for the research centre website (www.research.sightsavers.org.uk)
- Maintain and manage new content for the website including research projects, publications and reports.
- Support the design and publication of research reports ensuring they are consistent in style and design, drawing on the support of designers and freelancers as and when needed.
- Working closely with the Communications Manager, identify communication objectives and strategies to raise awareness of and the profile of Sightsavers' research portfolio and team.
- Build effective relationships with colleagues across the team to develop greater understanding of their work and the audiences they wish to reach in order to improve communications.
- Support the research team with external communication opportunities: for example, live tweeting from events.

The principle accountabilities are not meant to be an exhaustive list of tasks. Flexibility is essential and the job holder is expected to carry out any other related duties that are within the employee's skills and abilities whenever reasonably instructed.

Jobholder entry requirements

Essential requirements

- Significant experience working in a busy communications team or department
- Demonstrable experience of supporting multichannel communications activities and confidence working across on and offline channels
- Experience of supporting teams/ clients to identify objectives and the ability to turn these into realistic communications plans and tactics
- The ability to write clear, compelling and engaging copy for a range of channels and audiences
- The ability to think creatively and present complex information in an engaging way relevant for a wide range of audiences
- Passionate about creating content and telling stories across multiple channels
- Good relationship building and stakeholder management skills
- Experienced in overseeing the design and development of creative communication products (on and offline)
- Experience using Content Management Systems
- Ability to work under pressure and manage conflicting priorities
- Ability to work with multiple internal and external stakeholders on a range of projects simultaneously
- Excellent project coordination skills and an ability to juggle multiple competing deadlines
- An understanding of and commitment to equality of opportunity for people with disabilities
- Some knowledge of global health, international development and policy

Desirable requirements

- Experience of working in a communications role for NGOs or charities, including international NGOs
- Experience of communicating complex research or academic content
- Experience using email delivery systems and Customer Relations Management (CRM) databases
- Adobe Photoshop or image manipulation software skills
- Video editing skills experience
- Proofreading skills

Core behaviours:

- Team work
- Creativity
- Flexibility and self-motivation
- Self-starter
- Tenacity
- Enthusiasm
- Planning and organising
- Change and improvement
- Delivery and implementation

Key relationships

Internal

- PS2 communications team including Communications Manager, Editor and Content Producer
- Other communications teams including media, social media, NTD communications (neglected tropical diseases), online and design, events and content (case studies)
- Other PS2 directorate including:
 - Research and technical leads
 - Institutional Funding team
 - Policy and global advocacy including campaigns
 - Programme staff based in country offices
- Other internal teams as necessary to fulfil the requirements of the role

External

- External agencies and freelancers when required including:
 - Photographers
 - Videographers
 - Editors
 - Proofreaders
 - Freelance designers
 - Other creative agencies
- Funders/ donors
- NGOs and other partners working with Sightsavers to deliver programmes
- Coalitions and membership bodies