



## Job Description & Person Specification

Job Title: Senior Communications Officer

Contract: Permanent

Hours: Full time (37.5 hours per week)

Location: Flexible, with time in the London (Hammersmith) Office and some UK travel

Salary: £33,000 - £35,000 per annum plus benefits

### About Starlight

Starlight is the national charity for children's play in healthcare.

We support children to experience the power of play during treatment, care and recovery from illness in more than 600 healthcare settings across the UK. Play is integral to the wellbeing of children and can make hospitals and hospices feel more welcoming, safe and a good place to thrive, ensuring children live every day even when they are sick. We know that the highest attainable standard of health can only be realised if children are supported to engage in play in hospital.

Play is often overlooked or trivialised in the healthcare system, and play professionals are often undervalued and under resourced despite the contribution they make to children's wellbeing and the efficiencies they deliver in the NHS. Play is a vital way children gain agency in their treatment, a sense of autonomy and control; and is an important way to express thoughts and feelings in a healthcare setting.

We believe that children's healthcare services should fully reflect the importance of play to their health, wellbeing, resilience and recovery, and that every child who is an inpatient should have daily play opportunities, appropriate to their condition, supported by dedicated play staff. We aim to enable all children in the UK to have their right to play protected and provided for when they are receiving healthcare – in or out of hospital.

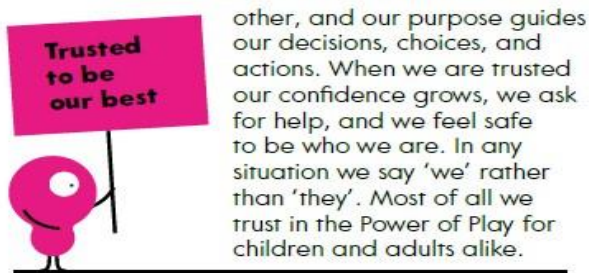
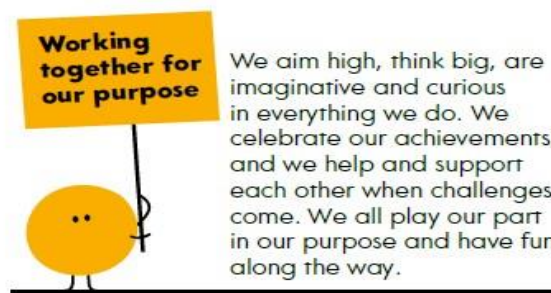
### Our Culture

We believe that our success depends upon focusing on our purpose and business results and taking individual responsibility for a culture where everyone can belong, feel safe and thrive. Our values are the agreed standards that govern our behaviour and are central to our decision-making and the choices that we make. Our development programme focuses on individual awareness of our own values, strengths, and preferences – what makes us who we are – to help all colleagues think for themselves, manage their environment, and make appropriate, balanced decisions for themselves, others and Starlight. We believe that our strength is in our differences and constantly strive towards an authentic workplace culture with equity, diversity, and inclusion as central principles.



## OUR VALUES

**"Our standards and the environment we create through our behaviours"**



## Our Strategy and the Senior Communications Officer

We know the enormous difference play and play professionals can have on children in hospitals, hospices and other healthcare settings. We want the public, health services and government to understand why play is a must have, not a nice to have.

In order to support our strategy by raising awareness of why we exist and what we do, we are seeking a dynamic and experienced communications professional to join the Marketing and Communications team. With a strong background in media relations and PR, you will have responsibility of overseeing and delivering the press office function, develop and deliver media and communications plans, shape our storytelling and key messages and provide expert consultancy to all colleagues up to and including the Chief Executive.

Working closely with colleagues from across the organisation, children and their families, our youth panel and health professionals, you will proactively seek out stories to create compelling content for the media, our fundraising and awareness raising campaigns, and marketing collateral. You are an exceptional copywriter and will have an understanding of different audience requirements and can advise colleagues accordingly.

Reporting to the Head of Marketing and Communications, you'll support with strategic communications planning, and in the ideation, development and management of content to maximise impact of campaigns, fundraising appeals, events and policy activity across owned, earned and paid channels.

You'll be committed to development, both for yourself and those around you. You'll manage your own environment by constantly listening, responding and adapting. You will believe in the value of giving and receiving feedback as helpful information for us all to continually grow, and consciously make appropriate, balanced decisions for yourself, others and Starlight.



## Key Areas of Responsibility

As our Senior Communications Officer, you'll:

- Oversee and deliver the press office function and develop warm journalist relationships to be the first point of contact for queries and to proactively pitch stories.
- Meet the organisational KPI's and measurements which are set to evidence the reach and engagement generated by the coverage you achieve
- Monitor, track and evaluate all media activity to ensure learnings are taken forward.
- Work closely with and understand the needs of different members of the Marketing and Communications team and other teams to develop media and/or communications plans or content for fundraising, awareness raising, policy campaigns and marketing collateral for maximum impact.
- Manage and build the case study library of families, play professionals and fundraisers/ supporters. Work with colleagues to source case studies and lead on interviewing and writing up stories.
- Provide media and communications consultancy to internal and external stakeholders (such as case studies and fundraisers) and provide media training/ briefings accordingly.
- Write, proof-read and monitor the quality and brand alignment of media, marketing and communications outputs across the organisation.
- Attend events which require media or communications expertise or are an opportunity for gathering content.
- Develop, brief and maintain effective working relationships with external providers such as copywriters, photographers and videographers.
- Support the development of effective systems and process for briefing, testing and evaluating content.
- Represent the Marketing and Communications team when necessary.

## Person specification

Requirement	Essential	Desirable	Evaluation*
Substantial experience and knowledge of PR/ media relations with a proven track record of generating proactive media coverage and responding to journalist queries.	√		A/I
Excellent knowledge of the UK media landscape and experience of media databases and monitoring tools.	√		A/I



Extensive experience of developing and delivering media and communications plans from concept to evaluation.	√		A/I
Excellent written skills with experience of turning complex issues into compelling copy and writing for a range of audiences and channels. Proven experience of writing: press releases, statements, media briefings/ Q&A, blogs, web stories, articles and other content such as marketing collateral and social media posts.	√		A/I
Strong interpersonal and communication skills; experienced in pitching to journalists; presenting ideas to colleagues and external stakeholders at all levels; providing media training; and representing the Marketing and Communications team internally and externally.	√		A/I
A resilient team player who can respond quickly to organisational needs, prioritise their own work and work effectively under tight deadlines overseeing several projects simultaneously from start to finish.	√		A/I
Extensive experience of working with case studies particularly when discussing sensitive issues.	√		A/I
Good understanding of social media and website CMS to support in providing cover (monitoring, responding and posting) due to annual leave/ absences in the Marketing and Communications team.		√	I
Experience of implementing and ensuring brand application.	√		A/I
Experience of briefing and supervising external providers/ freelancers.	√		A
Understanding of EDI and demonstrate those principles within the role to create content that is inclusive.	√		I
Commitment to personal development and to being able to manage your own environment and make appropriate, balanced decisions for yourself, others, and Starlight.	√		I
Enjoy being part of a small team where individuals thrive on working outside of their designated roles from time to time to get things done.	√		I
Excellent Microsoft Office skills and the ability to work with databases.	√		A

\*I = tested at interview, A= tested via cv / supporting statement

## What we offer

The opportunity and environment to be yourself and be your best. To work within a team with play at its heart. To have flexibility in where you work and the hours that you work. Personal



development through our strengths and self-awareness Development Programme. A competitive salary and benefits package including ability to work flexibly between home and office, holiday entitlement of 25 days plus bank holidays increasing up to 30 days with service, office closed at Christmas in addition to holiday entitlement, matched pension contributions to 5%, life assurance, Vitality health cover, income protection, cycle to work scheme, season ticket loans.

## **To apply**

Please apply for this role through Charity Job with your CV accompanied by a supporting statement which demonstrates how your experience matches the person specification and highlights your most relevant, recent experience for this role.

Role will close on 29<sup>th</sup> February 2025 and we are actively recruiting for this post on a rolling basis, allocation for interviews may happen as candidates apply, which may be before the interview dates stated above. As we may interview before these dates, we reserve the right to close the role earlier if we receive a number of high-quality applications.

## **Additional Information**

### **Diversity Policy Statement**

We believe that everyone has the right to be treated with consideration and respect. Starlight is committed to achieving a truly inclusive environment for all, by developing better working relationships that release the full potential, creativity, and productivity of each individual. We aim to ensure that all staff, volunteers, donors, partners, contractors, and the public are treated fairly. This will be regardless of sex, sexual orientation, gender, marital or civil partnership status, ethnicity, disability, medical status, age, religion or belief, political opinion, social or economic status, or ex-offender status. Starlight actively welcomes candidates from diverse backgrounds. If you are invited to an interview and need any adjustments made or have particular access needs, please let us know at that stage.

### **Shortlisting**

Starlight is an equal opportunities employer, and we are committed to ensuring all applications are treated fairly. All applications are subject to our shortlisting process; if you are shortlisted, we will contact you and invite you to attend an interview on or before the dates in this document, please let us know on application if you have any difficulty with the dates. You will also be advised at this point if there will be any skills test, presentations etc. We may appoint to the role before the stated closing date if a suitable candidate is identified.

### **Employment Checks**

All offers of employment are made subject to the following criteria: proof of eligibility to work in the UK, proof of residency and satisfactory employment screening, enhanced DBS and two most recent references.