

Position description – Communications Officer

Organisation	Understanding Animal Research (UAR)
Job title	Communications officer
Reports to	Communications manager
Direct reports	None
Location	Hybrid / King's Cross, London Staff are required to work from the King's Cross office for at least two days per week (currently Tuesdays and Thursdays)
Salary	£33,000 per annum. Plus a pension contribution (after the probation period), a 10% flexible benefits scheme (after the probation period), and 26 days' annual leave, in addition to bank holidays and three days' office closure between Christmas and the new year. Following the probation period, up to four weeks of fully remote working may be taken each year, non-consecutively and with the agreement of the line manager.
Tenure and hours	Permanent; full-time (35 hours per week) Three months probation (max six months) UAR supports flexible working patterns and observes core hours of 10:00–16:00.
Travel and out-of-hours work	Occasional evening and weekend work and travel may be required and will be recompensed accordingly
Right to work	You must have the right to work in the UK. UAR is unable to support work visas.
Start date	From January 2027

About UAR

Understanding Animal Research (UAR) is the UK's only organisation dedicated to explaining why and how animals are used in research. We are a not-for-profit organisation with more than 150 members and supporters across the UK, including the UK's ten leading universities in the life sciences, research institutions, research funders and charities, pharmaceutical companies, learned societies, and government agencies. We promote open, factual, and evidence-informed communication about animal research and support the research community to communicate responsibly and confidently with the public. UAR plays a leading role in the Concordat on Openness on Animal Research in the UK and works with members, government, academia, industry, journalists, and partner organisations to strengthen trust and understanding.

We work to increase public understanding and acceptance of the use of animals in scientific research, support the life sciences sector to communicate openly and confidently about its involvement in animal research, and ensure that the UK remains a safe and supportive environment in which this research can take place.

Role

Reporting to the communications manager, the communications officer delivers UAR's day-to-day digital communications and stakeholder engagement programme. The postholder is responsible for implementing

UAR's approach to social media; developing detailed social media plans and schedules; creating and publishing well-researched content; establishing collaboration opportunities with stakeholders; and supporting the production of UAR's stakeholder communications, including its newsletters. They also help create and update content for UAR's websites, campaigns, and events; coordinate contributions from colleagues and members; and use performance data to improve content, readership, and engagement. The communications officer works to agreed priorities and collaborates with colleagues, UAR members, Concordat signatories, and external contributors to deliver accurate, accessible, and consistent communications.

UAR is a small organisation and, in addition to their line manager, the communications officer will work closely with the entire team, particularly UAR's head of communications and engagement, video producer, and freelance science writer.

Key duties and result areas

Content scheduling and delivery

- Maintain the social media and newsletter schedule, recording agreed content, approvals, and publication dates.
- Deliver assigned social media, newsletter, and digital content, flagging risks or delays to the communications manager.
- Work with colleagues and suppliers to secure contributions and assets.
- Maintain clear records, templates, and workflows.

Social media, newsletters and digital content

- Oversee and expand UAR's social media, including developing social media content plans and a publishing schedule based on agreed priorities.
- Create, publish, and monitor accurate, accessible, and well-researched content across UAR's social channels, including TikTok.
- Work closely with UAR's video producer to develop short-form video content for social media and other communication channels.
- With support from the UAR team, respond to comments and messages on UAR's social media channels and enforce UAR's social media policy.
- Deliver live-action digital communications during appropriate UAR events.
- Track social, newsletter, and website performance and use findings to improve content and reporting.
- Conduct a regular audit of all UAR newsletters, assessing purpose, audience, frequency, content, consistency, and performance, and present recommendations to the communications manager.
- Support newsletter production by coordinating copy, contributors, approvals, mailing lists, scheduling, and pre-send quality checks.
- Write and help update website, campaign, and event content, including simple branded graphics and short-form video.
- Translate complex scientific, ethical, regulatory, and policy information into clear, accurate, and audience-appropriate communications.
- Position UAR as an exemplar of openness on animal research by embedding the principles of the Concordat on Openness into UAR's external communications.
- Identify and organise opportunities for social media collaborations with members and Concordat signatories to share powerful stories and align communications with key milestones.
- Maintain UAR's brand, tone of voice, and editorial standards across communications.

Member and stakeholder engagement

- Produce timely member and Concordat communications, resources, and event updates.
- Administer the Concordat on Openness, ensuring the contact database is up to date and key contacts receive UAR communications.
- Assist with the coordination, delivery, and analysis of annual stakeholder surveys and reports.
- Respond to routine enquiries and maintain constructive relationships with communications contacts.
- Deliver social media training for UAR stakeholders through workshops, webinars, conferences, and other events.
- Gather feedback and content from members and signatories to strengthen communications.
- Support UAR's presence at relevant meetings, conferences, and public events.

Project delivery, reporting and administration

- Coordinate copy, assets, and approvals for assigned social media, newsletter, and digital content tasks.
- Maintain approvals, permissions, mailing data, and content records.
- Provide concise delivery and performance updates to the communications manager.
- Follow requirements for accessibility, data protection, copyright, and brand use.

Key challenges

- Producing clear, accurate, and accessible content about complex and sensitive subjects for public, scientific, policy, and media audiences.
- Balancing planned activity with changing organisational and sector priorities.
- Coordinating content across multiple channels, projects, and contributors within tight deadlines.
- Maintaining consistent quality, visual standards, and accurate records across UAR's digital communications.
- Using performance data and audience feedback to identify practical improvements.
- Building effective working relationships across UAR's member and stakeholder network.
- Responding appropriately to challenging social media conversations and escalating reputational risks.

Authority and working relationships

The postholder reports to the communications manager and works within agreed priorities, plans, policies, and delegated authority. They manage day-to-day content delivery, seek guidance where priorities are unclear, and escalate strategic, legal, or reputational risks promptly. The role works closely with UAR colleagues, members, Concordat signatories, partners, and suppliers.

Required competencies

- **Editorial judgement:** Produces accurate, clear content and checks detail consistently.
- **Social media planning:** Turns agreed priorities into practical channel plans and platform-appropriate content.
- **Creativity:** Develops engaging written posts, images, graphics, and short-form videos.
- **Newsletter delivery:** Audits, coordinates, and quality-checks newsletters for defined audiences and outcomes.
- **Digital delivery:** Uses publishing, email, analytics, and Microsoft 365 tools confidently.
- **Organisation:** Plans work, meets deadlines, and maintains accurate approvals, permissions, and content records.
- **Collaboration and judgement:** Works constructively, takes direction and escalates risks appropriately.
- **Adaptability:** Responds calmly and flexibly to changing priorities, scrutiny and tight deadlines.
- **Integrity:** Communicates responsibly and handles confidential and sensitive information with care.

Selection criteria

Essential

- Experience planning, creating and publishing social media content across multiple channels.
- Practical experience using social media publishing, email marketing, content management, and analytics tools to produce, publish, and review content.
- Experience producing email newsletters, including editing copy, coordinating approvals, managing mailing lists, scheduling distribution, and completing quality checks.
- Strong writing and editing skills, with the ability to explain complex or sensitive scientific subjects clearly to a range of audiences.
- Experience using digital analytics or performance data to prepare reports and improve communications activity.
- Social media community management experience, including engaging with challenging and conflict-driven conversations.
- Highly organised, with the ability to manage competing deadlines, coordinate contributors, and maintain accurate records.
- Sound judgement, attention to detail, and a commitment to evidence-based science communication.
- Ability to work independently within agreed priorities and contribute positively to a small, collaborative team.
- A proactive, self-starting mindset, with the drive to spot opportunities and make things happen.
- An understanding of the scientific, ethical and moral justification for the use of animals in scientific research.

Desirable

- Experience reviewing a newsletter portfolio with reference to audience, purpose, frequency, consistency, and performance.
- Experience creating simple branded graphics and short-form video, including TikTok content.
- Experience maintaining mailing lists, data permissions or customer relationship management records.
- Experience developing and delivering training workshops and webinars.
- Experience in life sciences, research, animal welfare, public engagement or a membership organisation.
- Experience supporting events.
- A relevant scientific qualification or equivalent communications experience.

Please submit a CV and supporting statement demonstrating how you meet the criteria to Victoria Summers (vsummers@uar.org.uk) by 23:59 on Sunday 8 November 2026.

Please contact Victoria Summers for an informal discussion. UAR welcomes applications from people with diverse backgrounds and experiences and is committed to a fair and inclusive recruitment process. Unfortunately, our office is not wheelchair accessible.

We will be in touch with applicants during the week of 16 November 2026. Interviews will be held in the UAR office during the week of 23 November 2026.