

JOB AND TASK SPECIFICATION

Job Title: Senior Communications Officer

Division: Communications Division

Job Grade: H

Reports to: Head of Media Relations, Communications Division

General information

As the principal intergovernmental organisation of the Commonwealth, the Commonwealth Secretariat implements the collective decisions of its 54 member governments. The Communications Division is primarily responsible for raising the public profile of the Commonwealth in line with the Secretariat's Strategic Plan. Our principle audiences are member governments, accredited Commonwealth organisations, partner organisations, civil society groups, young people, and the general public. The Communications Division does this through strategic communications, including proactive media outreach, and a range of public relations activities.

Job summary

The Senior 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 is expected to provide input on and execute communications proposals identified in the Communication Division's strategic 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

- Managing 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.
- Contributing 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 or senior officials on official missions with the objective of providing on-the-ground communications support.



The Commonwealth

- Collating and re-writing technical and official documents in a media-friendly and informative manner;
- Identifying multimedia opportunities and contributing to social media outputs to highlight the work of the Commonwealth Secretariat.
- Contributing to the content of the Commonwealth Secretariat website by providing text, photographs, audio-visual material and social media.
- Developing and maintaining contact with key journalists on Commonwealth matters.
- Coordinating and supervising press conferences, media briefings and interviews.
- Drafting statements and other materials to ensure that Commonwealth values are conveyed consistently and coherently.
- Writing and editing press releases, briefing papers and occasionally, speeches.
- Identifying and facilitating key media slots for senior management and directors to articulate Commonwealth messages.
- Working as part of a team to identify publicity and news angles for Commonwealth Secretariat programmes and projects.
- Mentoring and coaching communications young professionals and social media officers.
- Any other duties that may be assigned by the Head of Media Relations or Director of Communications.

Person specification

Education

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

Desirable:

Master's degree or similar post-graduate qualification in journalism or any other relevant field.

Experience

At least seven years of experience as a reporter or correspondent in a media organisation, and/or in an external communications role.
Competency in audio-visual or print journalism.

Desirable:

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

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)