



The Commonwealth

JOB AND TASK DESCRIPTION

Job Title: Communications Officer

Division: Communications Division

Grade: H

Reports To: Head, Media and Public Affairs Section

General information

The Commonwealth is a voluntary association of 53 independent and equal sovereign states. Its special strength lies in the combination of its diversity and shared values. The Commonwealth Secretariat in London is the principal intergovernmental organisation of The Commonwealth. It convenes summits and high-level meetings; executes plans agreed by Commonwealth Heads of Government; promotes Commonwealth values and supports the work of the Commonwealth family of organisations.

The Communications Division of the Commonwealth Secretariat is responsible for projecting the image of The Commonwealth (and the Commonwealth Secretariat), raising the Commonwealth profile to member governments, the media, specialist groups, young people, and the general public. It does this by a range of strategic communications means, including proactive media relations and public affairs, online outreach through social media, Commonwealth publications and knowledge management.

Job summary

The Communications Officer supports the implementation of the Commonwealth Secretariat's strategic communications strategy, which involves proactive media outreach and a range of public affairs activities. S/he will be expected to provide input on and execute communications proposals identified in the Communications Division's Communications Strategy in support of the Commonwealth Secretariat's Strategic Plan.

This role additionally requires the post holder to support the division's multi-media outputs, notably the development of quality audio-visual material. Demonstrable experience in the multi-media field is thus essential.

Task description

The post holder will be required to:

- Manage communications for one or more of the Secretariat's thematic work areas. In this role, the Officer advises programme divisions on media strategy and takes the lead in framing the communications and profile of the assigned area.
- Contribute to media strategy development and engagement ahead of and during official visits by the Commonwealth Secretary-General to member countries. The Communications Officer may also be called on to accompany the Secretary-General, Deputy Secretaries-General or senior management on official missions with the objective of providing on-the-ground communications support and coverage.
- Collate and re-write technical and official documents in a media-friendly and informative manner.
- Identify multimedia opportunities and contribute to social media outputs to highlight the work of the Commonwealth Secretariat.
- Develop and maintain contact with key journalists on Commonwealth matters.
- Coordinate and supervise press conferences, media briefings and interviews.
- Draft statements and other materials to ensure that Commonwealth values are conveyed consistently and coherently.
- Write and edit press releases, briefing papers and occasionally, speeches.
- Contribute to the content of the Commonwealth website by providing text, photographs, and audio-visual material.
- Identify and facilitate key media slots for senior management and directors to articulate Commonwealth messages.
- Work as part of a team to identify publicity and news angles for Commonwealth Secretariat programmes and projects.
- Monitor external media coverage of the Commonwealth.
- Assist with the planning, organising and setting up of media arrangements for public events hosted by the Commonwealth Secretariat.
- Respond to public inquiries about the Commonwealth and Secretariat activities
- Any other duties that may be assigned by the CPAD Director or Head of Media.
- Adhere to the Gender Equality values of the Commonwealth as enshrined in the Charter and Secretariat's Gender Equality Policy.
- Perform other duties as may be required from time to time.

The Commonwealth Secretariat operates a results-based management system. The post holder will be required to provide regular qualitative and quantitative reports on his/her output.

Person specification

Education

Master's degree or equivalent in communications, journalism media studies, international affairs or any other appropriate field.

Experience

At least six years of experience as a reporter or correspondent in a media organisation (either audio-visual or print journalism).

The applicant should be able to demonstrate:

- Excellent oral and written communication skills.
- Sound news judgement and news writing.
- Organisational and some administrative skills.
- Creative and strategic thinking.
- Excellent interpersonal skills with the ability to work in a team and perform well under pressure.

Desirable:

- Experience in covering political, parliamentary, social or economic issues.
- An appreciation and knowledge of international and or diplomatic issues.
- Experience as a press officer or involvement in news management.
- Event management experience.

Competencies

Respect for Diversity

Works effectively with people from all backgrounds.

Treats all people with dignity and respect. Treats men and women equally.

Shows respect and understanding of diverse points of view and demonstrates understanding in daily work and decision making.

Examine own biases and behaviours to avoid stereotypical responses and does not discriminate against any individual or group.

Identifies biases in systems & processes

Working with Others

Regularly shares information of value with colleagues

Shows commitment to delivering on key agreements made to colleagues

Makes an effort to view a situation from the other party's perspective as well
Demonstrates awareness and sensitivity to colleagues' pressures
Utilises networks to ensure similar goals are achieved collaboratively
Develops long term relationships across cultures and/or geographical boundaries
Uses relationships to identify the best people to help in the completion of tasks
Tactfully deals with difficult people to gain buy-in and manage their expectations

Developing & Applying Expertise

Takes advantage of opportunities to develop an area of expertise
Takes learning from previous experience and applies them appropriately
Demonstrates willingness to learn new skills and/or approaches

Adapting & Innovating

Recognises opportunities for improvement and proposes change with impact and effect
Helps others evaluate and strengthen ideas
Quickly grasps new concepts and how to apply them
Demonstrates flexibility e.g. by working beyond own remit in order to achieve an objective inter alia
Will effectively reorganise activities when faced with changing contexts and demands
Welcomes and adapts to new ideas and/or approaches
Adapts personal style to meet the needs of others

Accountability

Takes ownership of assigned tasks, honours deadlines.
Ensures timely delivery of outputs within defined cost and quality standard parameters.
Takes ownership of assigned tasks, honours deadlines (L1)
Ensures timely delivery of outputs (L1)