# AHEAD are Hiring: Communications and Membership Officer

**Job Title:** Communications and Membership Officer

**Reports to:** Operations Manager

**Duration:** This position is offered on a permanent contract commencing as soon as possible

**Location:** AHEAD offices are located within the UCD Smurfit Business School campus in Blackrock, Co. Dublin, however, AHEAD operates a hybrid-working model for most employees and it is expected that the majority of staff will work in-office 1-2 days per week and from home for the remainder of the week.

**Hours:** The successful candidate will work part-time 4 days per week (8 hours per day including 1 hour for lunch) with flexible start times on agreement between 08:00 and 10:00. Occasional weekend/evening work may be required for out of hours events.

**Deadline for Application:** 10am, Thursday 8th August 2024.

## About AHEAD

AHEAD, established in 1988, is a non-profit organisation working on creating inclusive environments in education and employment for people with disabilities. [You can find more about what we do by watching this short video](https://youtu.be/EHdlo7-3pbc).

You can also read [AHEAD’s Strategic Plan 2024-28](https://www.ahead.ie/userfiles/files/shop/free/AHEAD%20Strategic%20Plan%202024%20-%20online%20version.pdf) where you will find our values and strategic themes in order to achieve its vision of an equitable society where people with disabilities have the power and opportunity to flourish through education and employment.

## Nature and Scope

Based within the Operations Team of AHEAD, the Communications and Membership Officer will play a leading role in the delivery of the communications function in AHEAD, working to promote work across the Employment, Education and Research & Policy teams, including designing and managing social media output, designing and sending AHEAD’s weekly email newsletter, managing and growing AHEAD’s newsletter database, and maintaining/updating targeted direct email contact lists for the organisation. They will develop and deliver a communications strategy for the organisation which covers approaches to social media, managing direct email contacts, and overseeing press queries and public relations. The successful candidate will work alongside the Digital Media and eLearning Officer to manage updates and improvements to the AHEAD website content and infrastructure, and will support other teams to ensure accessibility and quality of website content.

Additionally, the Communications and Membership Officer will manage and grow the membership of AHEAD, evaluating member satisfaction and working with the team to ensure membership benefits are attractive and applied consistently across our offerings.

In the first few years of their work, they will lead on the review and update of the AHEAD membership offering with support from the Senior Leadership Team, consulting with existing members to redesign a series of benefits that align with their needs, and exploring opportunities for the widening of the membership e.g. to employers and other AHEAD stakeholders. They will be responsible alongside colleagues in the Operations team for maintaining an up to date register of members and for communicating key notices to the membership.

The Communications and Membership Officer will be highly organised, efficient and have a strong understanding of developing communications in a variety of media. They will be adaptable and have a strong ‘team player’ ethic.

## Key Responsibilities

### Communications

* Develop and deliver a communications strategy for the organisation with support from the Senior Leadership Team to include messaging design, approaches to social media, management of direct email contact, press and public relations.
* Manage AHEAD’s social media accounts, ensuring activities from across the organisation are published in a professional, accessible and creative manner, and using analytics and careful scheduling of posts to ensure maximum reach. Keep up to date with social media algorithm changes to ensure posting strategies remain effective.
* Where advertising budgets exist, build targeted advertising campaigns to maximise the effectiveness and reach of the campaign messages.
* Design and deliver AHEAD’s weekly email newsletter, liaising with others in the Education, Employment and Research and Policy Teams to ensure that all relevant activities in any given week are highlighted in a professional, well-designed and easy to understand manner.
* Manage AHEAD’s core mailing list and build strategies to grow numbers on the list and increase engagement with newsletter content.
* Maintain and update direct mail contact lists (e.g. Disability/Access Officer list) used for more targeted promotion of AHEAD events, training opportunities and other relevant work.
* Where relevant, develop press releases in conjunction with others in the Education/Employment/Research Teams to promote AHEAD work and act as a first point of contact for media enquiries.
* Ensure AHEAD’s public communications across all platforms adhere to high standards of accessibility.
* Work alongside the Digital Media and eLearning Officer to manage updates and improvements to the AHEAD website content and infrastructure, and support other teams to ensure accessibility and quality of website content.
* Work alongside the Digital Media and eLearning Officer to manage the branding/identity design of AHEAD e.g. producing business cards for staff, promotional materials for exhibition etc.
* Analyse available analytics across communications platforms to measure the success of communications strategies and to inform improvements over time.

### Managing and Building AHEAD Membership

* Work with the Operations Manager to drive the review and update of the AHEAD Membership model over a two-year period, maximising the benefits for Members and AHEAD, and ensuring the model aligns with both AHEAD’s strategic plan and good corporate governance practice.
* During this review and update, support AHEAD to better understand the needs of the current and potential new member organisations through consultation and collective design of the membership offering.
* Grow the membership base over, communicating the benefits of membership and managing membership queries.
* Work across teams to develop a membership model which offers value and meaningful benefits to our member organisations which is deliverable within our resources.
* Develop/improve the systems we use to track and update membership and ensure our website membership list and internal register of members is up to date and accurate.
* Ensure membership benefits are appropriately and correctly applied across our offerings.
* Ensure members are kept informed of our work and our offerings, and that we have capacity to deliver on our advertised membership benefits.

### Other Activities

* Periodic delivery of written reports on completed events/communications activities to the Operations Manager on request for use in AHEAD board reports and the Annual Report.
* Undertake other duties as may reasonably be assigned by the CEO or Operations Manager.

## Person Specification

* Strong organisational and administration skills and a close attention to detail.
* Good communication skills and an ability to craft clear and effective messages.
* A very strong ‘team player’ ethic, eagerness to collaborate and help out other members of staff during busy periods.

### Required Experience & Skills

* A minimum of two years’ experience in a communications-related role and/or in managing and communicating with an organisation's membership.
* Strong ICT and design skills including database management (excel), word processing and formatting, and ability to effectively use a range of multimedia design software such as programmes within the Adobe Creative Suite, Canva etc.
* Good general technical ability in understanding how to create and develop content for webpages and familiarity in using video-conferencing platforms such as Zoom etc.
* Experience managing social media content design and delivery through the use of content management systems such as Buffer or Hootsuite etc.
* Ability to write clear and easy to understand content for web such as webpages relating to AHEAD news, event outlines and descriptors and newsletter content.
* Experience using email marketing tools such as Mailchimp to design and deliver polished email communications/newsletters.

### Desirable Experience & Skills

* A third-level qualification in a relevant area such as marketing or communications.
* Understanding of how to operate social media advertising, using built in profiling tools to increase effectiveness and reach of social advertising campaigns.
* Drafting and effectively disseminating press releases.
* Experience or background of working in the community and voluntary sector and/or in an area related to AHEAD’s work – inclusive practice, assistive technology, inclusive teaching and learning, disability support etc.
* Understanding of how to produce accessible documents/events.

## Salary and Additional Benefits

#### The salary range for this position is €34,531 to €40,044 pro-rata (€27,624.80 to €32,035.20) commensurate with AHEAD’s pay scale and experience.

#### AHEAD also offers the following benefits to employees.

* Rewarding and flexible working environment
* Comprehensive needs assessment for employees with disabilities
* 20 days annual leave per annum
* Company pension scheme after one year’s service
* Access to EAP (Employee Assistance Programme) covering a range of services such as nutrition, fitness, legal, financial and wellbeing supports in addition to free mental health counselling and coaching.

How to Apply

To apply for this role, please send a completed application form with a 2-page CV with the subject line, “Communications and Membership Officer” to AHEAD’s Operations Manager, Angela Glancy via email angela.glancy@ahead.ie by 10am, Thursday 8th August 2024.

Please note, candidates will be shortlisted based on their application form only.

For shortlisted candidates, first round interviews will take place virtually the week commencing 19th August followed by a second-round interview.

AHEAD is an equal opportunities employer and encourage applications from people from diverse backgrounds. AHEAD will provide reasonable accommodations for candidates with disabilities at recruitment stage and in the workplace as identified through our comprehensive needs assessment process.