University of Edinburgh

Job Description

1. Job Details

Job title: Press and Communications Officer

School/Support Department: HSS

Unit (if applicable): ESRC Genomics Policy and Research Forum

Line manager:

2. Job Purpose

To manage and deliver communications activities for the ESRC Genomics Forum and ESRC’s Genomics Network (EGN), where appropriate.

3. Main Responsibilities

1. **Strategy and Planning:** develop/ deliver external and internal communications strategy and action plans for Forum key audiences including; ESRC, EGN, policy makers, academic, media and the general public. Develop/ maintain robust internal and external communications procedures to ensure efficient and reliable distribution of information. Managing evaluation of communications activities.  
   *Approx. % of time: 15%*

2. **Web Management:** to create and maintain a website for the Genomics Forum including; development and implementation of a web strategy, recruiting and appointing a web development agency, coordinating the creative process, maintaining and updating content; managing site development.  
   *Approx. % of time: 15%*

3. **Publications:** support Forum publications strategy through the development and production of a range of publications. In particular, management of the publication process for the ESRC Genomics Network Newsletter and GSP online journal - recruiting and coordinating external contractors where appropriate - including design, editing, production and distribution.  
   *Approx. % of time: 15%*

4. **Media relations:** to manage media relations for the Forum including the development and implementation of a media relations strategy; stimulating/ securing free & paid publicity in national, local and specialist UK & International media, issue press releases, statements, lines to take, Q&A briefings, press conferences, interviews, photo opportunities; develop/ implement processes for evaluating PR campaign/ activities; develop/ deliver a media training programme for Forum staff using external contractors where appropriate; identify/ co-ordinate lists of key contacts in the media and partner organisations; liaison with key contacts and partners on opportunities for joint publicity.  
   *Approx. % of time: 10%*

5. **Events Management:** developing and managing a range of events including lectures, seminars, meetings, film and book festivals and associated promotional and press materials. Supporting other Forum events as required.  
   *Approx. % of time: 10%*

6. **Manage/ support EGN communications activities** including media relations support, and design, production and distribution of appropriate: publications, promotional items and events.  
   *Approx. % of time: 10%*

7. **Artist in Residence:** manage planning and development of A in R programme including; enlisting project partners; coordinating recruitment, selection and appointment processes; developing public engagement programme.  
   *Approx. % of time: 10%*
8. **Contacts management**: identify/ co-ordinate lists of key contacts in the media and partner organisations; liaison with key contacts and partners on opportunities for joint publicity.

9. **Finance**: Manage and monitor communications budget and spending

4. **Planning and Organising** - Developing and implementing strategies and action plans for communications activities; recruitment of external contractors; establishing/ chairing committees; managing production of various publications, events and promotional materials.

5. **Problem Solving** - Thinking independently and on own initiative to resolve issues associated with Forum communications activities; providing advice/ support to staff on management/HR/ Finance issues.

6. **Decision Making** - Management decisions associated with Forum communications activities; recruiting external contractor services; supporting Forum staff recruitment where appropriate.

7. **Key Contacts/Relationships**
   - Internal: University - Finance, HR, CPA, College Office, IT, Publications, Web, Talbot Rice Gallery, ESRC, EGN, Management and Advisory Boards
   - External: media, public, external suppliers, partner organisations.

8. **Knowledge, Skills and Experience Needed for the Job** - A degree or equivalent, preferably in a relevant area; an outstanding record in communications, press or media work; excellent written and spoken communication skills; initiative, energy and ability in the development and implementation of projects; an ability to work collaboratively and flexibly as part of a small team; excellent organisational and interpersonal skills; some knowledge of, or interest in, developments in the life sciences and public policy would be an advantage.

9. **Dimensions** - Supervise external contractors and 2 members of clerical staff within Forum during Director’s absense, when appropriate. Manage Communications budget approx £250 000. Represent Forum at internal/ external meetings where appropriate.

10. **Job Context and any other relevant information** - The ESRC Genomics Policy and Research Forum, explores and supports synergies between the three existing ESRC Genomics Network (EGN) centres at Edinburgh, Cardiff and Lancaster Universities. It also aims to connect research from across the EGN, as well as its own work programmes, with public and policy debates. The Forum runs a programme of national and international activities to draw natural and social scientists, policy-makers, regulators, civil society and business into an ongoing discussion about the relationship between genomics and society.