



Dear Applicant

Thank you for requesting the application pack for the post of External Relations Associate (Six month Fixed Term Contract).

This pack contains all the relevant information you will need to complete the application form:

- Job description and person specification.
- Terms and conditions.
- Link to equal opportunities monitoring form.
- Recruitment and selection process at Think Ahead, including guidance notes for completing the application form.

Please note that personal details and equal opportunities monitoring data will be removed when the application is assessed. The recruiting panel will see only your education and career history, and personal statement.

The deadline for the receipt of completed applications is 9am Friday 21 June 2019. Please note that due to our recruitment practices, we cannot accept CVs, or applications received after the deadline.

Interviews will be held on Thursday 27 June 2019, with a further short phone interview for those successful to the second stage.

It may not be possible to provide feedback to you should you not be shortlisted, due to receiving a large volume of applications. If you have not heard from us within three weeks of the closing date, please assume that your application has not been successful on this occasion.

If you have any difficulty in filling out the application form, or have any queries regarding your application, please contact Think Ahead's Human Resources department on 020 3146 7181.

In the meantime, we wish you every success with your application and thank you for your interest in Think Ahead.

Please send your completed application form to: applications@thinkahead.org or by post to: Think Ahead, 344-354 Gray's Inn Road, London, WC1X 8BP.

In order to complete your application please also complete Think Ahead's [equal opportunities monitoring form](#).



Job Description

Job Title: External Relations Associate	Salary: £30k to £37k per annum (depending on experience)
Responsible to: External Relations Manager	Responsible for: N/A
Contract: Six month Fixed Term, full-time (or four days a week will be considered).	Start Date: By 22 July at the latest, ideally earlier.

Background on Think Ahead

At Think Ahead, we want to see a society where everyone with mental health problems can flourish. That won't happen unless people can improve their social circumstances. To drive positive change, we created the Think Ahead programme: a new route into mental health social work for talented graduates and career-changers. It has quickly become one of the country's most competitive graduate schemes, with over 23 applications for each place on the programme.

As a charity we aim to:

- Attract talented people into mental health social work.
- Train our participants to improve outcomes for people with mental health problems.
- Support services to unlock the potential of social work.

About the External Relations team

The External Relations team develops and implements our communications strategy, including our brand, media, public affairs, content development and digital activities.

The team's key priorities include:

- Attracting highly talented and suitable graduates and career-changers to apply to the Think Ahead programme.
- Supporting the onboarding and ongoing cultivation of participants, so that they remain engaged with the programme and the movement.
- Supporting the recruitment of host organisations to provide on-the-job learning for programme participants.
- Building and maintaining a high and positive public profile for the organisation in the areas of mental health and social work.
- Building recognition and presence amongst relevant policymakers and other influencers, in order to secure further government funding, be consulted on policy affecting Think Ahead, and publicly demonstrate political support.



About the role

We're looking for a talented communications professional to join our busy External Relations Team at head office. This fixed term role has been created to increase the team's capacity during a very busy period, when there will be multiple vital projects overlapping.

In this role, you will:

Lead the communications elements of the campaign to recruit Think Ahead's 2020 Cohort.

This includes:

- Creating, and managing the creation of, compelling and engaging content to encourage people to apply – e.g. writing case studies and website content.
- Managing external consultants to deliver services such as photography, printed marketing materials and filming.
- Develop and pitch story ideas to local media outlets to raise awareness of the programme in certain geographical areas.
- Creating and running social media adverts.

Generate positive media coverage for the organisation, in particular with the aim to build a positive public profile for the organisation in the areas of mental health and social work.

This includes:

- Seeking out and developing story ideas.
- Building relationships with journalists and pitching stories.
- Managing successful media pitches to ensure a positive outcome – e.g. by setting up media opportunities, briefing interviewees and providing background information.

Provide communications support for the Summer Institute (the six week period that will bring the 2019 Cohort together for the first time, for intensive learning in a residential setting) at Middlesex University.

This includes:

- Generating content to promote the Summer Institute, including of some of the high profile speakers attending.
- Providing support for colleagues for events and sessions taking place during the Summer Institute, for example advising on briefings for external visitors.
- Managing a film agency to create a short "vox pop" style film to be played at the Summer Institute's closing night.

Contribute to the operation of our day-to-day communications activities.

This includes:

- Taking on the management of some channels – such as our website, social media and digital newsletters.
- Supporting Think Ahead's engagement with officials, politicians, and funders, for example by identifying key contacts and providing briefings and/or in-person support for meetings.
- Contributing to quality assurance and clearance processes to ensure that externally-facing products meet standards.



If you've got what it takes, you'll join a dynamic, fast-paced and ambitious team, where you'll play a key role in ensuring that Think Ahead is a transformative initiative, making a real difference to the lives of people with mental health problems.

You'll need to demonstrate experience across a range of communications disciplines, and high standards for your quality of work. You'll also need to bring team spirit, an ambitious and pro-active attitude and a strong commitment to what we're trying to achieve. In return you'll take on a varied role with lots of opportunity for growth and development.

We offer a competitive salary for the non-profit sector, and good benefits and working conditions. We are currently funded by the Department of Health.

This is a broad description of likely duties, but as Think Ahead continues to evolve your role is likely to vary over time and include a wide range of objectives and experiences. All our team members need to take responsibility for leading projects and driving work forward independently.



Person Specification

Knowledge, experience, and skills:

- Degree or equivalent experience (*Desirable but not essential*: Degree in a relevant discipline).
- Significant experience of communications work, including leading projects.
- Experience of communications strategy and planning, including audience analysis, message development and content planning and scheduling.
- A track record of generating positive media coverage and good knowledge of the UK media environment.
- A track record of creating engaging content across a range of media.
- Experience of digital communications, including managing websites, social media channels and digital newsletters.
- Experience of influencing and supporting others to communicate effectively.
- Excellent written and verbal communications, with exceptional attention to detail.
- Excellent organisation skills.
- *Desirable*: Knowledge of the UK policy environment and experience of influencing in this area.

Personal qualities:

We expect all our staff to role model the personal qualities we expect of our participants:

- **Leadership**: The ability to demonstrate initiative, engage others and enable them to achieve their goals.
- **Adaptability**: Resilience and flexibility in changing circumstances with the ability to work under pressure and deal with uncertain or unexpected outcomes. (Managing workplace stress, an organised work style and the ability to prioritise to meet deadlines are also important.)
- **Motivation**: A personal commitment to improving people's lives through better mental health, with an understanding of the positive impact of social work and Think Ahead's mission.
- **Relationship building**: Empathy and respect for all individuals, with the ability to build relationships and understand people's motives and perspectives.
- **Problem solving**: The ability to objectively analyse situations, using evidence and clear judgement to generate effective solutions.
- **Self-awareness**: The ability to understand, and reflect critically on, both your own personal development and how your actions affect others.
- **Communication**: The ability to collaborate with and influence a wide range of people, in person and through written communication.



Terms and Conditions

Location

Our London office is currently based in Kings Cross, London WC1X 8BP. We reserve the right to move your base within the London area in the event of the organisation relocating to new offices.

Working hours

This post is a six month Fixed Term Contract, full time (37.5 hours), or we are happy to consider four days a week (30 hours). Think Ahead's core hours of work are from 10:00am to 4:00pm from Monday to Friday, with a minimum of 20 and maximum of 60 minutes for lunch each day. You are free to organise your working hours within those parameters, but should ensure that your line manager is made aware of and approves your preference.

Notice period

You will be required to give 6 weeks' notice.

Annual Leave

28 days per annum plus UK bank holidays (pro rata for part time employees). The Think Ahead office closes for 3 days over the Christmas period and you will be given these days (pro rata for part time employees) in addition to your annual leave entitlement.

Other Benefits

Think Ahead is committed to the professional development and wellbeing of staff. We offer a number of core benefits to employees, including the following:

- **Pension.** There is a competitive stakeholder personal pension plan offered through Aviva.
- **Employee assistance programme.** Confidential support for employee's personal problems and/or work-related problems that may impact their job performance, health, mental and emotional well-being.
- **Season ticket loan.** Interest free loan for season ticket.
- **Easy commute.** Less than 5 minute walk from Kings Cross.



Recruitment and Selection Process

To apply for the role you will need to send your completed application form (having also completed the equal opportunities monitoring form) by email to applications@thinkahead.org or by post to The Think Ahead Organisation, 344-354 Grays Inn Road, London WC1X 8BP.

The Application Form

Please read the following carefully before completing your application form.

Personal details. Make sure that your contact details are clearly displayed. If you move house between sending in your form and being interviewed, please let us know as soon as possible. All personal details will be removed prior to the selection process.

Education and training. Give a list of formal and informal training. Formal training is training that is certified, e.g. a degree. Sometimes we ask for specific qualifications. You may need to provide information so that we can assess whether you meet the qualification requirements, e.g. relevant qualification for accountancy or research.

Present and previous employment. Starting with your current or last employer, list all the employers you have worked for. Provide the job title and the period you worked for them. Briefly describe the main duties of the post. This information may be used to assess whether you meet the experience required for the vacancy. Check that the dates are correct and in order (please account for gaps in employment).

Personal statement - this is the most important part of the form. You have to make a case here for selection. Do not repeat your career history; use only the relevant parts, drawing out the skills you have developed. It is usually a good idea to use extracts from the person specification as headings and answer them as questions. However, do not just repeat what we are asking for. You have to demonstrate how your experience matches the criteria. In considering your experience, remember all your previous work and draw on this to demonstrate that you have the necessary skills. Do not forget other relevant experience outside work that may contribute to meeting the person specification, such as community, voluntary, leisure and other interests. Describe any relevant skills this experience has helped you develop. Remember, it is your skills and abilities relevant to this job that we are looking for. You do not have to write several pages in support of your application, but rather focus on ensuring you meet the essential criteria in the person specification.

Legal and organisational requirements when filling in the application form:

Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. You should not sign the application form without being clear about what you have to reveal about yourself. For instance, you do not need to disclose convictions that would be deemed as being spent under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, or cautions, reprimands and final warnings that are over five years old, unless they are exempt from the Act. If you are not sure about what declarations to make, you should ring the Human Resources at Think Ahead, who will give you confidential information about declarations (see application form).

Referees. At least one referee must be known to you in a work capacity, and should be given by the person who line managed you. If this is not possible you should clearly explain the relationship and the reason for giving another person as a referee.



Interview Detail

All shortlisted candidates will be contacted by either telephone or email to offer an interview and this will be confirmed by letter or email. **You will be informed of the time, location, and contact for the interview, as well as notice of any presentation, test or exercise you may be asked to do at the interview.**

The recruitment and selection panel will be comprised of a minimum of two people, and will normally include the relevant line manager of the post. We will always try to ensure gender balance in the composition of the recruiting panel.

Applicants will be asked questions relating to the job description, person specification and application, and the panel will take notes during the course of the interview. This is part of the procedure to ensure that all applicants are treated equally, and to help us to make the right decision.

In preparation for the interview, take the opportunity to read through the job description, application form, and any other literature sent as part of the information pack, and be prepared to talk about your experience, giving examples that illustrate your ability to do particular aspects of the job.

If you have any special requirements that would allow you to participate more fully in the interview, let Human Resources know when you are invited to interview.

Feedback

All unsuccessful candidates who have attended an interview will be contacted by telephone and will be offered constructive feedback; this can be useful for helping you in future interviews. Feedback should be a two-way process. It is important to use the information given to you positively. If possible, you should also give feedback on how the process felt for you.