Advertisement

Post Title: Head of Media  
School/department: Communications, Marketing and Advancement  
Hours: full time or part time hours considered up to a maximum of 1 FTE. Requests for flexible working options will be considered (subject to business need).  
Contract: Fixed term for 2 years  
Reference: 6632  
Salary: starting at £42,149 to £50,296 per annum, pro rata if part time  
Placed on: 08 November 2021  
Closing date: 8 December 2021. Applications must be received by midnight of the closing date.  
Expected Interview date: to be confirmed  
Expected start date: ASAP

The University of Sussex is looking to appoint a Head of Media to work closely with the University Executive Group providing expert communications advice and lead on all external institutional announcements. The role will ensure that the University is able to identify, manage and amplify media opportunities with key audience groups.

Reporting to the Associate Director of Communications, Digital and Creative media you will lead a team of four Media Relations Managers and a PR and Social Media Manager to deliver on key University strategic objectives. The University of Sussex has a bold vision, Sussex 2025, that seeks to transform the University for new times and a new generation. In this role you will be responsible for raising awareness of the University’s excellence across research, education and the student experience.

The University is now in its 60th year and seeks to become one of the most sustainable universities in the world.

You will be an effective senior representative for the Communications team, leading on media opportunities with journalists, editors, opinion formers, digital influencers and directly to audiences through social media.

_The University of Sussex values the diversity of its staff and students and we welcome applicants from all backgrounds._

2. The School / Division

Please find further information regarding the division at http://www.sussex.ac.uk/schoolsandservices/professionalservices/communications-marketing-advancement

3. Job Description

Job Description for the post of: Head of Media

Department: Communications, Marketing and Advancement

Section/Unit/School: Communications
Location: Sussex House

Grade: 8

Responsible to: Associate Director of Communications, Digital and Creative Media

Responsible for: 4 x Media Relations Managers; PR and Social Media Manager

Principal accountabilities:

- Providing expert communications advice to the University Executive Group on the opportunities and considerations on decisions and policies, on handling announcements and on responding to news.
- Developing effective PR and media strategies that support institutional priorities, covering areas such as sustainability, research, student experience and our role in the local community.
- Leading a team of media relations and social media managers and running a high quality, proactive and reactive media management and news planning service, monitoring news across all platforms on behalf of the University. Responding rapidly to fast-moving events.

Key responsibilities:

- Assuring all outputs are crafted to the highest standard, are timely and in line with the University's guidelines and that all work is evaluated.
- Owning the overall institutional communication timetable, responsible for scheduling key announcements ensuring that activities are planned and well timed.
- Enabling the University to communicate effectively during a crisis and playing a key role in managing incident communications.
- Building excellent relationships with Heads of School, Divisional Directors and key leading academic staff, to make sure the Division can develop impactful communication campaigns that contribute to the University’s strategic aims.
- Developing excellent working relationships with journalists and a good understanding of their priorities in order to promote accurate and fair media coverage. Seeking opportunities to proactively champion the work of the University in the media.
- Owning the editorial calendar for the University’s main social media channels, collaborating with other Divisional colleagues, enabling the social media team to deliver channel strategies to key audience groups.
- Ensuring that media coverage and social media activity is monitored, measured and evaluated and that learning is shared amongst the team and wider colleagues.
- Building relationships with key communications contacts at other local universities and organisations to deliver third party support and advocacy.
• Acting as a key member of the Communications team, working collaboratively with other senior colleagues to deliver the Department’s Communications Strategy.

• Budgetary responsibility for media relations activity and the management of a range of media and media-related services and resources.

• Playing a leading role in University transformation programmes working with other communications colleagues on external stakeholder relations to deliver on key objectives.

Dimensions
• The role holder will have budget responsibility for commissioning content to support communications aims; media monitoring; media services and media training.

• This role has line management responsibility for five staff.

• The post holder reports to the Associate Director of Communications, Digital and Creative Media working under broad direction to enable the post holder to manage their own work and that of their team members, to achieve their agreed objectives. The role holder will play a key role as part of the Communications leadership team in supporting the achievement of the strategic and operational goals of the University, Professional Services & their Division. The post holder is expected to work collaboratively across the University and with key stakeholders to deliver single team working that efficiently and effectively supports the achievement of those goals and objectives.

• Support achievement of the Communications, Marketing and Advancement Divisions compliance with all applicable statutory and regulatory compliance obligations, including (but not limited to): UKVI, Health & Safety, the Prevent Duty, data protection, Competition and Markets Authority requirements and equal opportunities, as appropriate to the grade and role. Additionally, to promote good practice in relation to University policy, procedure and guidance in relation to those compliance matters in respect of students, staff and other relevant parties.

• Balance effectiveness and cost-efficiency in the management of the budgets you are accountable for, demonstrating compliance with Value for Money and Return on Investment principles to support the University’s strategic aim to achieve a world-class standard of teaching and research by managing our resources effectively and efficiently

This Job Description sets out current responsibilities of the post that may vary from time to time without changing the general character of the post or level of responsibility entailed.

4. Person Specification

Essential criteria:
1. Normally educated to degree level, or other equivalent qualification.
2. Five years’ experience in a senior media relations role, in a high profile organisation.
3. Detailed knowledge and understanding of the media landscape and how expert communications can contribute to delivering a defined organisational strategy and objectives.

4. Effective management skills in leading a small team within a wider department/division.

5. Well developed oral and written communication skills with the ability to present a strategic approach and communicate complex messages in a way that can be understood by the audience.

6. Planning and organisational skills.

7. Well developed interpersonal skills with the ability to quickly build rapport, effectively influence, persuade and negotiate an effective communications approach.

8. Build and develop working relationships, and work with external networks to build advocacy and maximise opportunities.

9. Analytical skills with the ability to generate effective solutions and make effective decisions.

10. Effective IT Skills and experience of content management systems.

**Essential role specific criteria:**

1. Experience in developing both proactive and reactive media relations strategies that support wider communications and campaign objectives.

2. Experience of social media channel management and a strategic approach to connecting with different audiences using effective content and messaging.

3. Experience in sensitive and fast-moving media handling within issue management scenarios.

4. Experience of overseeing a coordinated media approach by leading and motivating a high-performing team.

5. Experience in developing media relations strategies that involve influencing and engaging international, national, local and sector journalists, digital influencers and direct to audiences through social media

**Desirable criteria:**

1. Experience working in a university or similar environment.