



Candidate Pack for Director of Communications



Royal College
of Surgeons
of England
ADVANCING SURGICAL CARE



Welcome

Thank you for your interest in the role of Director of Communications at the Royal College of Surgeons of England.

This is a truly exciting moment for the College. We are building on a proud heritage as a world-leading professional body, while undertaking a period of significant transformation to ensure we remain modern, agile and outward-facing in how we operate and communicate.

We are currently progressing through a significant programme of digital transformation, strengthening our policy and campaigns capability, and preparing for a major brand relaunch later this year, alongside a new College strategy in July. Together, these changes represent an opportunity to redefine how we engage with our members, influence the healthcare agenda, and communicate the value and impact of surgery to wider audiences.

As the leading voice of surgery, how we communicate has never been more important. Our members, the media, policymakers and the public look to us for clear, authoritative and evidence-based insight. This role will play a central part in ensuring that our voice is consistent, compelling and influential across all channels and audiences.

The Director of Communications will lead a broad and high-performing function, bringing together communications, media, marketing, publishing and policy alignment under a clear and coherent narrative. You will act as a trusted adviser to the President, Officers and Executive Team, supporting them to navigate complex and often sensitive issues, and ensuring the College responds with clarity, confidence and authority.

This role will also be instrumental in shaping how we connect with our members, from trainees at the start of their careers to senior surgeons at the height of their profession, ensuring their experiences of the College are engaging, relevant and reflective of their needs.

We are looking for a leader with strong judgement, political awareness and the ability to operate effectively in a complex environment. Someone who can balance strategic thinking with delivery, bring clarity to priorities, and build confidence and cohesion within a talented and committed team.

This is an opportunity to lead a function that sits at the heart of the organisation's future, shaping how we communicate, how we influence, and how we support excellence in surgery for years to come.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Best wishes,



Lucy Davies,
Executive Director – External Affairs and Engagement

About us

The Royal College of Surgeons of England (RCS England) is a world-leading professional membership body and registered charity, founded to advance the art and science of surgery. Our purpose today remains firmly focused on improving patient care and supporting the surgical profession at every stage of its journey.

We represent a diverse community of more than 30,000 members in the UK and around the world, including surgeons, dental professionals, trainees, students and the wider surgical care team. Our work is delivered by over 300 staff, working alongside more than 5,000 volunteers who contribute their expertise across education, standards, research and governance.

Education and training remain central to our role. Each year, we deliver hundreds of courses to thousands of participants, supported by an extensive faculty of expert practitioners. Our examinations define the standards of surgical training in the UK, while our continuing professional development programmes and fellowships equip surgeons and surgical leaders to thrive throughout their careers. As a charity, our impact extends beyond training into research, public engagement and policy influence. Through fundraising, partnerships and philanthropic support, we invest millions of pounds each year in surgical research, education and innovation, including fellowships and programmes that advance areas such as robotics, global surgery, clinical leadership and equity in the profession.

In July 2026, we will launch a new five-year strategy that sets a clear direction for the College through to 2031. The strategy will focus on strengthening standards and professional leadership, supporting and advocating for the surgical workforce, and increasing our influence and impact for patients and the public. Underpinned by a renewed emphasis on engagement, reputation and trust, it places communications at the heart of how we speak with clarity, authority and confidence to members, partners, policymakers and wider society.

Diversity and Inclusion

At RCS England, we believe we are only as good as the people we hire. We know that the people we hire come from all walks of life and with that comes different perspectives. Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging are at the heart of everything we do.

Our commitment to fostering an inclusive environment is evident through the active engagement of our employees in the Staff Council, where their voices play a crucial role in shaping work life for everyone within the College. Additionally, our staff networks cultivate a strong sense of belonging, while social clubs create a vibrant community spirit. We actively encourage our team members to openly share their professional and personal experiences, contributing to the evolution of our mindset and organisational culture.

We firmly believe that embracing diversity goes beyond a moral obligation; it serves as a catalyst for both individual and collective growth. Our unwavering dedication ensures that our profession and the College lead the way in advancing patient care for future generations. However, we recognise that achieving this goal demands a collective effort. That is why we are on the lookout for individuals like you. Your unique talents and diverse experiences, acquired through both life and work, are invaluable contributions that will enhance and complement our existing team. Join us on this journey towards a more inclusive and pioneering future in healthcare.

Our Vision

We want to see excellent surgical care for everyone.

Our Mission

We will achieve our vision by enabling our members, in all their diversity, to deliver excellence in everything they do.

Our Values

Collaboration - We embrace our collective responsibilities working collaboratively and as one college.

- We work together, using our collective expertise and experience to effect positive change
- We are open, honest and transparent, straightforward in our language and actions, acting with sincerity and delivering on our commitments
- We take our responsibilities to each other, to patient care and to the environment seriously and we act with this in mind across our work

Respect - We value every person we come into contact with at the College as an individual, respect their aspirations and commitments in life, and seek to understand and meet their physical and wellbeing needs.

- We treat everyone we meet with kindness and integrity and we seek to promote these behaviours in others
- We actively seek a range of views and experiences across our work, and we listen to, and make everyone feel, a valued part of the team

Excellence - We aspire to excellence and success. We share learning from our experiences, apply feedback into practice, and commit to continual improvement.

- We work hard to be the best at what we do, recognising and celebrating effort and achievement, and reflecting on our work, so we can learn and improve
- We value and invest in research, education and training to drive excellence and put improvements in surgical practice, dentistry and patient care at the heart of our work
- We always seek to learn and discover more, valuing knowledge and scientific evidence, basing our decisions on insights, fact and experience

To learn more about our organisation, please use the links below.

- [Annual Report](#)
- [Current Strategy](#)
- [Our Commitment to Diversity](#)
- [Our Commitment to Sustainability](#)



Organisation Chart



Job Description

Job title:	Director of Communications
Reports to:	Executive Director, External Affairs and Engagement
Direct reports:	Head of Policy & Standards; Head of Campaigns & Press; Head of Publishing; Head of Marketing

Role purpose

The Royal College of Surgeons of England is the leading voice of surgery. The Director of Communications is responsible for shaping the College's brand and voice, ensuring it clearly articulates our organisation's narrative, is authoritative, member-driven, and underpinned by strong evidence.

The postholder will lead the College's communications, media, campaigning, marketing, publishing, and the strategic alignment of the newly formed policy and standards unit, bringing these functions together under a coherent brand and evidence-based narrative grounded in professional expertise.

The postholder will support the early establishment of our new policy and campaigns functions - helping to ensure our policy work is solutions-focused and underpinned by a robust methodology, working with a campaigns functions that will directly involve members in our efforts to implement change in surgery.

Working closely with the President, Officers, Council and Executive Director Team, the Director will provide trusted strategic counsel on high-profile, complex and sensitive issues, and ensure the College's reputation, influence and impact are protected and enhanced.

This is a critical role in the organisation, requiring excellent judgement, strong leadership and the ability to lead and develop a high-performing multidisciplinary team in a complex and high-profile external environment.

Main responsibilities

Leadership & Organisational Culture

- Lead the Communications team, working closely with the wider senior leadership to develop a positive team culture
- Manage, develop, and, as appropriate, make changes to the team structure to ensure that the team delivers high-quality, high-performance for the functions
- To lead and continuously improve the work of the communications team
- Contribute fully to the effective direction and management of the organisation, working closely with the Executive Director Team members
- To work collaboratively with all other RCS England departments - providing communications, marketing and policy support as necessary
- Be a role model for RCS England's values and behaviours for the team and all staff
- Ensure we progress towards our ambition to be a more diverse and inclusive organisation

Strategy & Policy

- Lead the development and implementation of RCS England's communications strategy that will support the delivery of RCS England's five-year strategy (2026–31)
- Provide strategic oversight and communications alignment for RCS England's policy and campaigning activity
- Help to contribute to the development and implementation of RCS England's five-year strategy

External Influence & Reputation

- Provide senior level communications advice and support to the President, officers, council and the executive team staff on all matters related to communication
- Ensure that we maximise our impact with members and fellows, the media, policy makers and the government
- Ensure RCS England has a positive reputation, high-profile and extensive level of influence with decision-makers and opinion formers, to meet our strategic priorities - through generating a high level of positive media coverage, lobbying and stakeholder influencing

Delivery & Engagement

- Ensure the team identifies and mitigates communications challenges that create risks to the profession and organisation— including crisis communications
- Oversee a wide range of high-quality content and communications activities, including media, public affairs, digital communications, marketing and publishing, ensuring that the RCS England's brand and reputation are protected and developed
- Work with income generating teams to enable income through effective marketing



Person specification

Knowledge and experience

- A successful track record in a senior communications leadership role
- Demonstrable experience of developing and implementing successful integrated communications strategies across multiple audiences and channels
- A strong track record in Government relations, able to show a clear understanding of the mechanics of Government
- Demonstrable experience of leading and stewarding a strong organisational brand, ensuring consistency, credibility and impact across all communications and channels
- Significant experience of strategic marketing leadership, including audience insight, campaign-based marketing, and the effective promotion of products, services or programmes to support organisational objectives
- Strong leadership experience, able to ensure the team is well managed, highly motivated and high performing
- Excellent experience of media relations both proactive and reactive, able to promote the RCS England's reputation effectively
- Politically sensitive, able to recognise, influence and manage communications of sensitive issues
- Excellent communication skills, oral and written, including perceptiveness and presentation skills in formal, informal and public settings
- Experience of working with elected representatives, trustees or Board Members
- Deep understanding of the UK healthcare landscape, including the policy, regulatory and political environment, and the role of professional bodies within it

Skills and abilities

- Ability to exercise strong judgement and leadership on sometimes complex and sensitive issues, providing advice on stakeholder engagement at the highest level
- Resilience and diplomacy to work within a complex structure
- Team player willing to share ideas and work collaboratively to devise strategy and business solutions
- Strong interpersonal and stakeholder-management skills, able to build trust and negotiate effectively
- Excellent organisational skills, methodical approach to planning and attention to detail
- Ability to use own initiative and prioritise workload and manage conflicting priorities while meeting deadlines
- Ability to communicate effectively with both internal and external stakeholders
- Possesses both vision and application to drive the wider organisational priorities whilst at the same time delivering departmental objectives

Terms of appointment

Salary

£85,000-£95,000

Location

Our excellent benefits package includes:

- 27 days paid holiday + bank holidays and up to 4 college closure days over the festive period & other leave entitlements (carers leave, fertility treatment leave, etc.)
- Hybrid and flexible working.
- Enhanced contributory pension scheme
- Equal access to enhanced parenthood leave
- A range of staff and peer networks
- Employee health and wellbeing committed (Healthcare cash plan, menopause friendly, disability confident employer, mental health first aiders, EAP etc.)
- Retail discount platform
- Sabbatical and volunteering opportunities
- Variety of learning and development opportunities

Further information around our benefits can be found [here](#).



How to apply

We hope you will consider making an application. To make an application, please go to <https://starfishsearch.com/jobs/rcs-dir-comms/> and click on the apply now button, with the following prepared:

- Your CV (no more than three sides).
- A supporting statement (no more than two sides) that sets out why you think this role is the right move for you and how you meet the knowledge and experience criteria.

We would also be grateful if you would complete the Equality and Diversity monitoring form on the online application process. This form is for monitoring purposes only and is not treated as part of your application.

Closing date:

Friday 29th May 2026

Preliminary interviews:

w/c Monday 8th June & w/c Monday 15th June 2026

Final Panel interviews

**(including stakeholder session,
and 1:1 with our President):**

w/c Monday 6th July 2026

