

Job Description

Job title	Communications Officer	Grade	C
Department	Communications and Marketing		
Responsible to	Senior Communications Manager		
Revision Date	November 2025		

Organisation Context

The Institute of Physics (IOP) is the national society for the discipline of physics in the UK and Ireland. As well as being a learned society, we are also the professional body for members based in the UK, Ireland, and overseas.

We are a professional, modern, and ambitious organisation seeking to unlock the potential of physics and physicists nationally and internationally. Our purpose is to promote the advancement and dissemination of knowledge and learning in pure and applied physics for the benefit of all. We do this by building a thriving and diverse physics workforce, raising standards, supporting careers, and addressing barriers.

We demonstrate the importance, relevance, and impact of physics in everyday life and the role it plays in addressing society's major societal, economic, and environmental challenges. We influence change, actively engage in public and government dialogue, improving the quality of debate, informing policy, and influencing funding strategies. Above all, we are pioneering. We foster a sense of community amongst employees, members, volunteers, and people with an interest in physics, providing a platform and a voice for ideas to be heard and creating an environment which enables game-changing innovation.

Our organisational values are at the heart of IOP and provide the foundations to empower us all to lead cultural change, deliver high performance across the organisation, and enable us to promote advancements and learning in pure and applied physics for the benefit of all.

Our 2024–2029 strategy, titled "Physics for our Future," focuses on three key priorities: addressing the skills shortage and expanding opportunities in physics education and careers; strengthening physics across science, research, innovation, and technology; and exploring and communicating the social and economic benefits of physics to ensure they are widely understood. The strategy emphasises collaboration within the physics community, inclusivity, and diversity, aiming to make physics accessible and welcoming to all. It also highlights the central role of IOP Publishing in supporting the organisation's mission, with profits directed towards public benefit and scientific advancement.

Purpose of the Role and Accountabilities

The IOP Communications Officer will work to raise the profile of physics, the IOP and the huge impact physics can have on our society through high quality, high impact communications.

They will develop creative, ambitious communications strategies plans which will engage our audiences in the media, social media and elsewhere, inspiring people to learn more about the power and potential of physics to create a better world. They will translate complex topics into compelling and relatable messaging, finding human stories and media angles in the IOP's work that will help our message cut through to the wider world.

They will be a core part of the IOP's ambitious Communications team and support our rapid reactions on key topical stories and policy announcements, working closely with colleagues in expert teams to draw out what matters most. The role will support our monitoring, forward planning and horizon-scanning work, responding to communications opportunities and provide tactical support to crisis management.

The role will deliver work that helps us to engage target audiences including opinion formers, stakeholders, members, public audiences and IOP staff, and act as single point of contact within the communications team, for colleagues from designated departments or nation teams as directed by the team plan.

The Communications Officer will help develop messaging and plans that utilise owned and earned channels including media relations, PR, social media, member communications and internal communications. The role will support the delivery of media relations, social media, digital content and internal communications work as required.

The postholder will deliver against our strategic and tactical communications objectives and work with colleagues across the wider communications and marketing team to ensure an integrated approach. They will work to deliver the tactical communications work which supports the IOP's strategy around science, society and skills.

Accountabilities

- Reports to and supports the Senior Communications Manager, deputising for them when needed
- Advise colleagues and stakeholders on communications issues, deploying strong interpersonal skills, and be proactive, diplomatic and influential.
- Spot and escalate emerging risks, using their judgement and expertise to take immediate mitigating actions if needed
- Strong planning and time management skills are essential, with the ability to successfully juggle multiple priorities.
- Responsible for representing the organisation with journalists, senior members of the physics community and other important external stakeholders.
- The postholder will have responsibility for safeguarding the IOP's reputation including over our social media channels, and of for identifying and escalating risks and issues in a timely manner.
- £5k budget sign off

Contribution to Governance

The IOP's Communications and Marketing department, of which the Communications team is a central component, is responsible for the leadership of the organisation's strategic, public and member communications, media, digital, marketing and brand.

The Communications Officer will work with the Communications and Marketing department to develop and implement integrated communications campaigns and activities that support the delivery of organisational strategy and have the power to amplify the organisation's impact and messaging, shift public opinion, galvanise ambassadors and supporters and change the minds of influencers and decision-makers.

They will contribute towards wider decision making in the organisation, providing advice about the external environment and serving on governance board structures within the IOP as required.

Ways of Working

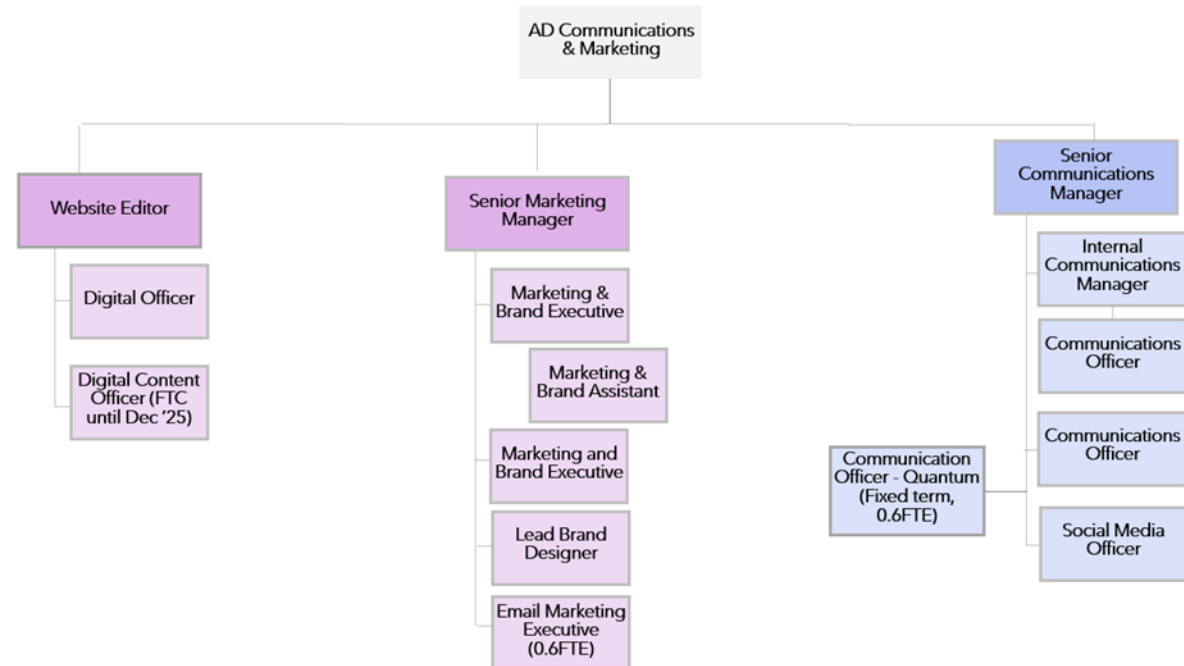
At IOP, we are committed to fostering a collaborative, inclusive and impact driven working environment.

All colleagues are expected to:

- Work collaboratively across teams and functions to deliver shared goals and contribute to a culture of transparency and mutual support.
- Demonstrate integrity by being a good corporate citizen, ensuring that work is evidence based, impartial and aligned with IOPs strategic priorities.
- Champion diversity and inclusion, actively contributing to an environment where everyone feels respected, valued and able to thrive.
- Engage constructively with stakeholders, to promote the value and impact of physics.
- Embrace flexibility and innovation, adapting to change and seek continuous improvement in how we work and deliver services.
- Take ownership and accountability for individual and team outcomes, upholding high standards of professionalism and conduct

Organisational chart

The Institute of Physics is an open and inclusive organisation that welcomes and celebrates diversity.



Main responsibilities of the role

•	Deliver effective, high impact communications activity across media, social media, and digital channels.
•	Write and edit high quality media lines, press releases, social media content and other communications material.
•	Develop and demonstrate policy knowledge and the ability to work closely with policy and public affairs colleagues to advise on, develop and deliver communications activity.
•	Provide communications advice to internal colleagues, ensuring all activity clearly ties into our overarching strategic objectives.
•	Understand all key audiences (internal, external, member and media) and work with colleagues to develop communications solutions tailored to their needs.
•	Support the IOP's social media activity, working alongside the Social Media Officer and Senior Communications Manager.
•	Monitor the external environment to identify opportunities to reach and engage target audiences and amplify strategic messages.
•	Build and maintain collaborative and trusted relationships with colleagues
•	Provide administrative support to the communications team as needed, including monitoring email inboxes, updating our intranet pages, schedules etc
•	Support the media monitoring work of the communications team and contribute towards its out of hours rota and coverage.
•	Be an expert writer with meticulous attention to detail and the ability to develop effective messages and compelling copy.

•	Identify, assess and manage risks and threats to the IOP, its programmes and projects within their specialism.
•	Encourage best practice in managing, following and promoting IOP EDI standards through their work, interaction with colleagues, stakeholders and members.

Person Specification

We are looking for someone who...	
•	Shows excellent judgement, identifying and escalating issues and reputational risks, offering solutions for these and ensuring mitigating actions are taken.
•	Proactively identifies and recommend communications opportunities and can explore them with skill and tenacity.
•	Can build strong relationships with colleagues and stakeholders, including at senior levels, deploying strong interpersonal skills, and be proactive, diplomatic and influential.
•	Can effectively manage competing priorities and move between longer-term strategic aims and rapid response work.
•	Will ensure accuracy, effectiveness, and quality across the output of communications activities.
Experience this person should have is...	
•	Experience developing communications and media campaigns, generating unique and compelling content that engages audiences
•	Experience in proactive and reactive media engagement, including press notices, lines to take, briefing spokespeople.
•	Experience working with senior colleagues from a wide range of backgrounds
•	Experience engaging with complex topics and able to make them understandable to a general audience.
•	Experience of balancing priorities and delivering to tight deadlines.
•	Experience of effective news management and crisis media handling.
•	Experience of creative communications campaigns that raise awareness of an organisation's event, service or product.
•	Some experience working with and managing social media channels.
•	Track record in the creation and development of relationships with journalists and opinion formers.
Skills this person requires are...	
•	Excellent written and verbal communication skills.
•	Able to understand and analyse complex issues and communicate them to various audiences in a simple but effective manner.
•	Able to develop engaging, targeted content and messages suitable for use across a range of channels and ensure appropriate content, messaging, tone and consistency in all communication.
•	A superb eye for detail and accuracy with strong editing and proofreading skills.

- Ability to work calmly under pressure to tight deadlines.
- Ability to make sound judgements and have a strong news sense.
- Effective time management with the ability to plan, prioritise and deliver to tight timescales.
- A creative and solutions focused approach with the ability to identify and exploit opportunities.
- Enthusiastic, proactive and a flexible approach to work.
- Organisational skills – ability to work with minimum supervision, prioritise own workload
- Computer literate – good working knowledge of Microsoft Office and of press office and social media tools.
- Team player – the ability to work co-operatively with others to achieve common goals
- Negotiation skills – the capability to explore different positions and alternatives to reach outcomes that gain acceptance of all parties
- Influencing skills – the ability to bring others to your way of thinking diplomatically
- Proactive – to think ahead and act to ensure the smooth completion of team/individual aims and objectives.
- Interpersonal skills – ability to positively communicate with others; the confidence to listen and understand.

Qualifications this person requires are...

- Educated to degree level or equivalent experience and qualifications
- Qualification in journalism, PR or marketing (or equivalent relevant experience)