



**Job title:** Director of Communications

**Working base:** Central London

**Reporting to:** Chief Executive

**Direct reports:** Communications and Brand Manager  
External Relations Manager (Scotland)  
External Relations Manager (Wales)  
Freelance staff and multiple agencies

**Salary:** £60,000 - £65,000 per annum

**Contract status:** Permanent – Full time

## Introduction

When large-scale disasters hit countries without the capacity to respond, the [DEC](#) brings together 14 leading UK aid charities to raise funds quickly and efficiently. In these times of crisis, people in life-and-death situations need our help and our mission is to save, protect and rebuild lives through effective humanitarian response.

Since it was founded in 1963, [the DEC has run 73 fundraising appeals and raised more than £1.7bn](#) to help save lives and protect livelihoods in disaster-affected communities around the world. Pooling our resources to work as one, we are pivotal in co-ordinating the UK public's response to overseas disasters. In collaboration with our Rapid Response Network of national media and corporate partners, we raise the alarm to the UK public by launching high-profile appeals and setting up easy ways to donate.

The DEC Secretariat is funded by contributions from member agencies and is responsible for the day-to-day running of the DEC. There are currently 22 permanent staff working together to promote the values of collaboration, accountability and transparency, learning, humanitarianism, and impartiality.

As our Director of Communications, you will have the unique opportunity to work with senior decision makers and news editors at UK broadcast media outlets, as well as unparalleled access to our member charities, UK government, and a host of other corporate, institutional, and high-public-

profile figures. You will also be leading a small, dynamic, and collegiate team as well as a host of creative agencies and freelance consultants.

## **Role Purpose**

- To enhance the profile, reputation and income of the DEC and its appeals by developing and implementing the DEC's communications strategy, covering the periods both during and between appeals.
- To ensure the communications strategy remains relevant to the changing media environment and DEC needs over time, and is integrated with the DEC's fundraising strategy.
- To lead on internal communications within the DEC Secretariat and with members.

## **Key Accountabilities**

### **Leadership, Strategy and Planning**

1. Provide strong and effective leadership, individually and as a member of the Executive Team, in developing and implementing the DEC's overall strategy, its day-to-day management and monitoring its performance.
2. Take overall leadership of the Communications function within the DEC, with members and with strategic partners.
3. Work collaboratively in leading the development and implementation of strategic projects in own area of expertise as well as creating and sharing knowledge across the DEC and its members.
4. Contribute to strategic thinking within the Executive Team and supporting DEC Trustees to ensure appropriate accountability.
5. Monitor changes in external trends and environment and bring thinking into DEC's strategy and planning.
6. Work with other members of the Executive Team in setting an appropriate leadership culture for the organisation and act as role model within the DEC ensuring that its values are upheld.
7. Lead DEC's nations (Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland) external relations strategies, including managing nations leads.
8. Build and maintain effective relationships with team, colleagues, member agencies and external partners and supporters.
9. Work across the Executive Team to support the digital strategy as set out in DEC's overall organisational strategy.
10. Together with Executive Team, lead external relations activity with key stakeholders and existing and potential partners; in particular, lead on assessment of reputational risk of serious incidents, lead on crisis comms management, and assist with process for cascading

regular updates and ad hoc or crisis information to trustees, partners, and other stakeholders.

11. Work with celebrity agency to make sure DEC maintains strong links with key intermediaries in the world of entertainment and with celebrity coordinators at member agencies. Ensure in this way that DEC has a large pool of high-quality talent to support appeals at short notice, including, critically, by presenting broadcast appeals.
12. Lead ad hoc communications campaigns if needed e.g. secondary appeals.

#### During appeals

1. Ensure broadcast and other Rapid Response Network partners are mobilised. Provide appeal briefing to broadcast partners and ensure BBC and ITN appeal films are made as well as BBC radio appeal and RadioCentre appeals.
2. Lead communications activity during an appeal in order to raise funds quickly and effectively; develop key messages to promote the appeal and maximise appeal income, ensuring that messages balance member positions.
3. Lead and support the performance of the seconded short-term appeal media team, ensuring the team achieves high quality and frequent media coverage of the DEC appeal in all media outlets and creates opportunities for the Chief Executive and other spokespeople to promote the DEC appeal in the media.
4. Provide briefings and advice as needed to devolved nations, content gathering, social media, marketing and fundraising colleagues as well as creative and public relations agencies
5. Approve public materials for the DEC ensuring they are always on message, on brand and aligned with strategy and vision.
6. Oversee the evaluation of appeal communications and report to Secretariat and wider DEC.

#### Between appeals

1. Develop and implement the joint fundraising and communications strategy and appeal communications plans ensuring they are aligned with DEC's overall strategy, vision, mission and values, lead on brand development.
2. Develop relationships with opinion formers in the media in order to maximize opportunities for media coverage.
3. Work with the Chief Executive to maintain and develop the support of our broadcast partners and take a lead on continuing to develop our partnerships with key digital players, Charity Commission Comms, FCDO and others.
4. Act as a spokesperson and represent DEC as required; and ensure relevant DEC staff are media trained to act as credible spokespeople.
5. In conjunction with other team members, help to promote corporate and other high-profile partnerships in order to raise awareness for DEC and the partnership, for example by developing communications plans for the partnership in conjunction with external contacts.

6. Work with the Content Manager and fundraising team to ensure the creation of appropriate content including stories, stills and video to support appeal and post appeal communications.
7. Lead internal communications, in particular coordinate newsletter from CEO to members with support from Governance and Finance/Resources team.
8. Actively promote, encourage and support intra-Secretariat working and member agency involvement.
9. Monitor developing emergency situations, assess their potential to become appeals and prepare for potential appeals as far as practical.
10. Working with DEC lawyers, ensure the DEC name and logos are adequately trademarked.

The post also involves acting as the main out of hours media contact between appeals, when calls are very infrequent.

### **Working patterns: 35 hours per week**

The post holder must, during appeal periods, be able to work long hours including at evenings or weekends, in response to an emergency. There will often be no notice of an emergency but time off in lieu will be available.

- This is a key role and the post holder’s name will be included on an emergency contact list, for occasional urgent communications
- Occasional overseas visits may be required
- Annual leave entitlement starting at 25 days p.a. rising to 30 with service

### **Person Specification**

<b>Education/ Qualifications</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Degree or diploma in communications, journalism or related discipline; may also be qualified by experience</li> <li>• Post graduate qualification in communications or other relevant field (desirable)</li> </ul>
<b>Skills/ Competencies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Excellent written, spoken and communication skills, including copywriting for publications, press releases and online information</li> <li>• Relevant senior level leadership and management experience in appropriately sized and complex humanitarian and/or crisis management agency, including field operations experience in a senior position</li> <li>• Excellent project- and people management skills</li> <li>• Able to analyse situations, identify problems, opportunities and patterns, and make decisions in a working environment with multiple stakeholders</li> <li>• Ability to work under pressure and to tight deadlines</li> <li>• Budget development and monitoring skills</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ability to influence, direct, motivate and communicate with internal and external people at the highest level</li> <li>• Journalistic writing skills</li> <li>• Some experience of providing training skills such as media and brand (desirable)</li> <li>• Experience of public speaking (desirable)</li> <li>• Proven ability to convene a complex group of stakeholders</li> </ul>
<b>Experience/ Understanding</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Considerable experience of working with the UK media, building one-to-one relationships with key journalists</li> <li>• Experience of managing high profile media campaigns</li> <li>• Strong awareness of the changing digital environment and how it is affecting communications</li> <li>• Considerable experience of successfully managing a press, public affairs or communications team, including coaching and supporting performance</li> <li>• Experience of using consultants for project delivery</li> <li>• Proven success and evidence of developing and managing a brand strategy, especially developing audience specific messages</li> <li>• Significant experience of working in humanitarian or development charity in an NGO environment (desirable)</li> <li>• Experience of media relations work during disasters and emergencies (desirable)</li> <li>• Experience of working with celebrities or high-profile people (desirable)</li> <li>• Experience of acting as the spokesperson for a high-profile organisation (desirable)</li> </ul>
<b>Other</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sets ambitious and challenging goals for themselves and their team, takes responsibility for their own personal development</li> <li>• Future orientated, develops and encourages new and innovative solutions</li> <li>• Honest, encourages openness and transparency; demonstrates highest levels of integrity</li> <li>• Excellent writing skills in English</li> <li>• Second language (desirable)</li> <li>• An understanding of and commitment to the mission and values of DEC</li> </ul>

## How to apply

If you are interested in joining the Disasters Emergency Committee as our next Director of Communications, please contact our executive search partners Green Park on [Harry.Marven@Green-Park.co.uk](mailto:Harry.Marven@Green-Park.co.uk) for more information. To formally apply for this position, we would like you to provide an up-to-date CV along with a statement outlining your suitability for this role and why you are motivated to join the DEC at this time. In particular, we are interested to hear about your experience or knowledge in the following key areas:

- Leadership and developing strategy in a fast-paced environment;
- Collaboration and consensus building across an organisation or network;

- Leading on rapid scaling-up of capacity and crisis comms;
- Building effective relationships across the media landscape.

Interviews with the DEC panel are currently scheduled for Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> September (9 a.m. – 1 p.m.) and Friday 10<sup>th</sup> September (1 p.m. – 5 p.m.).

Please send your completed application to [CharitiesandSocialEnterprise@Green-Park.co.uk](mailto:CharitiesandSocialEnterprise@Green-Park.co.uk) and [Harry.Marven@Green-Park.co.uk](mailto:Harry.Marven@Green-Park.co.uk) along with a diversity monitoring form (available from Green Park). We look forward to hearing from you.