

International Institute for Environment and Development

Job Description and Background Information

Job Title:	Press Officer
Reports to:	Director of Communications
Main purpose:	Responsible for developing and implementing IIED's overall press and media strategy
Main contacts:	<u>Internal:</u> Director of Communications, rest of communications team, Director, Group Heads and Programme Directors, project managers and IIED researchers <u>External:</u> Journalists and other media contacts in UK and internationally (particularly in countries round the world where IIED has a work programmes), external media consultants, IIED's partners
Circumstances:	Full time, permanent position
Salary:	Programme Grade 3: £33,588 - £41,947

Background:

IIED aims to provide expertise and leadership in researching and achieving sustainable development at national, regional and global levels. In alliance with others we seek to shape a future that ends global poverty and delivers and sustains efficient and equitable management of the world's resources.

For IIED's research findings to hit their targets, it is essential that the Institute has a strong communications capacity. The communications team works to improve the impact, influence and reach of IIED's research and experiences, along with that of its partners. The end is not to publish research in itself but to communicate the research with integrity and force, influence policy-makers and other audiences, and thereby improve the world.

An experienced media professional is sought to play a leading role in delivering this strategy. The communications team has a dedicated team of 4 and an operating budget of c£450k. The postholder will focus on developing IIED's capacity to work with the press and other media to influence audiences nationally and internationally, both through direct coverage and by cultivating strong relationships with a range of media contacts to extend our sphere of influence behind the scenes.

IIED is not a campaigning organisation but does believe in taking a stronger activist stance than most research organisations. Our ability to influence thinking within the global policy-making community about the real implications of development decisions facing people on the ground, and our ability to communicate the voices of the local communities we work with is paramount. We are trying to make connections from local situations to global decisions, both through research and long-term partnerships.

IIED is involved in a number of interesting and varied projects under the banner Environment and Development. We remain one of the only organisations in the development community actively making the links between the environment and development. A good case in point is the current debate around Climate Change. For IIED, Climate Change is a hugely important environmental issue but our particular emphasis focuses on the coping strategies of communities now faced with this new reality, rather than global mitigation efforts.

IIED is organised into five key thematic areas:

- Climate Change** - how communities are adapting to new realities
- Human Settlements** - 50% of the world's population will live in cities in the next five years: what are the implications for environment and development?
- Sustainable Markets** - environmental economics, business and sustainable development and how markets can work for the poor
- Natural Resources** - biodiversity, forestry, land rights, sustainable livelihoods
- Governance** (including the Foundation for International Law in Environment and Development)

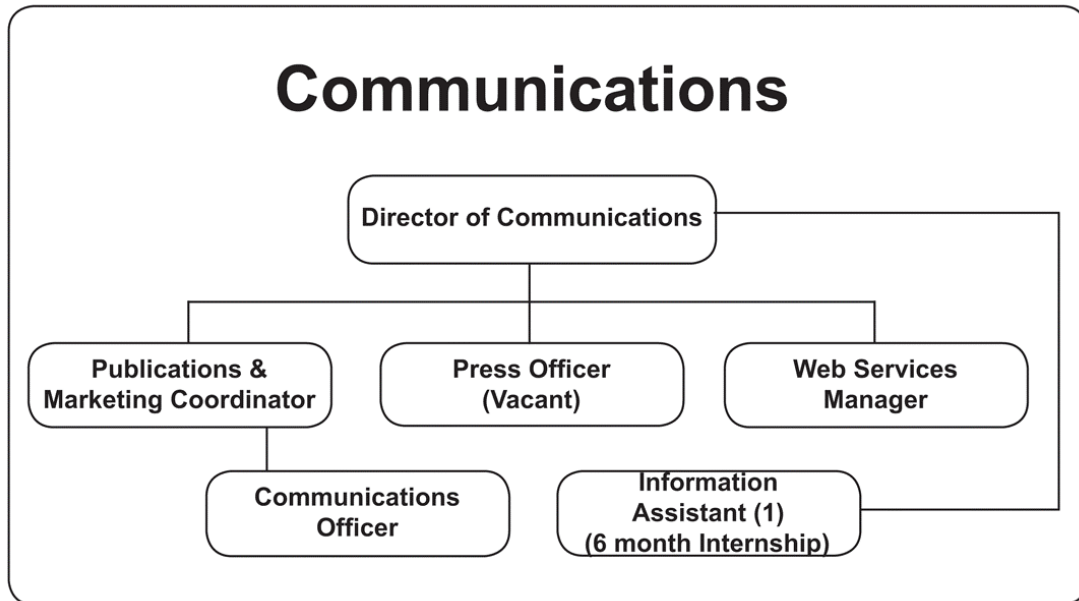
It is worth taking a look at our website to explore some of these in more detail!

With the exception of Climate Change, much of IIED's work does not immediately lend itself to mainstream media coverage. However, we are finding that with careful thinking and planning, good media relationships and close connections to our researchers and partners, there is much that we can say and do to project our work through relevant media. We are looking for someone who is equally impassioned to see more justice in the world and who believes that we can make our work more visible!

Department organogram:

The Press Officer in IIED is a new post that will be an integral part of the Institute's communications team managed by the Director of Communications. Together with the Director of Communications, the post will be responsible for developing and implementing the Institute's press and media strategy.

The communications teams constitutes these two posts, a Web Services Manager, Publications and Marketing Officer, and a Communications Officer who will provide some administrative support (approximately one day a week). The role will include collaboration with other Institute staff, particularly the Group Heads and research staff.



Key Responsibilities:

1 Media Strategy

- Develop and implement the Institute's overall media strategy
- Devise media strategies for the Institute's five main research Groups, projects, publications and events
- Where necessary work with partners in support of their developing media strategies

2 Media Content

- Seek opportunities to write and distribute press releases about IIED's research outputs, publications and events
- Seek opportunities to help promote the work of the Institute's partners across the world
- Initiate and assist with writing and placing letters/features/comment/op-eds and articles in national and international mainstream media as well as in more specialist media
- Respond to external events as appropriate
- Be a point of call for all media enquiries
- Develop and provide content for media pages of the website
- Develop networking events and other materials for media as required

3 Internal Relationships

- Work with researchers to select, edit and produce relevant topics and angles that will attract the interest of the media
- Advise staff on media techniques in general
- Work with the Director of Communications and HR Manager to advise on the content of external media training, and help to deliver in-house media training, as appropriate

4 External Relationships

- Develop an active on going relationship with key media, establishing contacts and cultivating relationships, in order to develop IIED's media strategy
- Regular networking on behalf of the Institute and represent IIED at key external events – nationally and internationally
- Be willing and able to travel internationally to events, workshops or particular projects in order to develop media angles and stories
- Ensure the development of a strong media contacts list
- Keep IIED Media Directory updated and distributed

5 Management and administration

- Manage the relevant media role of external consultants, the Communications Officer, and other volunteers or interns as appropriate
- Work with the Communications Officer on keeping good records of media coverage, contact lists, files etc
- Take part in individual and team fundraising activities, as required
- Participate in Management and/or Strategy Team meetings, as appropriate
- Responsibility for that part of the Communications budget allocated to press work
- Donor reporting as required

This job description defines the level of responsibility and areas of involvement of the post; the details of the duties may change over time and do not form part of the contract between IIED and the post holder.

Person Specification

Essential qualifications, skills and experience

Qualifications

- Minimum of first degree in a relevant discipline e.g. communications, media

Experience

- At least 6 years relevant work experience in a media environment, including print, broadcast and electronic media

Skills

- Fluency in English (verbal and written)
- Excellent written communication skills – a demonstrable commitment to quality editing and an ability to write for different audiences
- First class verbal communication skills for working with staff and high level journalists from a wide range of backgrounds and cultures
- First class inter-personal skills including coaching and mentoring, persuasion, and negotiating skills
- Excellent networking skills and ability to build productive relations with the media
- Strong organisational skills and an ability to work independently and as part of a team

Knowledge and Attributes

- Lively interest in environment and sustainable development issues and a demonstrable understanding of policy-oriented research and/or advocacy
- Lively interest in “new media” and developments in communications technologies
- Willingness and ability to travel internationally
- Good working knowledge of Windows-based computing, including word-processing (Word) and spreadsheets (Excel)
- Good working knowledge of the media works both in the UK and elsewhere in the world. This should include print media and broadcast media in particular.

Desirable skills and experience

- Experience of media in a policy research institute or with researchers
- Experience of working in an international media context
- Strong network of existing contacts in the UK and internationally, especially the South
- Good working knowledge of Spanish, French or Portuguese
- Work experience in the South