



Candidate Information Pack

Director of External Affairs

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For background information on ACF go to

www.acf.org.uk

About ACF and the role



ACF is the membership body for UK foundations and grant-making charities.

ACF is ambitious about the impact that charitable foundations can have, individually and collectively, in supporting communities and enabling civil society across a wide range of charitable causes.

Collectively our 380 members hold assets of around £50bn and give over £2.5bn annually to a wide range of charitable causes, including: social justice, education, human rights, arts and heritage, criminal justice, conservation and the environment, vulnerable adults and children, health, housing and poverty.

Our strategic objectives are to:

- Support foundations to achieve their charitable objectives
- Advocate on behalf of foundations for an enabling policy, legislative and operating environment
- Connect foundations to the people, organisations, governments and movements relevant to their work
- Inspire foundations to be ambitious and effective in the way that they use their resources

And in order to achieve these objectives we need to ensure that ACF continues to thrive and be sustainable.

This is an exciting time to join ACF. The Director of External Affairs is responsible for managing ACF's relationships and reputation. They ensure that we are positioned at the leading edge of thinking about foundations and their work, act as a senior representative of ACF, inform policymaking, and develop our branding, positioning and media management so that it supports our mission, reflecting the quality and ambition of the work that we do.

As a membership association, our members are at the heart of what we do. Our external affairs work is vital in protecting and enhancing foundations' ability to fulfil their individual charitable missions as well as enabling their collective contribution to a healthy and plural civil society.

We aim to inspire foundations as a sector to be more ambitious and effective in their pursuit of social good. This includes our ambitious Stronger Foundations initiative, a ground-breaking member-led inquiry into what excellent practice looks like for foundations on a range of issues, from diversity, equity and inclusion to strategy and governance.

Over the next year the Director of External Affairs will continue to develop the scale and scope of ACF's external affairs work. You will also oversee a high-performing team that leads on our members policy forum, Stronger Foundations initiative, publications, member briefings, and support to members on policy issues.

The executive leadership team

The Director of External Affairs will be a member of ACF's executive leadership team. ACF has been through a process of rapid growth and change in the last two years, and this role is part

of a new and energetic executive leadership team that provides strategic leadership for the organisation.

You will need to be able to work closely and collaboratively with the team at ACF and be central to bringing about innovation and change, to turn ideas into reality. As a leader you will model the culture and values that will enable us to achieve our mission.

The Director of External Affairs will combine creative thinking and an understanding of the big picture with the ability to work effectively with our team and our systems. They will also need to be a leader and a manager who will empower and support their team and work across departmental boundaries.

Job Description

Job Title:	Director of External Affairs
Responsible to:	Chief Executive
Line management of:	Direct report; Head of Policy, who manages Policy & Communications Manager and Stronger Foundations Programme Manager

Purpose of role

The Director of External Affairs is responsible for managing ACF's relationships and reputation. They ensure that we are positioned at the leading edge of thinking about foundations and their work, act as a senior representative of ACF, inform policymaking, and develop our branding, positioning and media management so that it supports our mission, reflecting the quality and ambition of the work that we do. They are a member of our Executive Leadership Team and oversee a high performing team that lead on our work to shape the operating context for charitable foundations in order that they can be ambitious and effective in their pursuit of social good.

Organisational strategy and leadership

Working as part of the executive senior leadership team to:

- Develop the strategies, culture and values that will deliver ACF's mission and charitable objectives
- Understand and anticipate the collective and emerging needs of foundations and ensure that ACF is well-placed to meet these
- Contribute to the budgeting process, and to the sustainability of ACF, as it transitions to adopting a more enterprising and commercial focus, identifying and developing new income streams and funding
- Deliver innovative and creative continuous improvement of systems
- Nurture and develop ACF's staff team and support them in delivering ACF's new strategic vision
- Recognise the important role that Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) plays in enabling ACF to achieve its mission, modelling positive behavior and ensuring that DEI is a lens for all of our work
- Contribute to good governance and the work of ACF's board

Drive the implementation of ACF's strategy in external affairs directorate and on external affairs issues across the organisation

Act as a first port of call for all issues relating to external affairs, supporting others across the organisation in aspects of external affairs that relate to their work

Policy strategy and implementation

Drive the work of the policy team, identifying key issues and opportunities, ensuring that members are at the heart of what we do and developing appropriate measures of success.

Ensure that the policy team leads a proactive policy agenda that promotes the ambitious and effective use of foundation resources and ensures a supportive policy and regulatory environment

Ensure that ACF achieves an appropriate balance between leading the sector, facilitating member views and representing them

Support the CEO to build ACF's profile as an organisation helping define what an ambitious and effective foundation looks like, both now and in the future. This will include giving strategic oversight to ACF's Stronger Foundations initiative

Ensure that the policy team informs members in a timely and comprehensive way about developments in the external environment that affect their work, including policy, regulatory, compliance and developing foundation practice.

Public affairs, influence and media

Develop ACF's public affairs activity in order to increase awareness of our work and the work of our membership; raise its profile and influence amongst policy and decision makers, the press, media, think tanks, academics and other stakeholders.

Manage and develop both pro- and reactive media relations to support our strategic, policy and operational objectives and as part of the overall external affairs strategy

Act as first point of contact for media enquiries, together with overall responsibility for overseeing media releases, statements, and other public facing information

Strategic communications

Strategic lead on ACF's branding and messaging framework across all communication channels, print and digital, to reflect the quality of its work, insight, strategic objectives and values

Ensure that ACF members are recognised as a primary audience and sit at the centre of all decisions relating to issues of perception, branding and public profile

In the case of an unforeseen issue, crisis, or other problematic situation, use expertise to maintain a positive public image for ACF.

Research, thought leadership and editorial

Improve further ACF's reputation for the quality and thinking of its research and policy work, and for being at the forefront of emerging thinking about philanthropy, social investment and grant-making and their role in society

Lead the external affairs directorate and support the CEO to build stronger links with policy makers and to ensure ACF and its members are recognized as a unique and powerful source of insights.

Act as a senior ambassador for ACF through attendance at, and contribution to, external ACF events, steering groups, joint initiatives and networking opportunities.

Lead on the commissioning and publication of strong research and evidence bases for our policy and influencing work, as ACF and in partnership with others, including ACF's annual Foundation Giving Trends research.

Strategic lead on commissioning, creating and publication of ACF's flagship publications, including the *Trust & Foundation News* magazine, member policy briefings and guidance, and publications on foundation practice

Line management

Lead a high performing and talented team, creating an inspiring team culture and supporting staff in their development.

Takes lead responsibility for supervising line reports consistently with ACF policies and practice and setting annual objectives that deliver the organisational strategy and annual plan.

With the support of the Director of Resources, keep up to date with developments in employment law and ensure that ACF's HR policies and practices are operationalised so that there is consistency of delivery throughout the organisation

Diversity, equality and inclusion

Ensure that the principles of valuing diversity, equity and inclusion underpin the execution of the responsibilities and tasks described above, leading by example and sharing and supporting good practice across the organisation and membership

Have regard to environmental good practice and sustainability in all areas of the work

Undertake any other duties in support of ACF's work as may reasonably be required and be willing to travel and work outside of contracted hours.

Person specification

Knowledge, skills and experience	E	D
Experienced communications and/or public affairs professional, with significant experience of developing, executing and evaluating successful policy and communications strategies that influenced change	Y	
Strong leadership and management skills, with the ability to work well in a team	Y	
Excellent strategic, intellectual, analytical and creative thinking skills	Y	
Track record of demonstrating judgement, diplomacy and tact, and negotiating skills in managing multiple stakeholder relationships and a persuasive and diplomatic networker at a variety of levels	Y	
Understanding of the policy context within which the charity sector operates and track record of influencing change within a policy environment	Y	
Experience in commissioning and leading research, able to interpret and manage data	Y	
Digital leadership skills	Y	
Outstanding communicator, speaker, writer, editor and user of social media	Y	
Commercial and financial acumen, able to set and manage budgets and create and capitalise on new opportunities to generate income from a range of sources	Y	
Track record of supporting diversity, equity and inclusion, including through lived experience	Y	
Empathy and commitment for ACF's aims and core values, including environmental sustainability	Y	
A relevant professional qualification or appropriate training		Y

Salary and hours

Salary: Initially £54,500 to £58,400 with scope to increase to £62,500. Plus 10% pension contributions and staff travel card loan on successful completion of probation.

Hours: 35 hours per week, part time, and home working possible

Annual leave: 25 days, plus public holidays, plus any weekdays that are not public holidays between 27 and 31 December (inclusive), 24 December when it falls on a Monday, and 2 January when it falls on a Friday

Contract type: Permanent, full time

Location: 28 Commercial Road, London E1 6LS. Near Aldgate, Aldgate East and Whitechapel stations.