JOB DESCRIPTION: OA Communications Manager

**Job Title:** Communications Manager

**Location:** Home Working (or current office if on secondment)

**Pay Grade:** £40,000 - £50,000 pro rata

**Hours of Work:** Part-Time: 0.4-0.5 FTE (working pattern negotiable)

**Reports to:** Chief Executive

**Key Relationships:** Chief Executive; OA Executive Assistant & Conference Co-ordinator;

OA Communications Network; OA Chair.

**Purpose of the role**

Access to justice and redress has never been more important, with both consumer rights and human rights enjoying a high profile in the media and the focus of policy makers. This is an exciting opportunity to revamp and grow the Ombudsman Association’s (OA) internal and external communications to support our dual activities to (a) promote and facilitate the sharing of best practice between our members and (b) inform and influence policy makers, industry bodies, and other stakeholders to make our [Vision](https://www.ombudsmanassociation.org/about-us/governance) a reality.

As part of a small team, which already punches above its weight, you will have considerable autonomy to use your significant communications experience across a diverse range of sectors in different countries.

The role is available as a secondment opportunity, on a contractual basis, or as an employee of the OA. The working pattern is negotiable and includes full working from home option.

**About the Ombudsman Association**

The Ombudsman Association (OA) is the professional association for ombudsman schemes and complaint handling organisations in the UK, Ireland, British Overseas Territories and British Crown Dependencies.

The OA’s objectives are to:

* Support and promote an effective system of complaint handling and redress in the United Kingdom, Ireland, Britain’s Crown Dependencies and Britain’s Overseas Territories.
* Encourage, develop and protect the role of an ombudsman in both the public and private sectors as the ‘best practice’ model for resolving complaints, according recognition through membership.
* Provide an authoritative voice and promote best practice and policy for those involved in complaint handling and redress to ensure an effective service for the public.
* Support open and transparent accountability and endorse principles of good complaint handling.

The OA’s membership criteria are recognised as representing best practice, as reflected in the UK Cabinet Office’s [guidance](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/new-ombudsman-schemes-guidance) for government departments and UK Companies House [criteria](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/incorporation-and-names/annex-a-sensitive-words-and-expressions-or-words-that-could-imply-a-connection-with-government) for using the protected term ‘ombudsman’.

The Vision of the OA is that throughout the public and private sectors:

* It is straightforward and simple for people to complain.
* People making a complaint are listened to and treated fairly.
* A complaint is dealt with quickly, fairly and effectively at the earliest stage by suitably trained staff.
* People have access to an ombudsman in all areas of consumer and public services.
* The learning from a complaint is used to improve services.

**Key responsibilities for the role**

* Review and strengthen the OA’s existing communication and public affairs activities to ensure effective sharing of insights on developments in policy, administrative justice, and complaint handling.
* Commission, edit, create, and manage content on OA’s website, social media channels, press, and newsletters, including: external facing OA News blog; quarterly internal OA Newsletter; and monthly OA Podcast
* Take the lead on driving effective use by members of the online OA Community, ensuring up-to-date information in the Network areas and elsewhere, and encouraging use of discussion forums.
* Plan and lead activities for the annual OmbudsDay, in conjunction with OA Comms Network.
* Liaise with OA Networks, attending online and in-person meetings where appropriate, to keep abreast of developments across membership.
* Collate headline statistics and ‘stories’ from OA Members in order to demonstrate benefit / impact of sector.
* Deal with media enquiries and develop excellent relationships with relevant external stakeholders, including journalists.
* Source and secure opportunities for the Chief Executive to inform and influence stakeholders, drafting articles, presentations, and speeches.
* Lead on the production of the Annual Report and other corporate reports and documents.
* Ensure all communication outputs are accessible and compliant with equalities legislation and best practice.
* Monitor and evaluate communications outcomes such as website usage and media coverage.
* Any other reasonable public affairs and communications duties as required.

**Person Specification**

With significant communications experience gained through roles in either communications, public relations, the media, or campaigning, you will have:

1. Excellent written skills including the ability to tailor messages for different audiences and channels as well as the ability to communicate complex information in a clear, engaging way.
2. Excellent interpersonal skills and the ability to build strong and effective relationships internally and externally.
3. Meticulous attention to detail and excellent proofreading abilities.
4. Experience and understanding of media handling and reputation management.
5. A good understanding of social media platforms, with practical experience of using them for corporate communication.
6. Ability to operate as part of a small team and comfortable with operating by themselves and on their own initiative.

**Application:**

Please submit a covering letter setting out how you meet the person specification, along with a copy of your CV, to the Chief Executive ([donal.galligan@ombudsmanassociation.org](mailto:donal.galligan@ombudsmanassociation.org)), by 14:00 on Friday 1 September. Donal is available for informal discussions about the role between 25-26 July, 31 July-4 August, and 28-31 August.