

Head of Communications and Engagement

Location: Remote, with at least one day each month at APF's Peterborough office for team meetings. Occasional travel to London for leadership meetings and elsewhere in the UK will be required

Salary: £50,000 to £55,000, within APF Band 5

Hours: Full time, 37.5 hours a week

Contract: Permanent

Reports to: Chief Executive Officer

Direct reports: Senior Marketing and Communications Manager; Press, PR and Stories Manager; Communications Operations and Engagement Manager

Team: Communications and Engagement

About Action for Pulmonary Fibrosis

Action for Pulmonary Fibrosis is a UK charity. We bring people together to drive change so that everyone affected by pulmonary fibrosis can live well for longer.

We provide support, information and education, raise awareness, campaign for better diagnosis and care, and invest in research. Our strategy, For Every Breath, Every Journey, Every Future, is shaped by lived experience and supported by stronger organisational foundations and sustainable income.

Purpose of the role

The Head of Communications and Engagement leads APF's communications, marketing and engagement function. Working within the strategic direction set by the Chief Executive, the role turns APF's priorities into an integrated, audience-led programme that strengthens our profile, reaches more people affected by pulmonary fibrosis, demonstrates our impact and supports sustainable income growth.

The postholder has delegated responsibility for leading the function, its people, budget, standards, systems and performance. They advise the Chief Executive and senior leaders on communications opportunities, organisational positioning and reputational risk. The Chief Executive retains organisational accountability and final judgement on significant external positioning and reputational matters.

Key responsibilities

Strategy and functional leadership

- Develop and deliver an integrated annual communications, marketing and engagement plan, with clear audiences, priorities, outcomes, resources and performance measures.
- Translate APF's strategy and organisational priorities into a realistic editorial, marketing, media and campaign programme.
- Lead, support and develop three managers, establishing clear accountability, effective delegation and high standards of performance across the function.
- Ensure communications and marketing expertise is involved early in planning across fundraising, services, research, policy and involvement.

Marketing brand and audience growth

- Lead APF's brand, messaging, tone of voice, editorial and accessibility standards, ensuring communications are consistent, trusted and compelling.
- Work closely with fundraising and other teams to turn organisational and income priorities into strong propositions, integrated campaigns and supporter journeys.
- Ensure marketing helps more people find and use APF's services, engage with our research and campaigning, support our work and choose to give.
- Oversee the strategic development of APF's website, quarterly PF Together magazine, email marketing and digital channels, with clear ownership of delivery across the team.

Media stories and reputation

- Set the direction for proactive media relations and storytelling, including a consistent pipeline of news releases, targeted pitches and opportunities for national and local coverage.
- Ensure APF tells powerful, connected stories about lived experience, services, research, policy, fundraising and organisational impact.
- Maintain high standards for consent, safeguarding, accuracy and dignity when sharing personal or sensitive stories.
- Lead the communications response to significant issues and emerging risks, including escalation, spokesperson support and advice to the Chief Executive.

Insight systems and responsible innovation

- Establish clear reporting on reach, engagement, conversion, reputation, campaign performance and impact, using insight to improve priorities and investment.
- Ensure effective communications data and audience systems, including appropriate integration between the website, CRM, Mailchimp and related platforms.
- Lead the responsible use of AI and connected technology across communications, establishing proportionate controls for data protection, information security, approval and human oversight.
- Manage the communications and marketing budget, suppliers and commissioned work, ensuring value for money and effective use of specialist support.

Person specification

Essential experience and knowledge

- Senior experience of leading a multi-channel communications and marketing function or substantial portfolio, with accountability for strategy, people, quality and delivery.
- A strong record of turning organisational strategy and audience insight into integrated plans with measurable outcomes.
- Experience of audience-led marketing that supports engagement, supporter acquisition, conversion, retention or income generation.
- Broad knowledge of brand, campaigns, content, websites, email marketing, digital channels, media relations and reputation management.
- Experience of leading and developing people, managing performance and building clear and effective ways of working.
- Experience of advising senior leaders, influencing across organisational boundaries and handling complex or sensitive communications.
- Experience of using data, audience insight and technology to improve communications and marketing performance.

Essential skills and abilities

- Strong strategic judgement, with the ability to turn ambition into focused and achievable delivery.
- Excellent written, editorial and verbal communication skills, including the ability to make complex or sensitive subjects clear and engaging.
- Inclusive and accountable leadership, providing people with clarity, feedback and the authority to succeed.
- Strong analytical and commercial awareness, with confidence using evidence to evaluate performance and guide investment.
- The ability to build trusted relationships with people affected by pulmonary fibrosis, colleagues, trustees, partners, journalists, suppliers and other stakeholders.

Desirable experience

- Experience in a health, disability, research, patient-focused or purpose-led charity environment.
- Experience of leading a significant website transformation, audience-growth programme or responsible adoption of AI-enabled communications tools.

Leadership approach

- Purposeful and audience-led, keeping people affected by pulmonary fibrosis at the centre of decisions.
- Clear and collaborative, setting expectations and building strong relationships across teams.

- Curious and improvement-focused, open to evidence, innovation and constructive challenge.
- Calm and accountable, exercising sound judgement when priorities compete or reputational risks arise.

Employment information

Annual leave: 28 days a year plus bank holidays

Pension: Workplace pension in accordance with scheme rules and statutory requirements

Life assurance: Three times basic salary for permanent employees, subject to scheme rules

Flexible working: APF supports flexible working where compatible with the requirements of the role

Additional hours: Occasional evening or weekend work may be required. Time off in lieu may be agreed in accordance with APF's current arrangements

Equality safeguarding and data protection

APF welcomes applications from people with a wide range of backgrounds and experiences. Everyone at APF is expected to help create a safe, inclusive and respectful environment, protect confidential and personal information, and follow APF's safeguarding, data protection and other organisational policies. Appointment will be subject to the checks appropriate to the role.

This job description describes the role as currently required. Responsibilities may develop in consultation with the postholder as APF's needs change.