



Dear Candidate,

Thank you for downloading the application pack for the post of **External Relations Associate**.

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 the application form and equal opportunities monitoring form.
- Recruitment and selection process at Think Ahead, including guidance notes for completing the form.

The deadline for the receipt of completed applications is 9am Tuesday 27 July 2021. Please note that due to our recruitment practices, we cannot accept CVs, or applications received after the deadline.

You will be notified on or before **Wednesday 28 July** if you have been shortlisted for interview. The first round of interviews will be held on **Thursday 5 August**. If you are successful at this stage, you will be invited to a second round of interviews on **Friday 6 August**. Due to the Covid-19 situation, recruitment for this role will be conducted remotely, with interviews being held via Zoom.

We will contact you by email to notify you if your application has been successful or unsuccessful. It may not be possible to provide individual feedback to you should you not be shortlisted, due to receiving a large volume of applications.

To apply, please complete our application form and our equal opportunities monitoring form and send via email to: HR@thinkahead.org.

[Download our application form and equal opportunities monitoring form here.](#)

Valuing diversity and inclusion is a core principle for Think Ahead, and we are actively seeking candidates from a wide range of backgrounds – including as part of [our anti-racism plan](#). As part of our commitment to flexible working we will consider a range of options for the successful applicant to fill the post. All options can be discussed at interview stage.

If you have any difficulty in filling out the application form, or have any queries regarding your application, please contact Jess Gray on 0203 404 4456.

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

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ella Joseph".

Ella Joseph,
Chief Executive



Job Description

Job Title: External Relations Associate	Salary: £30,00 - £33,000 per annum plus benefits <i>(dependent on experience)</i>
Responsible to: External Relations Manager	Responsible for: N/A
Contract: Permanent, full-time	Start Date: ASAP <i>(dependent on successful applicant's notice period)</i>

Background on Think Ahead

At Think Ahead, we want to see a society where everyone with mental health problems can flourish. We know that won't happen unless people can improve their social circumstances – because issues like relationships, living arrangements and employment have profound effects on mental well-being. This is why we created the Think Ahead programme: a new route into mental health social work for talented graduates and career-changers. It has become one of the country's most competitive graduate schemes, with high-profile support across the political spectrum, extensive media coverage, and more than 30 applications for each place on the programme.

About the External Relations team

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

The team's key priorities include:

- Building Think Ahead's profile as a go-to organisation within mental health and social work for policymakers, sector leaders, and the media.
- Managing the charity's digital communications channels including the website, social media and newsletters.
- Supporting the growth of our graduate programme, attracting talented graduates and career changers with a focus on encouraging a greater level of diversity amongst our applicants.
- Supporting the recruitment of host organisations to provide on-the-job learning for programme participants.
- Supporting our ongoing engagement with programme participants and the alumni network.



About the role

We're looking for an experienced communications professional to join our busy External Relations Team at head office. Reporting to the External Relations Manager, you will:

Support with the management of our digital communications channels including social media, the website and newsletters.

This includes:

- Sourcing stories, images, quotes, and content relevant to our target audiences.
- Using editing tools such as Canva to produce sharable assets and drafting engaging copy to post across all channels.
- Helping grow engagement and following across all channels, including a newly launched Instagram account (currently in development).
- Maintaining and updating Think Ahead's website, editing pages as needed and drafting news stories to share key announcements.
- Producing stakeholder newsletters on behalf of the External Relations team and the CEO as well as supporting internal teams to produce their own newsletters for the alumni network and potential applicants for example.

Support media engagement and generate positive coverage for the organisation, building our profile in mental health and social work.

This includes:

- Monitoring the media inbox and responding to journalist enquiries.
- Developing story ideas and pitching to national media.
- Building and maintaining relationships with journalists.
- Managing successful media pitches to ensure a positive outcome – e.g. securing interviews, briefing spokespeople and sharing information with the journalist for an informed piece.

Lead the communications elements of the campaign to recruit Think Ahead's 2022 Cohort.

This includes:

- Creating engaging digital content with motivational case study stories, statistics and information to encourage people to apply to the Think Ahead programme.
- Managing external suppliers to produce marketing materials including for example: photography, short films and printed materials.
- Exploring media opportunities to promote the programme and support specific recruitment targets (such as encouraging more men or ethnically diverse candidates to apply).
- Developing and managing digital advertising, primarily across Google and Facebook.

Contribute to the operation of our day-to-day External Relations activities.

This includes:

- Media, parliamentary and stakeholder monitoring to help keep the organisation up to date with sector news.



- 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 stakeholder meetings.
- Supporting colleagues to use our style guide and branding guidelines, ensuring brand consistency and high-quality outputs across the charity.
- Working with colleagues to produce their own external relations products. The level of support given on these projects may vary depending on capabilities and resource.

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.

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 project management.
- Experience in stakeholder management both internally and externally.
- 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, time management and prioritisation skills.
- *Desirable*: Knowledge of the UK policy environment and experience of influencing in this area.

Personal qualities:

We expect all our staff to put our corporate values at the heart of everything they do by demonstrating the behaviours listed below.

- **Inspirational** – we set ambitious goals, and we attract and lead others to achieve our vision.
- **Inclusive** – we respect everyone, build networks, and act in partnership.
- **Genuine** – we are honest with others, we seek feedback, and we reflect on ourselves.
- **Determined** – we stay on course, we set the right pace, and we don't give up.
- **Effective** – we use evidence and innovation to find what works and get things done.



Working at Think Ahead

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. As mentioned in the job description, Think Ahead is temporarily working on an entirely remote basis until at least the end of August 2021 due to the current advice.

Working hours

This post is full time for 37.5 hours a week. 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. The office is generally open from 8.30am to 6.00pm Monday to Friday. 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.

Probation period and notice period

All appointments are subject to a six-month probationary period. You will be required to give two months' notice period.

Annual Leave

28 days per annum plus UK bank holidays (pro rata for part time employees). Think Ahead offices close for an extra 4 days between Christmas Eve and New Year's Day and you will be given these days (pro rata for part time employees) in addition to your annual leave entitlement. Staff can carry over 5 days (pro rata for part time employees) into the following annual leave year.

Contributory pension

Think Ahead offers membership of a stakeholder compliant group personal pension plan operated by Aviva and will contribute up to a maximum of 7% of annual salary based on a relevant matched contribution from employees. An employee contribution of 4% is required for the maximum 7% employer contribution.

Employee Assistance Programme

Think Ahead offers all employees access to an Employee Assistance Programme, including access to telephone counselling, free and confidential advice on a wide variety of areas and up to six hours of in-person counselling.

Season Ticket Loan

Interest free loans are available for season tickets.



The recruitment process at Think Ahead

Please read the following carefully before completing your application form.

The 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.

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).

Supporting 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.

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.

The interview

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 details of the interview in advance, 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 parts 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 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.