

Development Studies Association Communications Officer

Salary:	£27.9k-32.3k pa
Hours:	0.5 FTE (17.5 hours per week)
Duration:	Fixed term from for 36 months
Location:	Flexible working arrangements (including remote working) considered

Responsible to: Sam Hickey, DSA President

Enquiries about the vacancy, shortlisting and interviews:

DSA President: Sam Hickey

Email: sam.hickey@manchester.ac.uk

Overall Purpose of the Job:

This role supports the Development Studies Association (DSA) in its core purpose: 'to promote and advance international development as a field of study, research and action, with a mission to *"deepen understanding of how global poverty and inequalities are produced and sustained and may be overcome."*

The DSA is the UK based membership organisation for all those studying, researching, and teaching in the field of global development. Working closely with the Manchester based president of the DSA and other Council members, the role will provide proactive research communications support to the association to help deepen and broaden the DSA community and to raise its broader public profile in pursuit of its mission.

The role requires an experienced and effective research communications expert who will use their initiative to help drive the DSA forward. This is a predominantly self-contained role focused exclusively on the DSA.

Key Responsibilities, Accountabilities or Duties:

- Deliver the DSA's Communications Strategy, which aims to promote the DSA as a central hub for information on development-related research and teaching in the UK, in a way that complements and adds value to the work of individual Development Studies centres.
- Establish and maintain an effective network and regular communication with key DSA stakeholders including the President and Council, NomadIT (who help administer the DSA), heads of member institutes, chairs of DSA study groups and other external development actors.
- Deploy various communications activities to deliver on key DSA objectives, including:
 - Increase and deepen members' engagement with the DSA
 - Increase and broaden wider awareness of the DSA and its work
 - Promote the engagement of DSA and development studies researchers in public debate
- Engage and regularly liaise with communications staff from similar professional/learned societies to establish best practices and to keep up to date with new approaches in the field.
- Engage and regularly liaise with staff with communications responsibilities within individual Development Studies centres, scoping the potential to better communicate and potentially coordinate priorities and issues across the sector.
- Report on progress and achievements to Council, including attendance at Council and DSA meetings, in a clear and timely manner and take on advice and guidance from Council in relation to core aspects of the post.
- Liaise closely with NomadIT who provide administrative support for the DSA and organise its annual conference.
- Craft and edit organisational messages to members, including those from Council and NomadIT.
- Effectively manage the DSA's communications channels, including:
 - **Website**
 - Promotion of the website as a means of communication and information for members and other stakeholders.
 - Oversee site maintenance: update information; load new pages within the current Content Management System (WordPress); convert and load information; source appropriate images; ensure accuracy and currency of pages.
 - Curate and develop the news and insights page, ensuring that engaging, relevant content is regularly posted, particularly from DSA study groups.
 - Manage any ad hoc web development needs with the website host.
 - Participate in any decision-making on website upgrades.

- **Social media**
 - Maintain and grow engagement with the DSA's social media channels, particularly Twitter and Facebook.
- **E-newsletter**
 - Co-ordination, production, and distribution of monthly electronic newsletter to members to publicise centres' activities.
 - Mark and celebrate high profile engagements and recognition of DSA members (e.g. giving evidence to Parliamentary committees; external honours and awards).
 - Work with NomadIT to ensure mailing lists (both for requesting and sharing news) are kept up to date and that GDPR and other relevant guidelines are followed.
- Identify PR and advocacy opportunities and ensure the effective production of news and features promoting DSA activities and research.
- Manage the external communications activities around the annual DSA conference, working with NomadIT and the host institution to maximise attendance and engagement both of participants and the wider development community beyond the conference itself. This will include attendance at the 3-4 day conference.
- Organise occasional DSA events, such as roundtable or webinar discussions on key cross-cutting development issues.
- Provide communications support and guidance to nurture special interest groups within the DSA, such as postgraduate students, early career researchers, and scholars based in low- and middle-income countries.
- Monitor the impact and reach of all DSA communications activities as a matter of routine. Monitor and report on key performance indicators (using web analytics and other tools) and interpret the results of the key performance indicators and recommend further actions and innovations for future activities.
- Undertake other duties of a similar nature as reasonably required by your line manager.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Essential Knowledge, Skills and Experience:

You should have/demonstrate:

- A strong track record in delivering measurable communications strategies.
- A sound knowledge of communication management tools and techniques, and understand the range of opportunities offered by print, digital and social media.

- A degree, appropriate professional qualification or experience in public relations, journalism or marketing.
- The ability to operate in a proactive, independent manner (e.g. in terms of seeking out material for communications from members, encouraging participation etc.)
- Relevant experience gained in a research or policy related communications environment.
- The ability to work on own initiative and to work on several fronts at the same time.
- Experience of working remotely as a Communications Officer
- The ability to manage a demanding and dynamic workload in a professional and astute manner.
- Excellent interpersonal, persuasion and influencing skills.
- Strong writing skills and an expert command of the English language.
- A professional manner, working positively and collaboratively with a range of colleagues from diverse backgrounds.
- Have excellent technical skills in relation to communication tools and techniques. This should include:
 - experience of using Google Analytics and other tools to report on online performance;
 - experience and knowledge of social media platforms, particularly Twitter and Facebook;
 - experience of using a content management system to create and publish website content;
 - excellent writing, proofreading and editing skills, with experience in writing for web
 - skills related to the production of podcasts, infographics and/or videos, including graphic design skills
 - skills across the Office package
- Possess the ability to present a professional image of the DSA at all times.
- Knowledge of development studies.

Desirable Knowledge, Skills, Experience and Qualifications:

Experience of working in similar roles in higher education would be valuable in terms of having a good understanding of how academics and the academic calendar operate.

Terms and conditions

This is a part-time position at 0.5FTE for a fixed-term of three years, with some prospects for renewal. The salary will be within the range of £27,900-32,300 depending on experience and qualifications. We expect remote working to be the norm, with periodical face-to-face meetings with relevant DSA staff, but are open to identifying potential hot-desking arrangements with a relevant institutional member.

There will be a workplace pension scheme on the basis of a 5% matched contribution from employer and employee. The number of days holiday per year will be in line with the statutory holiday allowance of 28 days plus all bank holidays (pro-rata).

Application and interview process

Applicants should send a CV (including details of referees and whether they can be contacted in advance of interviews) and a covering letter of no more than two pages that sets out their suitability for this post to <membershipadmin@devstud.org.uk>.

Closing date for applications: 31 August 2022

Interviews (online): w/b 12 September 2022