Job Description

Post title: Communications Officer

Service area: Public Health (Evidence Islington)

Grade: PO3

Reports to: Programme Director Evidence Islington (and with a reporting line in the corporate communications team)

Your team: Public Health (and with dotted line into corporate communications)

Our ambition

We’re determined to make Islington more equal. To create a place where everyone, whatever their background, has the opportunity to reach their potential and enjoy a good quality of life.

We also have an ambitious goal – to be the best council in the country – with every employee clear about the part they play and inspired, focused and supported to give their very best.

We want to build an organisation where employees feel valued, inspired and empowered to help us achieve our goals and provide the best services possible to our residents.

Our values and behaviours

‘Be Islington’ is about setting a clear challenge about what it means to be an Islington employee and sets the standard for every new recruit.

We ask our employees to ‘Be Islington’ – playing their part in working together for a more equal borough and to always be collaborative, be ambitious, be resourceful, and be empowering (‘CARE’).

Our commitment to challenging inequality

We are committed to tackling inequality, racism and injustice and creating a more equal borough for all. In order to do this, we need to set the example by being a fair employer and creating a workplace environment which is free from discrimination, racism and inequality. Our approach needs to be proactive, consistently learning to create a more equal workplace and foster a culture which empowers all staff to challenge inequality.

Equality is at the heart of what we do. We want to celebrate and embrace our differences by:

* Ensuring our workforce is representative of the people we work on behalf of, our residents
* Creating equitable working environments and diverse teams
  + Understanding our residents in order to design and deliver services that help tackle inequality and improve life chances for our residents
  + Getting to know people and their differences
  + Interpreting issues and concerns from a cultural perspective and address situations or problems from the points-of-view of multiple cultures

Evidence Islington

Evidence Islington (EI) is a new collaboration between London Borough of Islington, Healthwatch Islington, University College London and the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, set up to boost research capacity and capability within local government.

The National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR) awarded Islington Health Determinants Research Collaboration (HDRC) status in October 2023 which means we can work together to reduce inequalities and improve aspects of people’s lives that affect their health and wellbeing, for example housing and the environment.

Evidence Islington work is aligned with the priorities set out in [Islington Together 2030](https://www.islington.gov.uk/about-the-council/vision-and-priorities).

*Why is evidence and research important?*

Using evidence and research is vital to providing services that residents really need and we have three workstreams that aim to:

1. Create a sustainable research culture that places evidence at the heart of everything we do, including strengthening research collaborations
2. Strengthen and mature our data infrastructure to enable us to generate high quality insights and evaluate impact
3. Build capacity and participation in research

Key responsibilities

1. To develop strong relationships with the council’s communications team to ensure that work is coordinated and aligns with the council’s mission and objectives. This includes ensuring that council communications and planning processes are followed and that Evidence Islington’s projects are presented to staff in a coordinated way.
2. To develop, deliver, evaluate and review Evidence Islington’s internal and external communications strategy and its contingent elements (including dissemination/communication plan).
3. To plan, lead, deliver and evaluate communications and dissemination that support the delivery of the Evidence Islington Programme, including on and offline written communications, marketing materials, events and face-to-face communications. Including:

* Developing internal and external messaging about what is Evidence Islington and its role in increasing knowledge and understanding across the council and partners.
* Designing and producing a range of materials that support delivery and awareness of Evidence Islington internally (to officers and members) and externally to partners, residents and our funders.
* Using a range of media including website pages, project summaries, news stories, leaflets, newsletters, flyers, as well as maintaining an effective and innovative social media presence, while keeping abreast of institutional activities for dissemination to all relevant stakeholders across all media platforms and events.
* Developing and managing the Evidence Islington internet and intranet pages and other communication channels. Ensuring the production of innovative and interesting content that is accessible and up to date.
* Using appropriate systems (such as Canva and YouTube) to manage and deliver communications.

1. To offer strategic communications advice to the Evidence Islington delivery team to ensure consistency and a joined-up approach to resident and staff engagement. Helping to ensure communication systems and processes are in place and that relevant staff are briefed on how to work within these parameters.
2. To work in close collaboration and to develop trusted relationships with the communication teams across Evidence Islington partners (Islington Healthwatch, UCL, LSHTM and North Thames ARC) and NIHR (as funder).
3. To work with residents around messaging to ensure communications land appropriately.
4. To individually generate content (researching, interviewing, writing, editing, subediting, and proofing) and work with others to do so.
5. To develop and manage a plan for evaluating the impact of Evidence Islington’s communications activity in such a way that statistics can be provided with ease when necessary.
6. To co-ordinate and respond to media interest and prepare press releases and news items.
7. To manage and develop a database of key contacts and stakeholders for Evidence Islington.
8. To contribute timely content and ideas for council printed publications and digital channels, ensuring that content is tied to both Evidence Islington and council objectives and priorities.
9. To manage and promote events, ensuring good attendance and engagement from target audiences and smooth, professional running.
10. To ensure accessibility of digital content, including websites, social media and videos, and to support others in ensuring accessibility in their communications.

Key relationships

Evidence Islington delivery group, including:

* Public health consultant
* Head of research
* Engagement manager
* Project officer
* University academics
* Healthwatch Islington chief executive and communications officer

London Borough of Islington communications team

NIHR communications

North Thames ARC

Other HDRCs

Leadership

As a key member of the Evidence Islington team:

To contribute proactively to the collective leadership for Evidence Islington and the council, working collaboratively with Members, services across the council, partners and stakeholders to deliver the council’s objectives and priorities.

To drive positive cultural change, embodying and promoting the values and behaviours of the council and empowering staff to reach their full potential.

Resources and Financial Management

Ensure effective Financial Management, cost controls and income maximisation in an ever-changing environment, fluctuating demands and priorities. Ensure resources are well managed and effectively deployed to the best possible effects assuring value for money in all activities.

Compliance

Ensure legal, regulatory and policy compliance under GDPR, Health and Safety and in area of your specialism identifying opportunities and risks and escalating where appropriate.

Budget responsibilities

Play a part in the successful management of the Evidence Islington budget.

Work style

Part time (21 hours a week)

Flexible

Hybrid - office/home

Person specification

You should demonstrate on your application form how you meet the essential criteria. Please ensure you address each of the criteria as this will be assessed to determine your suitability for the post.

Assessment Guide

A = Application

I = Interview

T = Test

Essential Criteria

Experience

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Essential criteria** | **Criteria description** | **Assessed by** |
| 1 | Educated to graduate level, or with experience to the equivalent level | Application |
| 2 | Experience of delivering communications, using a wide range of content to generate impact and engagement for key priorities across a range of different channels | Application/Interview |
| 3 | Experience of turning complex information into clear, creative, compelling, relevant and targeted content that tells a clear and consistent story to its target audience | Application/Interview/Test |
| 4 | Experience of managing digital channels including websites, social media, especially Twitter, and email newsletters using relevant tools | Application/Interview |
| 5 | Expertise in successfully delivering communication campaigns across a range of channels and organisations | Application/Interview/Test |
| 6 | Experience of writing for different audiences and channels, and tailoring content for each | Application/Interview/Test |
| 7 | Experience of organising events such as conferences and workshops | Application/Interview |
| 8 | Experience of working in a political environment and with staff at all levels, including elected politicians | Application/Interview |

#### Skills

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Essential criteria** | **Criteria description** | **Assessed by** |
| 10 | Excellent written and verbal communication skills, and the ability to motivate, inspire and influence others | Application/Interview/Test |
| 11 | Personal and professional demeanour which generates credibility and confidence amongst the general public, members, chief officers, staff, external partners and all other stakeholders | Application/Interview |
| 12 | Ability to work under pressure, meeting deadlines and balancing different priorities and workloads | Application/Interview |
| 13 | Ability to work collaboratively within a multidisciplinary team and with a range of internal and external stakeholders and to engage and influence at many levels | Application/Interview |
| 14 | Excellent understanding of communication best practice, including a solid understanding of accessibility issues | Application/Interview |
| 15 | An interest in, and knowledge of, communicating issues connected to research, health and/or wider determinants of health | Application/Interview |
| 16 | Ability to recommend innovative solutions to problems to maximise the Council's communications objectives | Application/Interview |
| 17 | Ability to be thorough and give attention to detail, to ensure the highest possible results for all communications products, including ability to proof-read thoroughly, review and change design, good understanding of digital best practice | Application/Interview |
| 18 | A commitment to cultural competence and understanding of the needs of Islington’s diverse community | Application/Interview |

Our accreditations

Our accreditations include: the Healthy Workplace award, Timewise, London Living Wage Employer, Disability Confident Committed, The Mayor’s Good Work Standard, Stonewall Diversity Champion, and Time to Change.

