

Job Title: NFA Press and Communications Officer

Post Reports to: Policy Director

Name of Post Holder:

Salary Scale: £28,000 p/a pro rata (16,800 for 3 days a week)

Purpose of the Job:

To work with the NFA team to provide an effective and high-quality communication service to enhance, develop and promote the messages and profile of the National Federation of ALMOs both to its ALMO members and to an external national audience of wider stakeholders and journalists.

To develop and implement an effective and flexible communications strategy which recognises that good communication is an integral part of achieving the NFA's key objectives as set out in the business plan priorities for the year.

Nature of the Job:

The National Federation of ALMOs is the trade body representing 33 arms-length management organisations (ALMOs) which manage over 450,000 council homes across 36 Local Authorities. The NFA represents the interests of ALMOs at national level. In addition to lobbying and negotiating with central government on behalf of ALMOs, the NFA runs a website, organises events, regional meetings and an annual conference for its members as well as providing advice, training and briefings. Membership is also available to other organisations that share the core values of the NFA and have an ethos of delivering customer-led housing services. HouseMark currently host the NFA Managing Agent function and employ NFA staff on an annual fixed term contract. The NFA also use the Public Affairs Company (PAC) for parliamentary monitoring and adhoc pieces of lobbying work.

Generic Accountabilities:

To play a key role in developing an effective communications strategy for the NFA and lead operationally on its implementation covering both internal and external communications.

To manage, maintain and build press and communications relationships, in particular media contacts in the housing and local government trade press as well as the wider press and ALMO contacts ranging from Board members and CEOs to communications officers.

To maximise the impact of communications by promoting positive and coherent messages about the NFA, its vision and values and of its member ALMOs. To actively seek and identify media and PR opportunities to support the key priorities of the NFA Business Plan. To review and advise on how to improve our internal communications of our policy and good practice messages to members, including use of the website, social media and yammer networks.

To take responsibility for maintaining, developing and promoting the organisation's brand and to act as a brand ambassador, ensuring that branding is consistent.

To contribute both operationally and strategically to the organisation's future business planning and delivery of key business priorities.

Specialist Accountabilities:

Managing media contact for the organisation

- Planning and implementing a media plan for each briefing/seminar/report or other piece of work or news to ensure our messages get out to the right audiences as soon as possible in an engaging way.
- Developing relationships with key media contacts in order to help place feature stories/comment/blogs etc. by the NFA and share this with the senior managers and Board Members as appropriate.
- Planning and organising press briefings and events as required.
- Providing a proactive and informed response to all media enquiries in conjunction with the Managing Director and the Policy Director.
- Maintaining any media monitoring systems and database.
- Preparing appropriate press releases and distribute to relevant media.
- Carrying out environmental scanning activities, be aware of topics within the media, or other matters that may have an impact on the organisation; proactively ensuring the organisation is aware of the issue and in a position to respond.
- Commissioning photography and other professional services as required.

Managing external communications

- Ensuring all published material is accurate and consistent in appearance and accessibility and follows the NFA style.
- Ensuring the design and production of material is timely and cost effective
- Writing and/or editing and producing high level publications and communications, including briefing papers and the NFA Awards brochure.
- Maximising income generation opportunities.
- Work with colleagues to develop and manage corporate sponsorship opportunities.

Managing internal communications

- Preparing reports as required for the Executive Steering Group and NFA Board Members to inform and guide their decision making. Attending these meetings when necessary.
- Managing and co-ordinating the ALMO Communication Officers networking group meetings; setting agendas, inviting speakers and servicing the meetings.
- Managing and contributing to the Yammer site for ALMO Communications Officers and using it to spread good practice and news and collect information from ALMOs. Overseeing the use of Yammer for other policy networks.

NFA website, Twitter and other social media

- Overseeing the management and further development of the NFA website, ensuring it meets required standards, including accessibility.
- Retaining overall sign off of web content.

- Overseeing the management of the NFA Twitter account - all updates to website and marketing for events / awards to be communicated via twitter with link to relevant page or news
- Overseeing and assisting with Yammer group sites - active conversation and uploading of useful information/examples
- Overseeing and assisting with the NFA LinkedIn account – keeping it updated with policy briefings and event information.

Annual Conference

- Assisting the Events Co-ordinator with the planning and development of the Annual Conference programme with input from the Managing Director and Policy Director and help identify suitable subjects and high quality, interesting speakers for the sessions.
- Developing targeted marketing and promotional bulk emails to support the NFA Annual Conference.
- Working with the NFA Events Co-ordinator to issue flyers, prepare programmes and such other tasks to deliver a successful NFA Annual Conference.
- Overseeing and organising the NFA photography competition and showcase boards for exhibition within the conference.
- Writing, co-ordinating and editing the photography brochure for publication.

Seminars and Events

- Helping to plan and develop a seminar programme where appropriate and identifying suitable subjects and high quality, interesting speakers for the sessions.
- Developing targeted marketing and promotional bulk emails to support NFA products and services/ information capture i.e. photography competition, one day events, conference.
- Working with the NFA Office Manager and Events Coordinator to support the delivery of successful NFA events.

Communicating with the membership and potential members

- Establishing effective communications with NFA and ALMO contacts to maintain a close understanding of the issues affecting housing policy and practice.
- Analysing event feedback and leading on reporting back to the NFA team with recommendations for improvements where necessary.
- Responding to all queries to the NFA and seek to provide or obtain a prompt and helpful response.
- Using NFA twitter account and/or website and other social media to communicate NFA updates, policy briefings and other lobbying messages to members and the wider housing world.

Policy tracking

- Maintaining a watching brief on housing policy development and identify emerging issues and trends for ALMOs.

Other duties

- In addition to your normal duties, you may be required to undertake other duties from time to time, which fall within your reasonable capability and qualifications.

Principal Contacts:

External: NFA Members including ALMO Board Members, Chief Executives, Communications Officers and other ALMO staff and prospective members, PAC team, other housing organisations such as LGA, ARCH, CWAG, PlaceShapers, NHF, MHCLG, DWP, TPAS, TAROE, CIH.

Internal: All NFA staff, HouseMark staff.

Job Context:

This post is a part time post for 3 days (21 hours) a week. It is currently based in the Coventry office but there is also an opportunity for home-based working with regular visits to the Coventry office, London and Birmingham for meetings. The post holder should be able to demonstrate experience of working consistently to tight deadlines. The post holder's commitment to excellent customer service is essential. The post holder will be required to maintain excellent communication with the NFA team based around the country and the NFA Office Manager and Events Coordinator and Policy and Communications Officer based in Coventry.

The post will involve a large amount of contact with members and external agencies and therefore excellent interpersonal and customer service skills are required.

The organisation's approach is one of team work and it is therefore essential that the post holder is willing to take on a full and active role. The successful applicant will be required to travel occasionally to venues across England with some overnight stays to be expected. A flexible approach to work is essential.

We are recruiting to this post for an initial fixed term period to align with the NFA contract up to the end of December 2019 with a possible extension of 12 months on an annual basis thereafter. We are willing to consider secondments subject to agreement with your current employer.

Key Essential Skills Required:

- Ability to think clearly and produce imaginative and targeted communications solutions.
- Experience of contributing to the development and implementation of communication strategies for a range of audiences.
- Experience of producing high quality, well written communications including newsletters, briefings and web content.
- Good IT skills, with an advanced knowledge of Microsoft Office (particularly Word, PowerPoint and Excel)
- Understanding of good media management and relationships and the benefits of digital communications.
- Knowledge of the impact of communications and marketing activities.
- Ability to handle sensitive communications issues in a positive and diplomatic way.
- Ability to deliver a number of projects simultaneously, under pressure and to tight deadlines.
- Committed to equality and diversity.

Interpersonal skills:

- Ability to work on your own and as part of a team providing a positive input to the NFA
- A proactive enthusiastic style.
- A warm approachable personality. Adept at developing relationships and the ability to foster partnerships, work collaboratively across boundaries and achieve results through partnership.
- A willingness to learn and commitment to continuous self-development.

Communication skills:

- Exceptional written and verbal communication skills, presentation and persuasion skills; able to successfully deliver strong, inspiring and challenging messages to a wide range of audiences: ALMO officers, councillors, MPs, civil servants, journalists, board members and tenants.
- High levels of attention to detail.
- Literate and numerate.

Organisational skills:

- Ability to work to cope with pressure and meet deadlines without compromising attention to detail and accuracy
- Ability to prioritise own workload

Signature of post holder

Date:

Signature of manager

Date: