

PRIVATE & CONFIDENTIAL

Candidate Brief



WorldSkills UK
Director of Communications
and External Affairs
Y0302

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Managing Director
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Welcome letter from Dr Neil Bentley-Gockmann OBE, CEO

Dear Candidate,

I am delighted that you have expressed an interest in applying to be the Director of Communications and External Affairs to join our Senior Leadership Team at WorldSkills UK. We hope that you find the information in this candidate brief and on our website useful: <https://www.worldskillsuk.org/>

At WorldSkills UK, we have big ambitions to help the next generation, our education system and the economy.

We are working to help create a world-class skills system so more young people get better opportunities and are not written off because going to university isn't right for them.

We are seeking to appoint a new Director of Communications and External Affairs to help us drive forward our strategy supporting the UK to become a world-class skills economy.

Our new director will bring experience of thought leadership and public affairs; media and social media; and brand and marketing, to help us build our positioning as a global leader in developing world-class apprenticeships and skills to help employers create high-quality jobs for young people. As a newly created director level role this is an exciting opportunity to shape and lead our newly formed Communications and External Affairs Directorate.

If you are ambitious to shape the UK's skills economy and change lives, I would love to hear from you.

As an employer ourselves we aim to be truly inclusive, offering a hybrid and collaborative working culture. We pride ourselves on having a flexible approach to our working practices and are happy to discuss flexible working options with suitable candidates.

We are committed to equity, diversity and inclusion and as part of this commitment and to address underrepresented groups on our Senior Leadership Team, we particularly welcome applications from women and black and ethnic minority groups.

For a confidential conversation with Thewlis Graham Associates, who are supporting us with this recruitment, please contact Sarah Thewlis, Managing Director on 0207 850 4781 or email: applications@thewlisgraham.com. Sarah will be happy to discuss this opportunity with you.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Neil Bentley-Gockmann". The signature is written in a cursive style and is underlined with a single blue stroke.

**Dr Neil Bentley-Gockmann OBE
CEO, WorldSkills UK**

2. About WorldSkills UK

WorldSkills UK is an independent charity and a partnership between employers, education and governments. We're a leading member of WorldSkills, a global movement in over 85 countries.

Together, we use international best practice in skills development to raise standards in apprenticeships and technical education so more young people and employers succeed.

We are working to develop a world-leading UK skills economy by:

- supporting young people, from all backgrounds, to become world-class in skillset and mindset through national and international competitions-based training programmes and careers advocacy;
- improving training quality to world-class standards by mainstreaming international best practice in policy and practice across UK; and
- helping boost economic productivity and investment potential by providing intelligence on world-class skills to employers.

Our values

Inclusive:

We champion the benefits of high-quality apprenticeships and technical education and help more young people, whatever their background, develop their skills set and mindset to ever higher standards to get the best start in work and life.

Bold:

We are ambitious and daring in the way we do things and communicate about them. We are flexible to allow for the challenges that an ever-changing economic and skills landscape brings.

Positive:

As a progressive, passionate organisation, we see that our support makes a measurable difference. We help young people start out on the right path to reach their potential and we give UK employers a competitive edge by developing highly skilled employees.



3. Structure and governance

WorldSkills UK has a dynamic, hardworking staff team of around 60 employees supported by a wider training network of a further technical experts and performance and wellbeing coaches. Our team is structured into three directorates each directorate is led by a Director, or the Deputy CEO, who form the Senior Leadership Team (SLT).

WorldSkills UK is a registered charity with a Board of Trustees strategically overseeing its effective operation in conjunction with the Chief Executive to ensure it meets its charitable objectives.

The Board is made up of representatives of further education, skills and industry ensuring that the organisation's activities are firmly representative of the audiences and target groups it serves in its work.



4. The role and responsibilities of the Director of Communications and External Affairs

Our strategic positioning is focused on leveraging international benchmarking and best practice to drive up standards and the quality and prestige of apprenticeships and technical education for young people, teachers, employers and investors. We are seeking a new director with senior management experience in the field of communications and external affairs to sharpen up our brand positioning and ensure our work and impact are better understood by all stakeholders in a way that helps sustain and grow WorldSkills UK.

Job description

Role:	Director of Communications and External Affairs
Directorate:	Communications and External Affairs
Team:	Senior Leadership Team
Manager:	CEO
Direct reports:	Head of External Affairs Head of Communications (job title to be confirmed)

Role purpose

The Director of Communications and External Affairs will work closely with the CEO and SLT to grow the profile and external awareness of the organisation amongst stakeholders and enterprise audiences to help secure long-term sustainability and growth by:

- Generating more coverage for our work in the media and improving external understanding of our brand and positioning.
- Shaping brand-aligned generation of thought leadership content and activities to drive media coverage and brand recognition.
- Helping drive public funding and revenue generating corporate partnerships.
- Promoting existing programmes to key audiences to drive up engagement and impact.
- Shaping and securing our external positioning on equity, diversity and inclusion.

Key tasks and responsibilities

Reporting directly to the CEO, the Director of Communications and External Affairs' key areas of responsibility are: media and social media; thought leadership and public affairs; and brand and marketing.

As a member of the SLT, the role will work closely with the CEO on strategic positioning, the Deputy CEO on national and international programmes and the Director of Finance and Corporate Partnerships, fundraising/ income generation and equity, diversity and inclusion.

The Director of Communications and External Affairs will:

- 1) Collaborate across WorldSkills UK to develop and deploy a modern, unified communications and external affairs strategy that builds our brand and reputation amongst our key audiences, including decision-makers in government and the media, educational institutions, business, members, learners and apprentices.

- 2) Lead and develop our policy and public affairs work to build WorldSkills UK's reputation and positioning as a thought leader and policy influencer in further and higher education to drive up quality and standards in technical education.
- 3) Ensure our research and customer insight data is gaining multichannel exposure to highlight and elevate the value of our work.
- 4) Take accountability for the implementation of our media relations strategy, ensuring we take a modern, digital- first, approach to the use of both traditional and social media channels to influence our key stakeholders.
- 5) Provide line management and leadership to the Communications and External Affairs Directorate, setting personal objectives and supporting their development in order to embed a culture of performance excellence.
- 6) Be an active member of the Senior Leadership Team, contributing to the successful delivery of WorldSkills UK's strategic priorities and annual business objectives. This includes promoting and complying with WorldSkills UK's Employee Handbook and the policies contained therein with specific reference to those related to Health and Safety and on equality, diversity, and inclusion.

Person specification

Key: [E] Essential / [D] Desirable.

Qualifications and experience:

- Experience of working closely with governments across UK in a public policy-rich environment and working with business and employers [E].
- Experience of the education and skills sector and committed to and driven by our purpose [E].
- Experience of leadership and people management – with an experienced managerial team [E].
- A track record of successfully shaping and implementing compelling communications, marketing and external affairs strategies [E].
- A track record of building and managing stakeholder networks [E].

Knowledge and skills:

- Excellent communicator with a natural ability to be able to engage, enthuse and build strong, influential relationships with diverse stakeholder networks [E].
- Proven ability to make a demonstrable impact on brand awareness and policy outcomes for key audiences [E].
- Capable of working and solving problems with a broad range of individuals [E].
- Someone with a proven ability to build, mentor and develop teams [E].
- A progressive approach to continually evaluate the effectiveness of our communications work against our core objectives and look to identify areas for improvement [E].

Personal qualities and attributes:

- Strong collaborator with a team-oriented, low ego and flexible approach [E].

- Well-connected and credible, you will bring established contacts and have the ability to build and strengthen strategic relationships with our policy and external affairs network [E].

Special circumstances:

- Prepared occasionally to work outside normal hours [E].
- Prepared to travel within the United Kingdom and internationally if required [E].
- Able to spend time away from home [E].

5. Salary and benefits

- Permanent.
- The salary for this role is £80,000 per annum.
- WorldSkills UK offers a maximum employer's contribution to your pension of 6% of your basic salary, on the condition that you make an employee contribution to your pension of at least 3%. You may choose to contribute a higher percentage of your salary to your pension, subject to statutory limits.
- Normal place of work is Third Floor, 25 Wilton Road, London SW1V 1LW. Having worked largely at home during the Covid-19 pandemic there is now an expectation this role will return to being office based (as above) in the longer term, at least once or twice a week.
- Minimum of 35 hours per week, normal working hours are 09:00 to 17:00 Monday to Friday although we pride ourselves on having a flexible approach to our working practices and service delivery and are happy to discuss flexible working options with suitable candidates. Occasional weekend work may be required by mutual agreement for which reasonable time off in lieu will be given.
- 25 days' annual leave which will increase by one additional day for each completed year of service up to a maximum of 30 days plus public and bank holidays.
- The post is subject to six months' probationary period with one month's notice.
- The offer of appointment will be subject to satisfactory references.
- Salaries are paid monthly by direct transfer on or about 21st of the month.



6. Timeline, Application Process and How to apply

Timeline

Dates	Activity
12 April 4pm	Applications close
19, 20, 21 and 22 April	Thewlis Graham consultant interviewing of interested candidates
w/c 2 May	Client Interviews

Application Process

Thewlis Graham Associates will acknowledge all applications. These will be assessed against the criteria in the Role and Responsibilities section and the people who best meet these will be invited for an online interview with Thewlis Graham Associates.

Those candidates not invited to interview will be advised by email by mid-May.

Longlisted candidates will be advised by email. After a consultation between WorldSkills UK and Thewlis Graham Associates a Shortlist will be drawn up and Shortlisted candidates invited for interview with the Client.

How to Apply

To apply for this role, please email in word format to applications@thewlisgraham.com the following documents quoting reference Y0302: -

- 1) A comprehensive CV.
- 2) A covering letter containing:
 - A covering letter which fully addresses your suitability for the role and your motivation for applying
 - Your current remunerations details and notice period, and the name, job title, organisation, email address and mobile number of two professional referees. (Please note referees will not be approached without your prior permission.)
- 3) We also ask that you complete a diversity and inclusion monitoring form, the link for which is in the next section.

Please ensure that you include your mobile phone number and email address in your application. Do not hesitate to contact Claire Drummond on 020 7850 4781 if you have any queries.

Additionally, if you would prefer to receive this candidate brief in a more accessible format, please contact us.

7. Diversity and Inclusion Monitoring

Diversity and Inclusion Monitoring is independent of the recruitment process but please do complete your completed form as Thewlis Graham Associates is committed to monitoring and analysing diversity and inclusion information so that we can ensure that our processes are fair, transparent, promote equality of opportunity for all, and do not have an adverse impact on any particular group.

The link to this form is here: [click here](#). If you have any problems with this, please contact Tracey on: tct@thewlisgraham.com.

Any information provided on this form will be treated as strictly confidential and will be used for statistical purposes only. It will not be seen by anybody directly involved in the selection process. No information will be published or used in any way which allows any individual to be identified.

WorldSkills UK is proud to be a member of the Disability Confident Scheme and is committed to making reasonable adjustments at all stages of the recruitment process so that all candidates can perform to the best of their ability. If you have any specific requirements, please do let us know.



Thank you



8. Advert

Director of Communications and External Affairs

Location – London and flexible
Salary - £80,000 plus benefits

WorldSkills UK is an independent charity and a partnership between employers, education and governments. We're a proud member of WorldSkills, a global movement of over 85 countries. Together, we are using international best practice to raise standards in apprenticeships and technical education so more young people and employers succeed.

About the role

We have an exciting opportunity for a Director of Communications and External Affairs. This is a new role and opportunity at WorldSkills UK to help us drive forward our strategy supporting the UK to become a world-class skills economy.

As a key member of our Senior Leadership Team, the Director will play a critical role in sharpening up our ambition to help the UK become a global leader in developing world-class apprenticeships and skills to help employers create high-quality jobs for young people.

The Director will work closely with the CEO and SLT to grow the profile and external awareness of the organisation's work and impact amongst stakeholders and enterprise audiences to help secure long-term sustainability and growth.

Some of the key tasks and responsibilities of the role:

- Collaborate across WorldSkills UK to develop and deploy a modern, unified communications, marketing and external affairs strategy that builds our brand and reputation amongst our key audiences, including decision-makers in government and the media, educational institutions, employers and young people.
- Ensure our research and insights data is gaining multichannel exposure to highlight and elevate the value and impact of our work.
- Play an active role in the Senior Leadership Team in helping shape and deliver on strategic objectives and provide line management and leadership to the Communications and External Affairs Directorate.

Person specifications, we are looking for someone with:

- Experience of working with governments across UK in a public policy-rich environment and working with education leaders, business and employers.
- Experience of leadership and people management – with an experienced managerial team.
- Excellent communicator with a natural ability to be able to engage, enthuse and build strong, influential relationships with diverse stakeholder networks.
- A progressive approach to continually evaluate the effectiveness of our communications work against our core objectives and look to identify areas for improvement.

Full details of responsibilities and the person specification required can be found in the link below.

As part of our commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion and to address underrepresented groups on our Senior Leadership Team, we particularly welcome applications from women and black and ethnic minority groups.

Please apply by visiting www.thewlisgraham.com/assignment-briefings and following the instructions in the candidate brief quoting reference Y0302. The closing date is 4pm on 12 April.

For a confidential conversation with Sarah Thewlis or for any other information please email applications@thewlisgraham.com.

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