

Consultant: Sciencewise media and strategic communications

Role Profile (freelance)



Practical details

PAY:	£700 / day (8 hour days)
TIMING	From 16 September 2024 - 13 December 2024
LOCATION:	Flexible, must be comfortable with some travel across the UK
HOURS:	Approximately 8 hours per week for 3 months

01. Pay, location and benefits

Job Title:	Consultant, Sciencewise strategic comms (freelance)
Pay:	£700/day
Timing:	From 16 September 2024 (or asap) - 13 December 2024
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Reporting to:	Director of Capacity Building & Standards, Carly Walker-Dawson

02. Who we are

The aim of the Sciencewise programme is to assist socially informed decision making within the research and innovation sector and related policy and regulatory areas.

Sciencewise provides expert support, quality assurance and up to 50% of funding for public input projects commissioned by UKRI Councils, central Government departments or agencies, and other public bodies, organisations or research groupings that meet the programme's eligibility criteria.

Founded in 2004, it supports good practice, high quality methodology, transparency and impact in engagement projects on topics of societal interest within the above sectors, in accordance with the [Sciencewise Guiding Principles and Quality Framework](#).

The Sciencewise programme is the UK Government's exemplar of how to develop robust evidence on public views to inform policy development in areas of scientific and technological innovation. The programme has supported over 70 dialogue projects.

Sciencewise helps to ensure policy is informed by the views and aspirations of the public. The programme is led and funded by UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) with support from DSIT. Involve, the UK's leading public participation charity, provides expert advice, assurance and support to the programme.

03. About the role

For nearly two decades, Involve has been responsible for managing the UKRI funded Sciencewise programme. While it has always been ahead of the curve in what it delivers - in quality and innovation - Sciencewise has not always reached or been understood by diverse public audiences and key political stakeholders. We want to develop a long term, strategic approach to improving our communications in order to increase our reach and widen access to Sciencewise funding.

The programme is at a key moment of transition as it begins its new 2024-2030 programme, led by a consortium of Involve, the [British Science Association](#), and the [NCCPE](#). At the same time, there is a particular window of opportunity for impact in the first six months of the new government - an administration we know is more empathetic to participatory methods than any in the last decade.

This is a chance to ramp up our strategic comms approach, set new ambitions and methods for how we reach members of the public and commissioning bodies alike, and consider what platforms we need to be fit for the next five years, and how they should look and feel. This role will help us take advantage of this moment, and see tangible results in shifting the dial towards people affected by decisions being part of making them.

04. Key responsibilities

Given the short nature of the contract, required outputs will be agreed together with the successful applicant, with Involve having ultimate sign off. Below are example required outputs, to give a sense of likely outcome of discussions, but to be informed by your expertise:

Strategy and planning - estimated 40% of capacity

- Plan, co-ordinate, and deliver an autumn communications plan for Sciencewise, with the aim of capitalising on the post-election period and raising the programme's profile. Link into:
 - New parliamentary term
 - Conference season
 - New ministers in science and technology positions
 - Developments and innovation in the science and tech sector
- Develop a messaging framework written in collaboration with staff at Sciencewise, including our external consortium partners, showing how key dialogues and innovations can be used as a hook to highlight the relevance of Sciencewise to the wider public and commissioners.
- Identify future opportunities to strategically grow Sciencewise's networks, leaving these opportunities and the ability to deliver them with the Sciencewise team at the end of the contracted period.
- Review the current Sciencewise website, and consult with the team to produce written detailed advice on the updates needed.

External outputs - estimated 40% of capacity

- Broaden and deepen Sciencewise's relationships in the science, tech and health sectors, by building strong links between media contacts and key members of the Sciencewise team, maintaining accurate record for these contacts. .
- Write and publish 2-3 blogs or articles in science and tech publications. Support and develop the Sciencewise team to develop the skills to write stories for sector relevant publications and blogs.
- Manage day-to-day comms during the transition to the new Sciencewise contract, including social media and press around the new contract, and any ongoing publications and project reports.

Internal communications, reporting and handover - estimated 20% of capacity

- Short, fortnightly or monthly progress reports provided against deliverables.
- Final report on progress made, in line with deliverables, including a handover note with reflections and learning on what has and hasn't been effective, and a clear plan for where Sciencewise could go next.

05. Key competencies

Essential competencies

Applicants must demonstrate the following competencies:

- Excellent, practical understanding of how to develop and implement a comms strategy;
- Experience of leading successful efforts to increase the profile of a campaign, programme or organisation in the science and tech sector;
- Excellent relationships within the traditional media sphere with experience of leading successful efforts to acquire national media coverage, ideally on science, data and/or technology issues;;
- Excellent project management skills: a proven ability to manage and prioritise a diverse workload, and provide robust progress reporting;
- Excellent relationship building skills: proven expertise in developing and managing relationships with a range of people at all levels, including senior actors and decision-makers;
- Committed team player, embodying our values of collaboration, equality, independence, purpose and quality; passionate about furthering our vision;
- Strategic thinking skills: able to understand wider contexts and strategic objectives and apply these to developing and delivering our thinking and work.
- Excellent written skills: able to write clear and persuasive copy for a range of audiences and purposes.
- Excellent ability to embody the programme's Tone of Voice, with limited time to get accustomed to it.

Desirable competencies

The following competencies are desirable:

- An interest in issues of equity, power and privilege;

We are interested in applications from people with a wide range of different backgrounds. Please don't be put off applying if you don't meet all the criteria.

06. How to apply

Apply online via the link below. The closing date for applications is 10am on Thursday 29 August. Interviews will be held on 5 September, but we can be flexible given the tight turnaround.

The application consists of the following sections:

- Where did you hear about this freelance opportunity?
 - a. Personal details
 - b. Diversity monitoring (this section is optional)
 - c. Application:
 - i. Please outline why you are interested in this role? (Max. 400 words).
 - ii. A CV of no more than two sides of A4. The CV should include a summary of your: work experience, volunteering experience (if any), and education history.
 - iii. Please share up to three links to work you've done previously, that we should review in advance of interviews and that best demonstrate the competencies listed in the profile.
 - iv. Contact details for two references.
- Declaration

If you have any issues with the application form or if you have any questions, please contact us at info@sciencewise.org.uk.