

private & confidential

Role Description



Head of External Affairs

For further information please contact:

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Job Title:	Head of External Affairs
Reporting to:	Director of Communications
Salary:	Competitive
Location:	London
Website:	www.crick.ac.uk

Context

The Francis Crick Institute is a biomedical discovery institute dedicated to understanding the fundamental biology underlying health and disease. Its work is helping to understand why disease develops and to translate discoveries into new ways to prevent, diagnose and treat illnesses such as cancer, heart disease, stroke, infections, and neurodegenerative diseases.

An independent organisation, its founding partners are the Medical Research Council (MRC), Cancer Research UK, Wellcome, UCL (University College London), Imperial College London and King's College London.

The Crick was formed in 2015, and in 2016 it moved into a brand new state-of-the-art building in central London which brings together 1500 scientists and support staff working collaboratively across disciplines, making it the biggest biomedical research facility under a single roof in Europe.

The Francis Crick Institute is a world-class research with a strong national role and global reach. Its distinctive vision for excellence includes commitments to collaboration; to developing emerging talent and exporting it to the rest of the UK; to public engagement; and to helping turn discoveries into treatments as quickly as possible to improve lives and strengthen the economy.

The role

The Head of External Affairs is responsible, under the guidance of the Director of Communications, for the development and delivery of the Crick's strategy to inform and influence decision makers. You will play a key role in engaging with policy makers, politicians, our funders and founding organisations and other key stakeholders to manage the Crick's reputation, promote our work, and ensure that they understand our impact and expertise. You will work closely with Paul Nurse, our Director and Chief Executive, including writing speeches, briefings, opinion pieces and other material for him.

TEAM STRUCTURE

Reporting to the Director of Communications, you will be a senior member of the Communications team, managing media relations, digital communications and stakeholder engagement. The communications team is responsible for a range of activities, including media relations, digital communications, publications, stakeholder engagement, and events.

Person specification

The post holder should embody and demonstrate our core values: Bold, imaginative, open, dynamic and collegial.

Essential duties and responsibilities

- Develop and implement a successful public affairs strategy.
- Analyse the political and policy landscape to identify developments relevant to the Crick and advise on appropriate responses.
- Develop and lead activity to build and maintain a favourable profile of the Crick with key stakeholders, decision makers and influencers
- Prepare submissions to relevant Government consultations in collaboration with colleagues across the Crick
- Provide written or verbal briefings to senior colleagues to support meetings with decision makers
- Establish and implement an effective evaluation system for public affairs activity
- Support the Crick's Director and Chief Executive, including writing briefings, speeches and opinion pieces as appropriate.
- Oversee the Crick's media relations strategy to gain maximum positive coverage for the institute and respond effectively to media interest.
- Oversee the Crick's digital and social media strategy
- Manage the Media Manager and Digital Manager
- Establish excellent working relations with key internal and external stakeholders.
- Provide advice and support to the Director and CEO, the COO and Director of Communications on policy and public affairs issues.
- Provide clear and effective external communications in response to crisis or emergency situations.
- Deputise for Director of Communications when required.
- Other tasks relevant to the post as per organisational requirements.

Knowledge and experience

- Detailed understanding of Westminster, and of the UK and EU political process
- Effective networker and influencer with a strong track record of using creative lobbying to influence change.
- Proven success in developing communications strategies in a complex organization with multiple stakeholders to drive organisational objectives and priorities.
- Extensive experience of media relations, and of using media coverage to influence and achieve change.
- A proven track record of providing clear, balanced advice and support at senior level.
- Experience of developing high-performing teams, particularly during periods of change.
- A record of driving continuous improvement
- An understanding of academic/research environments and a demonstrable knowledge of and interest in, science communication, and issues that may affect the Crick
- Educated to at least degree level or equivalent.

Skills:

- Highly developed interpersonal and influencing skills, with a demonstrable ability to develop and maintain effective relationships with a wide variety of internal and external stakeholders.
- Ability to think strategically, exhibiting presence and confidence, with articulate and engaging delivery.
- Ability to act authentically and consistently, continuously developing self-awareness by seeking feedback from others.
- Ability to deal tactfully with senior colleagues to resolve conflicts, with highly developed emotional and political intelligence.
- Resilient under pressure and able to work in a highly collaborative and flexible way, reacting quickly to changing circumstance.
- Ability to use discretion and judgement in dealing with confidential, sensitive or controversial issues.
- A consultative approach - consulting with colleagues and sharing expertise and ideas to deliver effective outcomes
- Excellent oral and written communication skills, with a concise, compelling written style and strong written accuracy
- Highly organised, with strong planning skills and the ability to prioritise in the face of competing demands and tight deadlines