



Royal Mail

Director of External Communications (Interim) Candidate Pack



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The communications, advocacy, and policy headhunter



Royal Mail



Headlines

Royal Mail has been trusted to deliver your mail for 500 years. We have over 130,000 Service Points nationwide, and the lowest reported carbon footprint per parcel delivery in the UK.

Role purpose: To lead the external communications team, promoting and protecting IDS and Royal Mail Group's reputation with external stakeholders, particularly the UK national, regional and trade media.

Job title: Director of External Communications (Interim)

Contract: 6–7-month Fixed Term Contract (running until 31st March 2027) with the opportunity for the role to be made permanent.

Remuneration: Six figure salary and benefits package

Reporting to: Chief Corporate Affairs Office IDS and Royal Mail

Place of work: Farringdon, London, 4 days a week in office

Further reading: [Royal Mail website](#)

[About Royal Mail and GLS](#)

[Our History](#)



Royal Mail



About Us

Royal Mail is an iconic British brand with a history dating back to 1516, evolving from a service for the Crown into the UK's leading provider of mail, parcel and logistics services.

As the nation's designated Universal Service Provider, Royal Mail delivers a 'one-price-goes-anywhere' service for letters and parcels to around 32 million addresses across the UK.

In 2012 Royal Mail and Post Office Ltd split prior to the privatisation of Royal Mail, and they are separate companies. Last financial year (2025/26), Royal Mail delivered 5.7 billion letters and 1.4 billion parcels, generating revenue of £8.4 billion. The business also provides commercial mailing and parcel services for consumers, SMEs, large businesses, retailers and other postal operators, and employs around 130,000 people — all on permanent contracts, giving posties industry-leading terms and conditions compared to the casual or self-employed models used by many competitors.

Part of International Distribution Services, the group also includes the global parcel company GLS, which operates in 50 countries across Europe and North America. This makes us one of the most talked-about companies in the media.



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About Us



Royal Mail has continued to modernise and optimise its network to compete in the fast-growing parcels market, while sustaining its letters business. Its out-of-home parcel point network has expanded rapidly to around 30,000 locations, including parcel lockers, Royal Mail Shop outlets, Post Offices, Customer Service Points and parcel postboxes. The introduction of digital postboxes has also made it easier for customers to send larger parcels with proof of posting via the Royal Mail app.

Strategic investment in automation and infrastructure remains central to transformation. Parcel automation has reached 90%, aided by new automated parcel hubs in Warrington and Daventry, supporting the business's capacity to process around 8 million parcels a day across the operation. New high-speed sorting machines, vehicle tracking systems and AI-enabled logistics continue to improve speed, reliability and environmental efficiency. Parcelforce Worldwide provides time-critical, door-to-door services across the UK and internationally.

Royal Mail's strategy is built around a bold ambition – to become the nation's go-to delivery service. It focuses on four key areas that will define the next chapter of our transformation: unrivalled convenience, trusted reliability, clear value and a culture where people can thrive. By focusing on what truly matters, we'll shape a stronger, smarter and more competitive Royal Mail for the future.



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Role Purpose

We are looking for an experienced communications operator to join our Corporate Affairs Team as Director of External Communications (Interim). This important role will lead our external communications team, promoting and protecting IDS and Royal Mail Group's reputation with external stakeholders, particularly the UK national, regional and trade media.

With a background leading a team to deliver high profile communications campaigns and manage reputation in a large, complex business this is a role for someone who is proactive and able move at pace to make decisions while also managing a busy press office.

Reporting to the Chief Corporate Affairs Officer you will lead the external communications team, promoting and protecting IDS and Royal Mail Group's reputation with external stakeholders, particularly the UK national, regional and trade media.

We're proud of what we do and the service we provide. Our Values are:

Be positive - About what we can achieve.

Be brilliant - For our customers.

Be part of it - Each one of us is responsible.



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Scope of Role

Key Accountabilities

- Lead in the development of excellent external communications activity and creative campaigns to support the delivery of the Group's strategic, transformation and financial objectives.
- Generate compelling, high quality and accurate communications content for aspects of the financial calendar, including financial results.
- Develop high-impact consumer campaigns, working closely with the marketing and social media teams, ensuring a regular drumbeat of activity
- Run communication for major corporate activity such as regulatory updates and industrial relations activity.
- Manage delivery of briefings, speaking points, Q&A etc. as appropriate for senior business stakeholders.
- Ensure that all communications content aligns with and actively supports the overarching narrative, communications standards, principles, and timescales.





Scope of Role

Key dimensions

Scales of impact (team, function, division, group wide)

- Part of the wider Corporate Affairs team which includes Public Affairs, Internal Communications and Sustainability.
- Develop strong internal and external relationships, providing communications counsel to the board and senior leaders
- Provide strategic counsel and ensure joined up working with the GLS communications team.

Team size

Lead a team of five people plus external comms agency support.



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Scope of Role

Key Skills - Experience and Qualifications required for this specific role:

- Experience working at a senior level in a large organisation. Ideally, this would be in a large consumer-facing business, regulated industry, and/or in a unionised business.
- Strong media contacts and proven media relations experience – especially in reputation and issues management.
- Proven excellence in all forms of communications content, gained in either business, agency or media environment.
- Thorough understanding of diverse and evolving mix of communications channels, including AI, with the ability to deliver integrated plans across multiple channels.
- Impeccable judgement and excellent writing skills.
- Sound understanding and proven experience of measurement and research principles.
- A proven leader and committed to developing a high-performing team.
- Requirement to contribute to a weekend on call press office rota





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Next Steps

Ellwood Atfield is a specialist search firm appointing communications, policy, and advocacy experts. All reasonable adjustments will be considered for applicants with disabilities or special requirements under the terms of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and 2005.

To apply for this role please submit your CV via this [link](#) together with a supporting statement addressing the requirements of the role via the Ellwood Atfield website.



Olivia Grant is an Associate Director and leads our Interim Practice. She specialises in the recruitment of all day-rate and fixed-term-contracts across communications, policy, and public affairs in all sectors. Before this she led an interim recruitment team at a major London firm. 07435 970 531 olivia.g@ellwoodatfield.com



Rachel Smith has 20 years of recruitment experience, specialising in Interim roles in corporate and internal communications, public affairs, and public policy across many sectors. She previously worked in consumer PR for top communications consultancies, including Ketchum. 07860 400 325 rachel.s@ellwoodatfield.com



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