



THE SUNDAY TIMES
BEST NOT-FOR-PROFIT
TO WORK FOR 2018

Job Specification

Communications Officer

September 2020



‘The Message is a fantastic place to work. I get to be part of a global mission, a supportive community, and grow under a group of inspirational leaders.’

Ruth, Central Support

For the last quarter of a century, we’ve been leading the way in reaching the hardest-to-reach with the life-transforming gospel of Jesus Christ. The Message Trust was founded in 1992 by Andy Hawthorne, a passionate evangelist who was awarded an OBE in 2011 for services to young people.

At the heart of our operation is our staff team – dedicated followers of Jesus who have seen transformation in their own lives and who are passionate about seeing other lives impacted by an encounter with Christ that leads to a lifestyle of discipleship.

In 2018 we were named the **Best Not-For-Profit Organisation To Work For in the UK** by the Sunday Times Best Companies survey, based on responses submitted by our staff. We’re proud to know that we’re not only making a difference in the lives of the people we reach through our work, but that we’re making a difference to our employees lives too by being an outstanding working environment.

At the heart of our staff culture is a regular rhythm of passionate prayer. We spend at least half an hour every day seeking God and listening to his voice. Working here means you’ll have room to grow, not just professionally, but spiritually too.

By joining the Message team, you’ll be joining a family – united in one vision to see lives changed for the better.

Find out more at message.org.uk.



Our staff team in 2018



Prayer & worship are at the heart of our staff rhythm



Message CEO and Founder Andy Hawthorne

Job Specification

Job Title: Communications Officer

Location: Message Trust Head Office, Sharston, Manchester

Hours: Full time (35 hours per week)

Salary: £21 to £23k

Start date: September 2020

Responsible to: Communications Manager

Responsible for: Digital, online and print communications

Primary internal working relationships: Creative Team, team leaders

Primary external working relationships: Printers, external clients

Main purpose of the job

The Message Trust is looking for a high-capacity and enthusiastic communications specialist who is passionate about engaging others in our mission to share the gospel with young people across the UK and beyond to join our multi-disciplinary Creative team.

Our new Communications Officer will be responsible for helping to further develop our communications with supporters, partners and different audiences online, in print and in film.

What does the job involve?

We are a story-driven movement and are looking for someone who is proficient at telling other people's stories across different channels and platforms, helping our various teams and departments tell theirs too. You will write and curate content for Message websites and social media channels, recognising the advantages of each medium and tailoring content to fit.

To help with this you'll need to be proactively seeking out opportunities to drive our communications forward, and also need to have a keen eye for detail as you help us plan and deliver our communications.

Specific duties and responsibilities

- Production and publication of engaging digital content and campaigns for social media and online channels.
- Writing compelling stories from across The Message movement. This will include working closely with our regional and mission teams to ensure we are able to share up-to-date, relevant stories.
- Assisting in the planning and implementation of effective integrated communications campaigns.
- Ensuring all Message website and social media channels are kept up to date with fresh, engaging content gathered from across the organisation.
- Playing a key part in planning content and writing for Flow magazine (two times per year).
- Co-ordinating the compilation of our supporter prayer calendars (six per year; regional editions).
- Producing regular supporter facing email communication (weekly news and prayer emails) and help to continue developing these as our work grows.
- Assisting the production of video-based communication pieces.
- Encouraging and collaborating with other writers and content generators in other HQ departments and in each of our hub offices.
- Keeping up to date with the job list and report weekly to the Communications Manager.
- Have a 'can do' attitude in the tightest of deadlines and showing initiative to deliver solutions above expectations.
- Any other related duties may from time to time be necessary, at the discretion of the Communications Manager.
- Enter fully into The Message Trust team life, including morning prayers, monthly prayer days, evening prayer meetings and events.
- Must be prepared, on occasions, to work away from Manchester and work weekends.

Person Specification

Essential

- Proven communicator with first class writing skills and the ability to adapt material dependent on the audience and established tone of voice.
- Experience writing and curating content and stories for a range of internal and external audiences.
- Experience in producing engaging online communications and implementing campaigns that raise awareness and organisational profile.
- Strong knowledge of social media platforms and the specific communications requirements for each of these.
- A relevant degree or equivalent experience.
- Experience using website content management systems.
- Able to follow direction thoroughly whilst also showing initiative.
- Aptitude to work quickly, efficiently and meet deadlines.
- Familiar with the communications practices of other Christian charities and within the charitable, non-profit sector.
- A natural curiosity and desire to stay on top of the latest digital and communications trends and strategies.
- Strong interpersonal and communication skills are essential.
- Applicants should be able to articulate a clear vision for their role within the work of The Message, particularly with reference to their ability to function within the framework of its Mission, Vision, Ethos and Values.

Desirable

- Communications or marketing degree.
- Strong knowledge of SEO and how to develop this across organisations and brands.
- Ability to produce graphics and edit video content for use on social media and online channels.

Full copies of our Mission & Vision statement and our Ethos & Values statement are available on request or can be viewed online at www.message.org.uk

Notes

All Message staff are set a personal fundraising target. We ask that the successful applicant has a minimum of £75 per month of regular financial support before commencing employment, increasing to £125 per month by the end of the three-month probation period and aims to add one supporter a month after that. Training and support will be given to help you achieve this. Staff are also expected to organise and take part in, at least one fundraising or other sponsored event annually.

This job description is not exhaustive and amendments and additions may be required in line with future organisational changes.

The successful candidate for this post will be asked to apply for a DBS check at Enhanced level and the content of that check could affect ability of the Message to extend the offer of employment.

Genuine Occupational Requirement (GOR): This post has been identified as having a GOR to be filled by a Christian under the provisions of the Employment Equality (Religion and Belief) Regulations 2003 Section 7.2.

Working for The Message Trust

The Message Trust exists to share the good news about Jesus Christ boldly with young people, primarily in urban areas. Working in schools, in local communities and in prisons, The Message is in regular contact with around 100,000 young people each year across the UK and now internationally in South Africa, Canada and Germany from our base in Manchester.

Our objectives are expressed in the following ways:

- Producing quality Christian music and educational resources. Live music bands, printed materials, the internet and multimedia are all used to communicate the gospel to young people in ways that are relevant to today's youth culture and perspectives.
- Community-based Eden teams advancing the work of The Message through partnerships with local churches. Our goal is to see Eden teams with full-time and volunteer youth and community workers established in the most deprived neighbourhoods of the UK, positively impacting the people in those areas irrespective of religion, colour or background.
- Working in prisons and young offender institutions, sharing the gospel with inmates and offering discipleship programmes. After release, we offer supported housing in a Christian environment and employment through our enterprise initiatives.
- Inspiring and training church leaders and youth groups to be effective in reaching and communicating the Christian gospel to young people. Our goal is to produce discipleship materials, evangelism training courses and to inspire people to get involved with their neighbourhoods, through social action and evangelistic outreaches.
- Partnering with local churches, local authorities, schools, the police and other agencies to provide new opportunities and positive experiences for disadvantaged, deprived and marginalised young people across the UK.

Ethos & Values

Making A Difference

The Message Trust's work is underpinned by a clear definition of its Ethos and Values, which affirms the Christian origins of the Trust and its ongoing day-to-day working principles. A Statement of ethos and values is in place (see below) to demonstrate how the Christian Faith energises the organisation's work and sustains its culture, galvanising its long-term cohesion. The Trustee, Executive, Management and Outreach posts within the organisation have been recognised as carrying a Genuine Occupational Requirement. This is to ensure that the organisation's distinctive Christian basis is sustained. This is important given the extensive nature of the organisation's Christian charitable donor base which provides the basis for the financial viability of the work. The Message Trust is an inclusive Christian organisation, working with and supporting people from all sections of the community. In particular the Statement explains how organisations and individual people from all faiths or no faith can identify with and benefit from the services and support that the organisation provides.

We maintain the Trust's Christian ethos which is founded on a belief in God the Father as Creator, Jesus Christ the Son of God the Redeemer, and The Holy Spirit, the Enabler and third person of the Trinity. The Trust also affirms that the practical application of the Christian faith in accordance with the Bible should be expressed in daily work and living. As a Christian

organisation working with and supporting people from all sections of the community, we recognise the need to set out our values. These are clearly drawn from our Christian faith and our aim is that all our staff, volunteers, clients, service users, charitable funders and business partners should be able to identify with the benefits of the organisation's work and ethos.

People

We seek to empower staff to meet the needs and expectations of our clients and other service users as well as the requirements of the organisation overall. We will support staff through a comprehensive induction and training programme, backed up by strong supervision. The Message seeks to establish a culture that encourages teamwork, rewards creativity and innovation, and welcomes imaginative suggestions. Key attributes that The Message seeks in all its staff members and volunteers include valuing one another, honesty and integrity, the importance of the individual, respecting differences, a profound compassion, and working in an inclusive, non-discriminatory and non-judgemental way.

Partnership

We expect all staff to work together to achieve the aims and objectives of the organisation. To achieve this, staff will act as team players in supporting one another, recognising that more is achieved through harmony. We acknowledge and value contributions to our operation arising from the diversity of staff who join the organisation, and actively look to promote links and partnerships between the Trust and other service providers, local communities and agencies. To ensure all staff work as team players, we seek to create an environment where openness, trust and support of one another is expected. Our formal supervision policies place this expectation on all staff.

Performance

Our philosophy is to recognise the dignity and diversity of our clients and service users, to respect their independence, and to work with them to help meet their needs. Our staff will create an environment where our clients and service users are encouraged to take control of their lives and have the ability to exercise choice wherever possible. We will provide a high quality framework for our work, which sets out guidance and expectations. All staff and volunteers will accept their responsibility and accountability to treat clients and service users as they would wish to be treated, and challenge any practice that does not meet this standard at all times. Respect for the individual's freedom of choice will be paramount at all times. By working together, we aim to be recognised for "services of excellence" which offer proven choice, added value, and individually tailored support. We will value and recognise the importance of every individual helping to achieve this goal.

Confidentiality

Any information relating to people contacted by the Trust acquired in the course of duty must be treated in strictest confidence and must be discussed only within the confines of the work setting with the appropriate members of staff.

Any information relating to staff acquired in the course of duty must be treated in the strictest confidence and must be discussed only with senior staff members or with the line manager.

Note

This job description is not exhaustive and amendments and additions may be required in line with future organisational changes.