

Job Advert

Senior Public Affairs Officer

Department: UK Dementia Research Institute Core Team

Location: Maple House, London / Hybrid Worker

Reports to

Director of Communications & Engagement



Public Affairs Manager



Senior Public Affairs Officer

Context

UK Dementia Research Institute (UK DRI)

Today, over one million people in the UK are living with dementia and related neurodegenerative disorders, such as Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, and motor neuron disease (MND). The impact of these incurable and progressive conditions on individuals and their families is devastating. The cost to the economy and public services is large and growing as the UK population ages.

However, due to major advances in our understanding of the biology of these diseases, the scientific field is at a tipping point, with the next decade promising to deliver transformative breakthroughs in therapies and a new era of predictive, preventative, and precision medicine for neurodegenerative conditions.

The UK is well placed to play a leading role in this revolution due to its scientific strengths in the field, led by the UK Dementia Research Institute (UK DRI)

working with our world-class, university-based centres.

We are a globally leading multidisciplinary research institute of over 900 members investigating the spectrum of neurodegenerative disorders causing dementia, driving a step change in our understanding of neurodegeneration, and accelerating the discovery, development and delivery of interventions that will help diagnose, treat, and ultimately prevent dementia.

Our principal funder is the Medical Research Council (MRC). Together with our strategic partners including Alzheimer's Society, Alzheimer's Research UK, LifeArc and the British Heart Foundation, we have a five-year budget of over £200m.

Our 62 internationally leading Group Leaders and their teams are located across eight dedicated UK DRI centres based at University College London, University of Cambridge, Cardiff University, University of Edinburgh, Imperial College London, and King's College London.

The Institute is supported by the UK DRI's Core Team, whose expertise range from operations, business & innovation, communications, finance, HR, events, research funding, tools & technology, scientific affairs and more. The Core Team supports the Institute's single mission at a national level, coordinating scientific and operational efforts across the UK DRI centres and wider research ecosystem. It is a hybrid team with offices based at UCL, London.

Main purpose of the job

Reporting into the Public Affairs Manager, and working closely with colleagues in the

Communications team, the successful candidate will support the UK DRI's engagement with key audiences, to enhance the Institute's visibility, reputation and impact. This exciting new role will work collaboratively across several functions in the UK DRI's Core Team, and with a wide variety of external stakeholders and partners.

The key objectives of this role are to:

- Raise visibility and awareness of the UK DRI and our research among policymakers and parliamentarians.
- Enhance the UK DRI's reputation as a valued national institute through building and facilitating trusted relationships with key policymakers and political stakeholders.
- Build widespread understanding of the strategic value and world-leading quality of UK DRI science among key audiences.
- Facilitate policy impact by ensuring the effective dissemination of briefings, reports and other UK DRI products to a wide range of stakeholders.
- Further the UK DRI's strategic policy priorities, through effective communication with policymakers and political stakeholders.
- Generate content to showcase the Institute's impact.

The role holder will have:

- Experience of working with stakeholders across Westminster and Whitehall, and will be able to demonstrate delivery of impactful public affairs programmes and activities.
- A solid understanding of the workings of government, and a track record of building relationships with parliamentarians, policymakers and other stakeholders with policy influence.
- Good knowledge and understanding of current affairs in the national political arena, and an understanding of the policy landscape relevant to biomedical sciences and dementia research, such as health, life sciences, or ageing.

Duties and responsibilities

- Deliver an engagement programme across Westminster, Whitehall and the devolved legislatures to connect political stakeholders with the UK DRI, raise the Institute's profile and further its strategic policy objectives.

- Support policy-focused events, including roundtables, private dinners and parliamentary receptions, to build the UK DRI's reputation and enhance understanding of our work.
- Build, maintain and facilitate trusted relationships with local, regional, national and international political and policy stakeholders to further the UK DRI's strategic priorities.
- Work closely and collaboratively with other relevant contacts and partners across the dementia research ecosystem and wider life sciences sector.
- Undertake stakeholder mapping and maintain an effective contacts and intelligence database.
- Draft high-quality briefing notes, presentations and other materials for key audiences, both internal and external.
- Monitor the policy landscape and horizon scan for opportunities for the UK DRI to have policy impact.
- Identify and coordinate responses to calls for evidence (e.g. from Select Committees) on relevant topics, in collaboration with UK DRI partners where appropriate.
- Devise and deliver content for the UK DRI website and social media channels, including news stories and other online materials.
- Develop and maintain a strong understanding of policy issues relevant to dementia research in the UK and beyond.
- Collaborate with the UK DRI research community to identify challenges and opportunities, and generate impactful figures and quotes for influencing.
- Any other duties as requested by the line manager within the scope, spirit and purpose of the job, the title of the post and its grading.

General Duties

- Effective liaison with colleagues within UK DRI Core Team, our Board of Trustees, and the Centres to facilitate open communication and dissemination of information.
- Ensuring the highest standard of record keeping, maintaining accurate, complete, and up to date records.
- Ensuring confidentiality is maintained as applicable.
- Attending and contributing to institutional and other meetings and training as appropriate.
- Acting at all times in accordance with the highest professional standards and ensuring that these

are maintained in the delivery of all aspects of research.

- Adhering at all times to the policies, rules and regulations of the UK DRI.

The above description is not exhaustive, and the post-holder will be required to undertake any other duties as may reasonably be requested within the scope, spirit and purpose of the post. Job descriptions are reviewed on a regular basis including at the annual appraisal. As duties and responsibilities change, the job description may be amended in consultation with the post-holder.

All staff are required to act professionally, co-operatively, and flexibly in line with the requirements of the post.

What we offer

Salary

The salary band is in the range £42,099 - £50,585 per annum including London Allowance, based on skills and experience.

Probation

Appointments are subject to a probationary period of 6 months.

Hours of work

Full time, 36.5 hours per week; times of work are as determined by the line manager or Director.

As well as a competitive base salary and the exciting opportunities this role presents, we also offer great benefits, some of which are as follows:

- 41 Days holiday (27 days annual leave 8 bank holiday and 6 closure days)
- Additional 5 days' annual leave purchase scheme
- Single medical cover
- Group Life Assurance 4x base salary.
- Group Income Protection and Critical illness cover
- Season ticket loan
- Enhanced maternity, paternity and adoption pay
- Employee assistance programme
- Comprehensive programme of voluntary benefits

To apply

Please submit your CV and covering letter to recruitment@ukdri.ac.uk, marked for the attention of Olivia Marshall.

We anticipate interviews will be held w/c 12 August 2024. Our preference is for these to be in person (London offices) but will accommodate virtual if required.

The role is available immediately and funded by the UK DRI until 31 March 2028 in the first instance, with a likely extension dependent on successful quinquennial review.

For further information, or an informal chat prior to application, please contact Olivia Marshall, UK DRI Public Affairs Manager (olivia.marshall@ukdri.ac.uk).

Our commitment to Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

UK DRI promotes equality and is an inclusive workplace that aims to treat all employees, consultants and applicants fairly. It is our policy to provide employment equality to all, irrespective of:

- Gender, including gender reassignment
- Marital or civil partnership status
- Having or not having dependants
- Religion or belief
- Race (including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins)
- Disability
- Sexual orientation
- Age

We are opposed to all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination. All job applicants and employees who work for us will be treated fairly and will not be unfairly discriminated against on any of the above grounds. Decisions about recruitment and selection, promotion, training or any other benefit will be made objectively and without unlawful discrimination.

Person Specification

Criteria	Essential or Desirable	Assessment method (Application/Interview)
Experience & Knowledge		
Experience of working in UK parliament, government (any level) or in a public affairs role	Essential	Application
Successful track record of engaging and influencing different levels of government, parliament and other policy audiences	Essential	Application/Interview
A good understanding of UK government and parliament	Essential	Application/Interview
Experience of working with researchers and translating complex research and information for policy audiences	Essential	Application/Interview
Good knowledge and understanding of relevant policy areas	Desirable	Application/Interview
Experience of producing written materials including briefings, reports, presentations and case studies, and writing about complex policy issues for a variety of audiences.	Essential	Application
Experience of working with corporate, academic, government or charitable partners.	Desirable	Application
Ability to advise and influence senior management, and gain their respect.	Desirable	Interview
Skills and ability		
Excellent verbal and written communication skills, including the ability to present complex information in a clear and compelling way, tailored according to the audience.	Essential	Application/Interview
Excellent standards of accuracy, consistency and attention to detail.	Essential	Application/Interview
Strong networking and stakeholder management skills.	Essential	Interview
Strong interpersonal skills, including influencing and relationship building.	Essential	Interview
Ability to handle sensitive and confidential issues and manage conflict effectively.	Essential	Application/Interview
Ability to anticipate, analyse and mitigate reputational risks and resolve problems.	Desirable	Interview
Strong IT skills, including a high-level of proficiency in Word, PowerPoint, Excel and Outlook	Essential	Application
Proven ability to take initiative and plan own workload.	Essential	Interview
Ways of Working		
Switching easily between tasks for different groups and stakeholders	Essential	Application/Interview
Documenting and sharing solutions	Essential	Application/Interview
Creating and supporting simple and consistent work processes	Essential	Application/Interview