



## Senior Research Communications Officer Job Description

**This job description serves to illustrate the type and scope of what is required for the above post and to provide an indication of the required level of responsibility. It is not a comprehensive or exclusive list and duties may be varied from time to time, they will not however change the general character of the job or the level of responsibility entailed.**

### Section 1 - Job Details

<b>Job title</b>	Senior Research Communications Officer
<b>Directorate area</b>	Research and External Affairs
<b>Department/Team (if applicable)</b>	Research
<b>Reports to</b>	Research Communications Manager
<b>Direct reports</b>	None
<b>Job Location</b>	Office-based from London with flexibility to work remotely.
Contracted hours are agreed locally with line managers	

### Section 2 - Job Purpose

To ensure people affected by MS receive quality information on MS science and research by:

- coordinating and creating proactive research communications for a wide range of audiences, including people with MS and donors
- responding to both internal and external requests for up to date information on MS research, including our funding portfolio
- contributing to the overall implementation of the Research team's objectives

## Section 3 - Key Responsibilities/Accountabilities

	Responsibility/ Activity
1	Identify and scope opportunities for proactive research communications projects that enhance the visibility and understanding of MS research by reviewing the MS Society research portfolio, liaising with funded researchers and keeping up to date with the latest developments in MS research.
2	Drive strategic content development by leading the creation, curation, and updating of news and blog content for the research section of the Society's website and other digital channels, ensuring complex topics are communicated clearly and accessibly for people affected by MS and other key stakeholders.
3	Work closely with other members of the research communications team to plan, write and edit content for the Society's 'MS Matters' magazine and other publications, maintaining a high standard of editorial quality and impact.
4	Work closely with the Research Partnerships Manager to support our Stop MS Appeal and research fundraising by identifying suitable projects, writing and editing proposals and reports, giving pitches and reviewing creative materials.
5	Represent the MS Society at internal and external events, delivering engaging and accessible presentations on the Society's research to diverse audiences.
6	Write prompt and accurate responses relating to MS research questions for relevant stakeholders, including colleagues and people affected by MS.
7	Coordinate with the press team to support the development of timely, well-informed responses to media inquiries, providing expert commentary on MS research developments and managing reactive communications strategies.

## Section 4 - Dimension of the role

Resources	Responsible for the proper use and safekeeping of assets within scope of role, including laptop and related equipment.
Staff/Volunteers	This role does not have line management responsibility for staff or volunteers.
Budget	No budget management or monitoring responsibility.
Key relationships	<p><b>Internal</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research Communications Manager</li> <li>• Research Partnerships Manager</li> <li>• Head of Research and the Research directorate</li> <li>• Engagement and Income Generation Directorate, including the digital, events, appeals, individual giving and partnership teams</li> <li>• External Relations directorate, including the press team</li> <li>• Services and Support directorate, including the Helpline, supporter services and information teams.</li> </ul> <p><b>External</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People affected by MS</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>MS researchers, especially those funded by the MS Society</li> </ul>
ISO	Responsibility for undertaking relevant actions and responsibilities according to the role assigned within ISO

## Section 5 – Key deliverables

	Measures of success
1	MS Society-funded research news and case studies are shared proactively and in a timely fashion across internal and external channels
2	People with MS have access to trustworthy, accessible and engaging MS research content across a variety of formats.
3	Research communications activities are successfully project managed, meeting deadlines and the needs of teams across the organisation

## Section 6 – Competencies

Competency	Level required (see below)	B	E	A	T
Fosters co-production	2		X		X
Open to change and innovation	2	X		X	
Sound decisions	2		X	X	
Collaborative working	2				X
Effective communication	2			X	X
Outcome focussed	2	X			X
Inclusivity	2				X
Accountability	2	X	X	X	X
Tech savvy	2	X		X	

Level	
5	<p><b>Strategic</b> – Wide advanced knowledge of organizational policies, practices and procedures across the organization or detailed theoretical, practical and procedural knowledge of a specialized area. Provides expert knowledge and insight on a range of subjects and/or groups relevant to MS and represents the MS Society externally. Translates vision, strategic aims and direction in clear terms that people can relate to and action. Makes significant and influential decisions and facilitates appropriate resources.</p>
4	<p><b>Expert/Recognised authority</b> – Demonstrates expert knowledge and relevant and appropriate professional leadership and influence. Colleagues consistently perform a task or activity to higher levels having an intuitive grasp of what is required to be delivered, how it impacts across other areas of activity and how it may be improved for the benefits of the MS Society. Colleagues have an in-depth understanding and focus upon building expertise, they are the go-to person and have a reputation for being knowledgeable in this area and are able to apply their existing skills and knowledge to new or emerging challenges.</p> <p>Has responsibility for managing significant resource (people, budget etc) associated with the function/activity</p>
3	<p><b>Complex</b> - Roles with or without line management responsibility where they are required to use knowledge gained through experience, professional or technical qualification on complex information or raw data for typically non-routine problems upon which own judgment needs to be applied without further instruction or guidance</p>

	to work with others to overcome obstacles and deliver outcomes across teams/department.
2	<b>Enhanced</b> - Roles with or without line management responsibility but accountable for casework/face to face service provision/ internal/external process and or people (including volunteers) e.g. first line managers of people or process. Colleagues have knowledge of requirements of a team/function, contribute to building and maintaining successful internal and external relationships and collaborate to deliver effective outcomes. Colleagues use knowledge and understanding to organise and/or manage work, tasks and processes, can solve routine issues and contribute to the development of new practices and procedures.
1	<b>Foundation</b> – roles make an individual contribution to the MS Society with no process or line management responsibility. Colleagues have a fundamental knowledge and understanding of what is required to carry out the role and how it connects to other roles and activities. Understand what is required to be carried out and has the competence and skills to carry out the activities.

## Section 7 - Learning & Development requirements

(List L&D requirements for role)

<b>Foundation (mandatory)</b>	Mandatory training modules
<b>Additional internal learning/ courses required for role</b>	Tone of voice Writing skills Brand awareness Involvement and coproduction
<b>Other professional training/qualification required</b>	First degree in a relevant science discipline.  Postgraduate qualification in a relevant science or science communications discipline or equivalent experience

## Section 8 - Person specification (knowledge, experience, skills and attributes needed for the Job)

*Those that are marked as essential and will be tested at application stage (A) will be used as shortlisting criteria for determining who will be invited to interview.*

*There should be no more than 7 shortlisting criteria.*

Requirement	Essential	Desirable	Tested*
First degree in a relevant science discipline and postgraduate qualification in a relevant science discipline or equivalent experience	X		A
Evidence of continuous professional development		X	I
Experience in communicating complex research topics to a lay audience	X		A, I, T
Experience of communicating through multiple channels	X		A, I
Experience of managing long-term, complex projects	X		A, I, P
Experience working cross-departmentally		X	I, P
Able to effectively and appropriately	X		A, T

communicate complex research messages to staff, researchers, healthcare professionals, people with health conditions and the public			
A clear understanding of a range of research methodologies, including basic biomedical research, clinical trials and qualitative research	X		A, I
Ability to develop creative solutions to complex problems	X		I, P
Demonstrable commitment to collaborative team work	X		I, P
Demonstrable commitment to inclusive working, ensuring equality and valuing diversity	X		I, P
Excellent interpersonal skills, and able to influence/persuade a wide range of stakeholders	X		I, P
Excellent written and verbal communication skills, with the ability to communicate effectively in a wide range of media and audiences	X		A, T
Good organisational and workload management skills	X		I, P
Excellent IT skills, in particular MS Office	X		I, P
Experience of content management systems		X	I, P

\*Tested – A (application), I (interview), T (test or Assessment), P (through performance reviews including probation, 1:1's and PDR)

## Section 9 – Additional Information and Requirements

<b>Confidentiality</b>	Ensure that essential information of a sensitive and/or personal nature is not disclosed to, or discussed with, inappropriate persons and that all information is maintained in accordance with the GDPR and other related legislation/requirements.
<b>Equality, diversity and inclusion</b>	Ensure all duties are carried out in a manner which promotes the MS Society's equality, diversity and inclusion policies and practices.  As a charity whose primary focus is to support and improve outcomes for those with a disability, we expect all colleagues to be curious and innovative in identifying and removing any barriers experienced by those with disabilities whilst working with us.
<b>Health &amp; safety</b>	Promote a health and safety culture, observe all health and safety rules and procedures and complete training courses, as required.
<b>Safeguarding</b>	MS Society are committed to recruiting with care and to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children,

	young people and vulnerable adults and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Background checks and Disclosed Barring Service checks will not be required for this role.
<b>Digital, data and Technology</b>	Competently utilise technology to perform the role including internet-based voice and video calls, Microsoft Office applications, the MS Society intranet, human resource and finance systems, case management system software and other bespoke MS Society software and applications.
<b>Key contacts/relationships</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MS Society staff, including members of the Research and External Affairs and Engagement and Income Generation Directorates</li> <li>• People affected by MS</li> <li>• MS researchers</li> </ul>
<b>Unusual specific physical/mental demands associated with the role</b>	None specified.
<b>Travel requirements</b>	Expected travel into London office and other UK events every 1-2 months.
<b>Unsocial hours</b>	Where required when attending events.

**Last updated August 2024**