



Job Title: Head of Communications

Organisation: Runnymede Trust

Reports to: CEO

Direct Reports: Senior Campaigns and Communications Manager, Digital Manager and Editor

Salary: £58,516

Location: Hybrid – two days a week in the office in London

Hours: Full time – 35 hours per week

Contract: Permanent

About Runnymede Trust

The Runnymede Trust is the UK's leading independent race equality think tank. For over 50 years, we have worked to challenge racial inequalities and create a more just and equitable society through high-quality research, evidence-based policy development, and public engagement.

Our work is grounded in the belief that race equality is essential to a thriving democracy and a fair society. We work across a wide range of issues including education, employment, criminal justice, health, migration, housing, and economic inequality - centring the lived experiences and voices of racially minoritised communities throughout our work.

We combine rigorous research with advocacy, strategic partnerships, and influencing work to shape public debate and drive systemic change. Our work seeks not only to understand inequality, but to challenge the structures and systems that sustain it.

To support the delivery of our mission, we are guided by a set of core values that shape both our work and our culture:

- We're uncompromising on quality and evidence - producing rigorous, credible work that drives informed debate and meaningful change.
- Our work is rooted in care - centring humanity, wellbeing, and respect in how we work with communities, partners, and each other.
- We believe in the power of solidarity - recognising that collective action and collaboration are essential to achieving racial justice.
- We are thoughtfully courageous - willing to challenge injustice, ask difficult questions, and speak truthfully with integrity and purpose.

As an organisation, we are committed to anti-racism, equity, collaboration, and intellectual integrity. We strive to create an inclusive and supportive working environment where colleagues are empowered to contribute, develop, and make meaningful impact.

About the role



The Head of Communications is a key senior role at The Runnymede Trust, responsible for leading and delivering communications activity that strengthens the organisation's influence, profile, and impact across policy, media, civil society, and public audiences.

Working closely with the CEO and senior leadership team, the postholder will lead the development and delivery of communications strategies that ensure Runnymede's research, policy work, and public interventions shape debate, influence decision-makers, and contribute to shifting public understanding and narratives on race and racial justice in the UK.

The role combines strategic communications leadership with hands-on delivery across media, digital communications, campaigns, publications, and stakeholder engagement. The postholder will oversee a small communications team and ensure communications activity is aligned with organisational priorities, supports fundraising and external engagement objectives, and strengthens Runnymede's reputation as a credible and influential racial justice think tank.

The role requires strong political judgement, excellent media instincts, and the ability to lead communications activity within a fast-moving and high-profile environment, balancing strategic oversight with operational delivery across a broad communications portfolio.

The Head of Communications will also contribute as a member of the senior leadership team, supporting organisational planning, cross-organisational collaboration, and internal communications across the organisation.

Key Responsibilities

Communications Strategy, Influence & Reputation

- Lead the development and delivery of Runnymede Trust's communications strategy, ensuring communications activity supports organisational priorities, policy influencing goals, and audience engagement.
- Shape and maintain Runnymede's external voice, messaging, and communications approach across media, campaigns, digital platforms, and public engagement activity.
- Identify opportunities to position Runnymede's expertise within public, political, and policy debates on race and racial justice.
- Advise the CEO and senior leadership team on communications strategy, messaging, reputational risk, and external positioning.
- Monitor and evaluate communications impact, audience reach, and influence across communications activity.

Media, Campaigns & Public Affairs

- Lead media relations activity, acting as the primary contact for journalists and proactively securing high-impact media coverage across national, broadcast, digital, and specialist policy media.
- Oversee rapid response communications activity, including reactive commentary, media statements, press releases, and reputational management.
- Lead the development and delivery of communications campaigns and public engagement activity that support Runnymede's influencing and audience engagement objectives.
- Build and maintain relationships with journalists, civil society organisations, policymakers, funders, and external partners to strengthen Runnymede's profile and influence.

Digital Communications & Content

- Oversee Runnymede's digital communications activity across website, social media, email communications, and multimedia content.
- Ensure complex research and policy work is translated into accessible, engaging, and high-quality communications outputs for a range of audiences.
- Oversee the production of publications, digital content, campaigns materials, and organisational outputs, ensuring consistency, accessibility, and alignment with Runnymede's values and editorial standards.
- Support the development of audience engagement strategies that strengthen visibility, reach, supporter engagement, and organisational impact.

Leadership, Collaboration & Organisational Contribution

- Lead, manage, and develop the communications team, setting priorities and supporting a collaborative, creative, and high-performing team culture.
- Contribute as a member of the senior leadership team to organisational planning, decision-making, and cross-organisational collaboration.
- Work closely with colleagues across research, policy, operations, and fundraising to ensure communications activity supports organisational impact, partnerships, and funding objectives.
- Support effective internal communications and organisational information sharing across teams.
- Represent Runnymede externally at relevant events, networks, media opportunities, and stakeholder forums.

Person Specification

Experience

- Significant experience in a senior communications, media, public affairs, or external affairs role within a charity, think tank, NGO, campaigning, policy, advocacy, or media environment.

- Demonstrable experience of developing and delivering communications strategies that support organisational influence, audience engagement, and public profile.
- Proven track record of securing high-impact media coverage and managing media relations across print, broadcast, digital, and specialist policy media.
- Experience of leading communications activity within fast-moving or high-profile environments, including managing reputational or politically sensitive issues.
- Experience of developing and delivering communications campaigns, public engagement activity, or audience engagement strategies.
- Experience of translating complex policy, research, or social justice issues into accessible and compelling communications for a range of audiences.
- Experience of managing, developing, and supporting communications staff within a collaborative team environment.
- Experience of contributing to organisational leadership, planning, or strategic decision-making processes.

Skills

- Written and verbal communication skills, with the ability to adapt messaging and tone for different audiences, platforms, and political contexts.
- Media relations and stakeholder engagement skills, with the ability to build effective relationships with journalists, partners, and external stakeholders.
- Strategic communications skills, with the ability to identify communications opportunities, shape messaging, and align communications activity with organisational priorities.
- Digital communications skills including social media strategy, website oversight, audience engagement, and content development.
- Campaigns and public engagement skills, including the ability to deliver communications activity that supports influence and organisational impact.
- Leadership and people management skills, with the ability to support, motivate, and develop a small communications team.
- Ability to balance strategic oversight with hands-on delivery in a small and fast-paced organisation.
- Organisational and prioritisation skills, with the ability to manage multiple priorities, deadlines, and reactive communications activity effectively.

Knowledge & Understanding

- Understanding of the UK political, media, policy, and social justice landscape, particularly in relation to race equality and racial justice and charity obligations.
- Understanding of the opportunities, responsibilities, and risks associated with communications work within a high-profile and politically impartial organisation.
- Understanding of how communications activity can support policy influence, audience engagement, organisational profile, and fundraising objectives.



- Commitment to racial justice and alignment with Runnymede's mission, values, and anti-racist approach.
- Commitment to collaborative, inclusive, and values-led ways of working.

Equity, Access & Inclusion

The Runnymede Trust is committed to creating an inclusive, equitable and supportive workplace where everyone is treated with dignity and respect. As an organisation dedicated to racial justice and social equity, we recognise that a diversity of backgrounds, experiences and perspectives strengthens our work, challenges our thinking and improves decision-making.

We particularly welcome applications from people from Black, Asian and racially minoritised communities, disabled people, LGBTQ+ people, people with caring responsibilities, people from different socioeconomic backgrounds, and others who are underrepresented within the charity, policy and research sectors. In our recruitment processes, we value the skills, knowledge, experience and perspectives that individuals can bring, particularly where these contribute to broadening representation and bringing insights that are not currently reflected within our organisation.

We are committed to ensuring our recruitment processes are accessible and inclusive. If you require reasonable adjustments at any stage of the process, please let us know.

We recognise that candidates may not meet every requirement in the person specification. If you are excited by the role and believe you can make a strong contribution to our work, we encourage you to apply.

This job description provides an overview of the role and may evolve over time in line with organisational priorities.