

# Communications and Marketing Senior Lead

**Reports to:** Director of Programmes, with a dotted line to Head of Who's Losing Learning Campaign

**Start date:** As soon as possible

**Location:** Hybrid with 50% office presence

**Contract:** Permanent; full time

**Salary:** £40,000-£50,000 per annum, depending on experience (+6% employer pension contribution)

**Closing date for applications:** Midnight Sunday 2nd February

## The Task Ahead

As The Difference moves from its early start-up phase into the delivery of our 2025-30 strategy, our programmes and sector-influencing work are expanding to reach more schools and to deepen our impact.

As Communications and Marketing Lead, you will be a key member of the Research, Impact & Influence team. You will hold end-to-end responsibility for the communications and marketing function, from developing impactful content to executing high-profile events. You will decide where and how our existing processes could be improved, as well as developing new strategies that will underpin our work as a larger and more established charity.

The Difference is still a small and growing charity. This means that our work is fast-paced, our roles are broad, and there is a culture of being reactive and flexible, as the needs of the organisation evolve. If this sounds exciting rather than daunting, then this could be the role and team for you!

## Areas of Responsibility

The Difference is looking for a Communications and Marketing Lead to lead our this function in the following ways:

### Communications

- **Storytelling & content relation:** Produce engaging and informative content that showcases the impact of The Difference's work and resonates with target audiences. Develop compelling narratives and case studies that demonstrate the value of our programs and services, effectively communicating our impact and expertise.

- **Media Relations & brand awareness:** Proactively build relationships with journalists and key influencers to secure coverage that advances our mission and drives engagement. Support The Difference team to draft and deliver engaging and high quality content in a range of styles. Cultivate The Difference's profile and influence by planning and placing articles, blog posts, social media campaigns and reports for sector-specific and national press.

## Marketing

- **Sales & Marketing:** Drive sales for our school leadership programmes and events through targeted marketing campaigns, including social media, developing compelling collateral, managing online advertising, and exploring innovative approaches to reach potential clients and partners.
- **Conference Management:** Lead the planning, organisation, and execution of conferences and events, including our annual IncludED conference as well as smaller focus events, designed to generate direct sales and raise awareness of The Difference's work. This includes managing budgets, logistics, marketing, and delegate experience to ensure successful and impactful events.
- **Events presence:** Identify and map out key events where The Difference should have a presence throughout the year. Support the wider Difference team to ensure delivery and presence feeds back to sales.

## Person Specification

**Essential** – We are looking for the following skills, aptitude and experience; though you may be stronger in some areas than others:

- **Proven track record in marketing and communications, ideally within the children's services or non-profit sector.** This will include:
  - A demonstrable understanding of marketing principles and digital marketing best practices to achieve specific goals (e.g. sales targets and/or creating policy change)
  - Proficiency in social media marketing and campaigning and using digital tools to maximise impact
  - Excellent written and verbal communication skills to craft compelling narratives with different audiences, including the education sector and local and national government

- **Strategic thinker with the ability to translate organisational goals into impactful communication and marketing plans.** You can connect the dots between The Difference's mission and specific communication and marketing activities.
- **Experience engaging with media outlets and creating compelling content for the press.** You have a knack for storytelling and can produce high-quality content that resonates with target audiences.
- **Experience in planning and executing successful events.** You can manage the logistics and deliver engaging experiences for attendees.
- **Strong interpersonal skills and ability to work effectively in a team.** You are a collaborative team player who can build positive relationships with colleagues and stakeholders.
- **Passion for The Difference's mission and improving the lives of vulnerable children.** You are genuinely committed to making a difference in the lives of young people facing challenges.

**Desired** – You are more likely to be successful in your application if you have one or more of the following additional experiences:

- **Political Acumen:** Experience providing strategic and tactical political advice to senior leadership on how to create change.
- **Leadership & Development:** Experience in coaching and developing staff.
- **Lived Experience:** Insight into the school experiences of marginalised young people, including those with experience of the care system, mental ill health, special educational needs, and racism.

## Why Work for The Difference?

Schooling isn't working for the children who need it most. Every week in England 109 children – equivalent to three full classrooms – are permanently excluded. This is just the tip of the iceberg. Since the pandemic, school suspensions have risen significantly, as has persistent absenteeism. 1 in 5 children are missing more than 10% of their time in school. Children who are excluded or persistently absent are much more likely to already be experiencing vulnerability or disadvantage. They are more likely to live in poverty, have additional learning needs, suffer mental health challenges, or experience a lack of safety outside school. Certain ethnicities are also disproportionately affected, notably Gypsy Roma Traveller and black Caribbean children.

Exclusion and high rates of absence can have a dramatic effect on life chances. These young people are more likely to drop out of education or employment, become vulnerable to long-term mental ill health, or be at risk of criminal exploitation. The Difference believes that children and young people deserve better and that the education system has to change.



## Our Organisation

The Difference is a young education charity, founded to change the story on lost learning. By 2030, we want rates of exclusion and absence to be falling nationally and for schools to be better equipped to support all children, including those who may be vulnerable.

The Difference was born out of [a year of research into school exclusions with think-tank IPPR](#). This research identified a lack of inclusion expertise in schools and proposed a new leadership development programme to fill this gap. In 2018, Difference founder [Kiran](#) hired the team who took this idea from concept to reality, beginning work with our first schools. In September 2024, we published a follow-up report: [Who is Losing Learning?](#) This report broadened our definition of 'exclusions' to include lost learning from absence, as well as suspensions and permanent exclusions.

The Difference is now a 22-strong team delivering multiple school leadership programmes, alongside a growing research and policy arm. This work is needed more than ever. Effects of COVID-19, coupled with the spiralling cost of living, have substantially increased levels of vulnerability. Schools serving excluded pupils face under-funding. The Difference has had excellent early impact but there is work ahead to capture this, share learning with schools and policy-makers, and grow our capacity to lower exclusions across England.

## Our Values

- **Relationships underpin success** - Strong relationships and the safety they bring are the foundation of achievement - for children, for school staff, in our workplace and in our collaborations. They enable higher trust, challenging feedback, bolder work and stronger impact.
- **We build stronger from assets** - Every child, family, school and community has strengths and successes. We avoid deficit-labels about teachers, children and families, and instead focus on building from what's strong.

- **Systems shape opportunities** - Actions always take place within systems. These can help or hinder individuals. We recognise the role of policy and structural inequalities and address them directly in our work.
- **Agency makes the difference** - Bold leadership by individuals can create significant and lasting change. We are proactive in addressing problems and seeking out opportunities.

## How To Apply

To apply, please complete all sections of the application form by midnight on Sunday 2nd of February.

[Link to our application form on Applied](#)

First round interviews will be held during **the week beginning Monday the 3rd of February**, over video call.

If successful in this stage, second round interviews (including a task to be completed the same day) will take place on **the week beginning Monday 10th of February**, at our office in Bethnal Green.

**Please indicate if you would not be available to attend an interview during this timeframe.**

For an informal and confidential discussion about the role prior to application, please reach out to [jobs@the-difference.com](mailto:jobs@the-difference.com).


We are committed to building a diverse team and strongly encourage applications from under-represented groups in the charity sector such as people from black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds, LGBTQ+ people, people with disabilities, people with experience in the care system, non-graduates and first-in-family graduates.

As part of our commitment to fairer recruitment, all applications will be assessed with names and any protected characteristics redacted.

Please note that we are not able to provide working visas and therefore cannot hire anyone that does not have the right to work in the UK.

## Recommended Reading

If you'd like to understand more about The Difference and what we are trying to achieve, we would recommend the following:

- **Our founding theory of change & research** - [Making The Difference](#) (2017)- the IPPR report which started The Difference. Now our newest research on the scale of the problem [Who is Losing Learning?](#) (Sept 2024)
-  [The Spark - Kiran Gill and Excluded Pupils](#) (2020)- Kiran speaks to Helen Lewis from BBC Radio 4 and explores the genesis and mission of The Difference
- Our latest [Impact Report](#), sharing our work in 2023