Job Description

Press and Communications Officer

January 2016
Mary’s Meals – a simple solution to world hunger

Mary’s Meals provides one good meal to some of the world’s poorest children in a place of education every school day. It is a global movement supported by people from many walks of life and different backgrounds.

We have become known as ‘the charity that operates out of a tin shed’.

As an organisation working in some of the world’s poorest communities, we’re committed to keeping our running costs low to maximise the good we can do with the donations entrusted to us. At most, we spend 7% on governance and fundraising costs.

This is only possible because most of our work is done by an army of volunteers, who carry out lots of little acts of love on our behalf, in our fundraising countries and in the communities where we work.
Hunger kills millions of children each year. It also stunts their growth – and their dreams. Hungry children think about survival, not about going to school – around 59 million of the world’s hungriest children do not attend school.

These life-changing meals attract hungry children into the classroom. The food fills their empty bellies so they have the energy and opportunity to learn, giving them the chance of a brighter future. The meals also support families struggling to feed their children and, through the purchase of local produce boosts the country’s wider economy.

Mary’s Meals is now feeding *more than one million* of the world’s poorest children every day they attend school. It costs just £12.20 to feed a child for a whole year.

**Mary’s Meals UK & Ireland**

Mary’s Meals UK & Ireland is affiliated to Mary’s Meals International and is led by the Executive Director. The UK & Ireland fundraising, communications and finance & operations teams raise awareness of the work of Mary’s Meals, enabling supporters to raise funds in support of our overseas school feeding programmes.

The Press and Communications Officer will join the communications team and will work closely with the fundraising and finance & operations teams.

**Purpose of the role**

The Press and Communications Officer will play a key role in raising awareness of Mary’s Meals activities, in order to secure the organisation’s overseas school feeding programmes. Though involved in a broad spectrum of activity, the Press and Communications Officer will have particular responsibility for raising awareness of our work through the communication of Mary’s Meals key messages, developing relationships with existing supporters and reinforcing the values of the organisation. This role will be responsible for nurturing and growing existing relationships in the media to ensure effective and positive media coverage is achieved.

You will work as part of the UK & Ireland communications team, reporting to the Head of Communications. This post will inform and inspire people in the UK & Ireland about the role that Mary’s Meals feeding programmes are playing, and can play, in helping impoverished and marginalised children in the developing world lift themselves out of poverty.
Principal duties

- Support the Head of Communications to implement the Mary’s Meals UK & Ireland Communications strategy
- Drafting and issuing news releases to help maintain a high public profile for Mary’s Meals
- Ensuring that in all external and internal communications, consistent messages are shared
- Effectively dealing with day to day press and media enquiries
- Making arrangements for media interviews with key staff and hosting media visits
- Generating interesting stories on the work of Mary’s Meals in the UK and Ireland for use in media features and articles, including social media channels
- Liaising with the Mary’s Meals International communications team to provide case studies on our school feeding programmes for use in media feature and articles
- Liaising and working closely with other staff in the UK and Ireland team to assist in the development of creative media and fundraising campaigns
- Support the development and production of creative and engaging supporter resources, including information booklets and newsletters
- Assist in identifying opportunities to ensure Mary’s Meals is considered as a recipient for appropriate media appeals, funding or awards
- Working with other UK & Ireland staff and volunteers to draft and edit Mary’s Meals external and internal publications
- Working with the fundraising team to develop regular supporter updates via email and direct mail
- Performing other duties as required by the Head of Communications
- The post-holder will be prepared to travel throughout the UK on occasion and sometimes work varying hours, including weekends and evenings

Qualifications

Degree level education in a relevant discipline or equivalent experience

Skills

Essential:

- Excellent written and verbal communication skills
- Able to work independently when required, be a self-motivator and possess excellent judgement
- Excellent interpersonal skills and the ability to work and communicate with people at all levels
- Excellent organisational, prioritisation and time management skills
- Able to establish and nurture good relationships
- Can work effectively on multiple tasks simultaneously
- Good IT skills with experience of Microsoft Office suite
- Able to work under pressure and meet deadlines
- Cheerful, enthusiastic and persuasive
- Able to think creatively and capable of generating new ideas, opportunities and resources
Desirable:
- Effective project manager, capable of liaising with many stakeholders

Experience

Essential:
- Proven writing skills and the ability to adopt a variety of styles
- A good working knowledge of Mary’s Meals
- Experience of working with a wide range of media, including online media

Desirable:
- Experience of delivering results with a campaign emphasis
- Experience of using various social media outlets
- A background in communications or marketing is desirable
- Experience of working with publication design, print and distribution is desirable
- Experience of content generation for websites is desirable

Salary Indicator

Starting salary in the region £23,000