

Communications assistant – 12 month fixed term contract

Location: London

Salary: £25,000 plus access to civil service pension arrangements, 30 days annual leave

Transport Focus is the independent transport user watchdog. Our mission is to get the best deal for passengers and road users. With a strong emphasis on evidence-based campaigning and research, we ensure that we know what is happening on the ground. We use our knowledge to influence decisions on behalf of passengers and road users to secure improvements and make a difference.

We are looking for a first-class communications assistant, to help us deliver high-quality media and communications activities.

You will be motivated with a flexible approach, able to manage your own time to handle a busy workload, and have excellent writing skills and attention to detail.

Working as part of a small communications team, you will act as first point of contact for journalists, respond to media enquiries and help arrange interviews with spokespeople. You will proactively seek opportunities to promote messages to a wide range of media, including through our own website and digital media channels.

You will represent Transport Focus at internal and external events as required, and help produce the monthly newsletter and other external publications, including proofreading and liaising with design agencies.

This role will also provide some admin support to the communications team including organising travel, processing invoices, and maintaining records.

Please tell us why you are the right candidate by sending a CV and short covering letter via email to: recruitment@transportfocus.org.uk.

Closing date for receipt of applications is 12.00 noon 15 March 2017

TITLE: Communications assistant
GRADE: C
MANAGER: Head of communications

PURPOSE OF THE JOB

To make a difference for Britain's rail, bus, coach and tram passengers and users of England's Strategic Road Network by helping to deliver Transport Focus's integrated communications activities and raise our profile through managing and delivering high quality, media and communications activities.

OUTLINE

The communications assistant will assist the head of communications in delivering both external and internal communications.

The communications assistant will be motivated with a flexible approach, able to manage their own time to handle a busy workload, and have excellent writing skills and attention to detail.

TASKS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Strategic communication

- Act as guardian of the Transport Focus brand, working with other staff to ensure the corporate identity is consistently applied.
- Create and deliver integrated communications plans/materials for Transport Focus activities eg research, policy guides.
- Take responsibility for horizon scanning and forward planning activity (such as maintaining the grid)

Media

- Work as part of the press team, acting as first point of contact for journalists, responding to media enquiries and helping arrange interviews with spokespeople.
- Proactively seek opportunities to promote messages to a wide range of media, including through our own digital media channels. Suggest ideas for, and assist in the development of, other communications channels communications as appropriate.
- Write articles and guest blogs.

Digital

- Contribute to maintaining the website.
- Develop our social media presence and encourage colleagues to contribute to this activity.

Events

- Work closely with the Head of Communications to plan and manage internal and external events to the highest standard.
- Represent Transport Focus at internal and external events as required.

Newsletters and publications

- Assist with delivery of organisational monthly newsletter.
- Assist with the production of external publications, including proofreading and liaising with a design agency where appropriate.

Internal communications

- Build internal relationships to help source internal news items
- Deliver daily news bulletin (internal)
- Create and deliver daily media monitoring email.

Team support

- Team admin (including suggesting improvements where identified):
 - Booking travel
 - Processing invoices
 - Maintaining media enquiry and statement records.
- Evaluation – including using Meltwater social monitoring and Kantar news monitoring platforms
- Creating and maintaining contact lists on CRM and Agility media contact site.

In addition to the above, you may be required to perform other duties that fall outside your job title or key duties.

TRANSPORT FOCUS - PERSON

EDUCATION / PROFESSIONAL KNOWLEDGE & RELEVANT

ESSENTIAL:

- Demonstrated experience of working in a comparable role, working in a busy communications team.
- Excellent written and verbal communication and high level of speed and accuracy in all written materials.
- Strong news sense, with some experience of media handling.
- A good understanding of social media
- Personable, with excellent communication skills, including the ability to communicate effectively with a broad range of people at all levels
- Excellent organisational and time management skills with the ability to establish priorities.
- Experience of working at or managing internal and/or external events.
- Willing team player, capable of cross functional collaboration.
- Flexible and adaptable, able to react quickly to changing requirements and new challenges.
- IT skills: experience of using Microsoft Office (particularly Word, Excel, PowerPoint and Outlook) to an advanced level.

DESIRABLE:

- Knowledge of, or interest in, the transport industry.
- An understanding of passenger and road user aspirations and an interest in how passenger and road user issues are identified and improved.
- Experience of using video editing packages (especially Adobe Elements).

CORE SKILLS AND COMPETENCIES

WORKING WITH OTHERS - Level 2

Works effectively as part of a team by collaborating with others and contributing towards team goals. Professional in approach. Demonstrates empathy and understanding of others' viewpoints in order to build rapport. Supports colleagues and works cross functionally to provide an effective input to the organisational team. Engages with others at all levels, sharing knowledge and best practice. Manages the expectations of others. Gains cooperation from others by talking through issues and solutions.

INFLUENTIAL COMMUNICATION - Level 2

Communicates in a way that can be easily understood. Speaks clearly and concisely at an appropriate pace, checking for understanding. Presents verbal and written information in a structured way. Actively listens to others and asks questions to indicate engagement or for clarification. Engages positively when communicating with others. Adapts communication style to the needs of the audience and situation. Conveys credibility when communicating at all levels of the organisation.

FLEXIBLE PLANNING AND ORGANISING - Level 2

Systematic and methodical when developing structured plans to manage own workload. Considers timescales and the materials available and manages these effectively in order to meet deadlines. Recognises the need to be flexible in approach to completing tasks. Thinks ahead and anticipates changes. Prioritises tasks in order to respond effectively to competing demands. Monitors progress by reviewing stages regularly. Responds flexibly to changing priorities by re-arranging own workload or adapting existing plans.

PROBLEM SOLVING AND CRITICAL THINKING - Level 1

Is able to assess problems from a variety of angles by recognising relevant and irrelevant information. Will formulate solutions based on the facts. Able to understand research information or data and link outcomes to objectives.

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT - Level 1

Committed to continuously strive for results and takes pride in producing work to high standards. Committed to improving self through learning from own experiences.

TENACITY AND RESILIENCE - Level 2

Works well under pressure, focused on completing tasks. Delivers consistent quality representation of the organisation and retains business focus in difficult situations. Remains emotionally controlled when under pressure or in stressful situations. Self-starting with the ability to handle challenges and obstacles confidently. Determined to succeed, demonstrating persistence.

STRATEGIC THINKING - Level 1

Demonstrates organisational awareness. Understands the role of the organisation and who the stakeholders are. Recognises how own role impacts and links into organisational objectives. Thinks through the wider consequences of their actions and how these will impact on organisational goals.

IMPORTANT WORKING RELATIONSHIPS

Internal

- ↻ Communications team
- ↻ Transport teams
- ↻ Chief executives team
- ↻ Board and Chief Executive
- ↻ Insight team.

External

- ↻ Key stakeholders, including the Department for Transport, Road companies, Network Rail and train companies, bus/coach operators and MPs
- ↻ Specialist contacts.