
Job Description: Senior Press and Media Officer

JRS Mission and Work

The Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) is an international Catholic organisation, at work in over 50 countries with a mission to accompany, serve and advocate on behalf of refugees and other forcibly displaced persons. JRS in the UK has a special ministry to those who find themselves destitute as a consequence of government policies, and those detained for the administration of immigration procedures. JRS UK offers a place of welcome, recreational activities and hosting scheme (*At Home*) for destitute asylum seekers; detention outreach services to Heathrow IRC; and a specialist legal advice service. The work of JRS UK is carried out in collaboration with other JRS offices around the world, other Church and secular organisations, voluntary and governmental, which are active in the same field.

JRS values

JRS is grounded in Catholic social teaching and draws on the charism and principles of Ignatian spirituality. Staff and volunteers share a common set of values concerned with justice and the dignity of the person. As a Jesuit work, participative discernment and reflective practice are part of our ethos. If the successful candidate is not familiar with the spirit and charism of the Jesuits, there will be the opportunity to develop it through training, workshops and days of retreat.

Senior Press and Media Officer

JRS UK is seeking to recruit a full-time Senior Press and Media Officer to lead and develop JRS UK's press coverage to help to achieve our vision of a world where people forced to flee their homes are welcomed with love; and to help lead our work at a critical time when the Nationality and Borders Bill is seeking to overhaul the UK asylum system.

The ideal candidate will have an active interest and engagement in current affairs, with a demonstrable ability to analyse and advise on which stories we should engage in to further our mission. You'll have track record of generating positive news coverage across a variety of media streams, and a passion for amplifying the voices of the vulnerable.

You will be a key member of a small communications and fundraising team, seeking to broaden our media coverage across national and regional media, broadsheet, online and broadcast; as well as more specialist Christian and consumer media. We place a high value on encouraging refugee participation in, and the shaping of, our messaging, and you will play a key part in ensuring this.

The external communications of JRS UK seek to be clear and balanced, and congruent with our values as an organisation, protecting and highlighting the dignity of refugees at all times.

You will be passionate about raising awareness of the needs of asylum seekers and refugees in the UK, with an eye for what works in print, broadcast and social media. Happy to be 'on the go', you thrive on a fast paced communications style and getting agreed messages across to new and existing audiences.

We welcome and encourage applications from people with experience of seeking safety in the UK.

Responsibilities

- Ensuring refugee voice and experience is championed throughout all JRS UK communications;

Creating Opportunities

- Support stewarding of existing relationships with journalists and media;
- Build new relationships with key journalists across national and regional broadcast, digital, print and radio; in addition to Christian, refugee and migration sector media;
- Research and pitch stories, providing all the follow-through needed for journalists, and for the wider-communications and fundraising team;
- Facilitate a daily press briefing for the whole JRS UK team;
- Convene and co-ordinate a regular internal press review meeting with key staff from across the organisation, identifying where our work and media interest cross over;
- Take an active role in sector-wide press and communications fora e.g. IMIX

Reacting to Opportunities

- Be the lead 'on-call' person in the organisation, responding to reactive requests in good time;
- Provide quotes, data and sign-off for press releases;
- Write press releases, adapting them to be used on the JRS UK website;

Monitoring our impact

- Monitoring and tracking JRS UK's press coverage, and producing regular reports and analysis;
- Generating and maintaining up-to-date media contact lists, ensuring accurate notes of contact and progress, ensuring JRS UK as an organisation can track history of conversations and contacts;
- Supporting requests for information about JRS's work from Jesuit works & JRS offices.
- Accompanying refugees to gather testimony for JRS communications & fundraising work and encouraging them to share their experiences in their own words;

General:

- Maintaining a high standard for written copy and content, meeting JRS branding and style guidelines;
- Ensure the media and news sections of the website are kept up-to-date, accurate, and accessible;
- Build strong relationships with refugee friends, JRS UK volunteers and JRS UK staff;
- Supporting the implementation of the Communications and Fundraising strategies;
- Supporting the Communications and Development Manager to report to the Director and the JRS UK governance committee.
- To undertake such other duties and responsibilities as the Communications and Development Manager or Director may from time to time request. JRS UK is a small team and all staff are occasionally called upon to support the work of others.

Person specification

Essential

- Sympathy and congruence with the values of JRS;
- Outstanding written communication skills;
- A can-do attitude, someone who picks-up the phone rather than e-mailing;
- Thrive in a fast-paced environment;
- Demonstrable ability to tailor tone and content to different platforms and audiences;
- Ability to work flexibly as part of a small and varied team;
- Excellent organisational skills;
- Ability to meet concurrent deadlines in a dynamic environment, ability to plan and prioritise a complex and varied workload;
- Initiative to solve problems, working proactively and collaboratively as part of a team;
- Attention to detail;
- High levels of personal integrity and respect for others, working with emotional intelligence and empathy;
- Enthusiasm for working within a faith context and for engaging with parishes and religious congregations;
- Excellent knowledge of Microsoft Office suite.

Desirable

- Experience of using Mailchimp (or similar) mailing software;
- Experience of using Hootsuite (or similar) scheduling software;
- Familiarity with desktop publishing software (e.g. Photoshop, InDesign);
- Prior experience of supporting and accompanying refugees and asylum seekers;
- Experience of working in a faith-based organisation;
- Understanding of and with familiarity of Catholic social teaching;
- Familiarity with the Christian calendar;
- Familiarity with the Ignatian charism.

Key relationships

- Reports to the Communications and Development Manager;
- You will need to build relationships of trust with refugees served by JRS;
- You will need to build strong working relationships with JRS UK volunteers and staff.

Hours:	full-time (37.5 hours a week); open to considering 30 hours a week
Duration:	18 month fixed-term contract; potentially renewable
Location:	Primarily office-based in Wapping, London. The team are currently mostly wfh due to COVID restrictions; longer-term hybrid wfh/office arrangements can be made. Regular travel into London will be required.
Salary:	£28 – 34 K
Pension:	Additional 10% of salary of employer's contribution

The person must be permitted to work in the UK; (JRS UK is not able to obtain a work visa for this post).