



JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Title: Head of External Relations

Location: London/hybrid

RFUK operates a hybrid working model with staff working partly from home and partly from the office. The postholder will be required to work in the office two days per week during their 6-month probation period. This can be reviewed with their Line Manager thereafter.

Reporting to: Executive Director

Contract type: Permanent

Hours of work: 35 hours per week (full-time)

Salary: £65,817 FTE

RFUK operates a fixed salary grid, and salaries are non-negotiable.

Other entitlements:

- 30 days annual holiday allowance (in addition to Bank Holidays)
- 4% employer pension contribution
- Enhanced sick leave and sick pay
- Employee Assistance Programme
- Learning and development allowance
- 4 weeks of work from anywhere in the world

Candidates must have a pre-existing right to work in the UK.

ABOUT THE ROLE

The Head of External Relations is a key senior leadership role at Rainforest Foundation UK (RFUK) responsible for overseeing effective fundraising and communications strategies to support the organisation's work protecting rainforests and the rights of Indigenous Peoples and local communities.

Reporting to the Executive Director, this role is responsible for building RFUK's external profile and support for its ambitious 2033 vision to scale up community-led protection of tropical forests. The position combines strategic communications, outreach, targeted campaigns, and media engagement to connect RFUK's impactful programmes to its growing audience, supporters and funders. This a key role in the organisation, managing a small team, working closely with the Programmes team to craft compelling narratives that drive engagement and action, with the Operations team to ensure financial sustainability, and with the Executive Director to create and implement targeted fundraising strategies. They will bring expertise in fundraising and strategic communications to strengthen RFUK's position as key strategic allies to Indigenous and local organisations and as thought-leaders in rights-

based rainforest protection.

This role requires a strong commitment to social and environmental justice, the ability to form and cultivate relationships with a range of different groups, and the ability to communicate complex issues persuasively.

ABOUT RAINFOREST FOUNDATION UK (RFUK)

Founded in 1989, RFUK's mission is to support Indigenous Peoples and other communities of the world's rainforests in their efforts to protect their environment and fulfil their rights to land, life and livelihood. RFUK is committed to both human rights and environmental protection when it comes to tackling deforestation. Locally, we support forest communities to gain land rights, challenge harmful industries, manage their forests and protect their environment. Globally, we campaign to influence national and international laws and processes that protect rainforests and their inhabitants.

Since our founding, this approach has supported communities to protect millions of hectares of forest in the Congo and Amazon Basins. All our work is delivered in close partnership with Indigenous and grassroots organisations in rainforest countries who are at the core of what we do. We are a [values-led](#) organisation with a growing team of over 25 staff members who are based in the UK and abroad, including in rainforest countries.

RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Strategic communications

- Provide strategic oversight of RFUK's strategic communications, ensuring alignment with the 2033 vision and organisational mission.
- Set direction for KPIs and performance monitoring to assess communications impact and guide continuous improvement.
- Oversee the development of high-impact content and campaigns that amplify the voices of Indigenous Peoples and local communities.
- Ensure audience-centric strategies by defining priority segments, understanding key drivers, and tailoring messaging to maximise engagement and impact across all channels.
- Maintain strategic oversight of RFUK's digital platforms to maintain a cohesive and effective brand presence, including a planned website revamp.
- Direct media engagement strategy and cultivate relationships to enhance RFUK's media impact.
- Lead brand positioning and thought leadership efforts, including events and public representation, to elevate RFUK and partners' profiles.

2. Fundraising

- Ensure strategic direction of RFUK's fundraising strategy to drive sustainable income growth aligned with its mission and 2033 vision.
- Set direction for income targets and ROI analysis, and diversification across different income streams to maintain competitive advantage in an evolving funding landscape.
- Together with Head of Operations work on the implementation of a new CRM system.
- Guide the development of innovative, data-informed fundraising initiatives and ensure alignment with internal teams on major funding proposals.

- Work closely with Programmes and Operations Teams to support development of large-scale institutional and bilateral funding applications.
- Oversee donor engagement, relationship management, and outreach strategies to maximise income from trusts, foundations, corporates, and major donors.
- Ensure ethical fundraising practices, data integrity, and delivery of donor experiences that strengthen retention and long-term support.

3. Team management and senior leadership

- Manage three direct reports, fostering a positive work and professional development environment.
- Motivate the team to achieve ambitious goals, setting clear performance targets and delivering strategic support.
- Oversee design and management of budgets annual departmental work plans, budget monitoring and reforecasting.
- Support ongoing training and development initiatives, ensuring adherence to organisational policies and staff appraisal processes.
- Contribute to Board and Committee meetings and participate in regular Senior Management Team (SMT) decision-making processes.
- Work with the SMT to foster a culture of respectful, values-driven management, ensuring fair treatment, empathy, and growth opportunities for staff, while promoting reciprocal respect across teams and partnerships.
- Perform other tasks as may from time to time be requested by the Executive Director.

We would encourage candidates who don't strictly meet all the essential criteria listed below but are confident in their transferable skills to consider applying. We value individuals who demonstrate motivation, a commitment to learning, and the potential to thrive in the role. When reviewing our essential and desirable criteria, remember that relevant experience can be demonstrated through academic studies, work experience (paid or voluntary), lived experience, skills, and achievements from any area of your life that relates to this role.

For more information please read our [Recruitment FAQs](#)

PERSON SPECIFICATION

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Essential knowledge and experience	Desirable knowledge and experience
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Demonstrable experience in managing strategic organisational communications. · Proven track record in securing six and seven figure sums from trusts, foundations, corporates, major donors and institutional funders. · Proven ability to lead cross-functional teams and drive collaboration between fundraising, programmes and communications functions. · Minimum three years of effective people management experience, with demonstrated ability to develop and motivate teams. · Demonstrated expertise in strategic planning, budget management and implementing robust performance monitoring frameworks. · Ability to effectively represent the organisation with a variety of different stakeholders (governments, funders, peers, partners, communities, etc.) and to build long-term relationships with these actors. · Exceptional written and verbal communication skills, with particular strength in persuasive and accessible writing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Experience of being a member of Senior Leadership Team. · Working knowledge of French and/or Spanish. · Working knowledge of environmental and human rights issues, preferably relating to Africa and/or the Amazon basin. · Experience in strategic-level media positioning, including developing media strategies and opening doors at senior editorial levels for campaigns and organisational activities. · Experience shaping and maintaining a strong organisational brand identity, including overseeing compelling multi-channel content and strengthening online presence, experience managing a website redevelopment project would be an advantage. · Ability to develop and implement crisis communication plans to protect organisational reputation. · Experience developing and overseeing fundraising strategies, including effective use of CRM systems to support donor engagement, segmentation and income growth. · Successful history of maintaining and growing multi-year funding relationships with major donors.
Essential personal skills and attributes	Desirable personal skills and attributes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Commitment to RFUK's mission and values. · Cultural sensitivity and demonstrable commitment to the principles of inclusion and non-discrimination. · Resilience working under pressure, ability, and willingness to both give and take constructive feedback. · Excellent organisational and time management skills with the ability to work under pressure and to multiple deadlines. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Willingness and ability to occasionally travel including in remote forest areas.

Data policy

Rainforest Foundation UK (RFUK) is a registered Charitable Incorporated Organisation and registered Company (Charity No. 1138287. Registered Company No. 7391285). Our registered address is Suite 201, Pill Box Studios, 115 Coventry Road, London, E2 6GG, United Kingdom.

RFUK is committed to ensuring that your privacy is protected. Any data requested will be used for recruitment purposes only; to screen candidates and judge their suitability to progress to interview. RFUK will not share the data with other organisations for marketing purposes. Data collected in the UK is held in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (EU) 2016/679 and the UK Data Protection Act 2018. We will keep your personal information for 12 months after which it will be deleted, unless a longer or shorter retention period is required by law, is necessary in the course of legal proceedings or is otherwise needed for a particular purpose under applicable law. We may keep your personal information for a shorter period if you ask us to delete your personal information. In such a case, RFUK will aim to delete your personal information within a maximum period of one month from the date of the request. You have the right to request a copy of data we hold on you, to rectify your data and to restrict processing of your data. You can email at info@rainforestuk.org or write to us at RFUK, Suite 201, Pill Box Studios, 115 Coventry Road, London, E2 6GG, United Kingdom. For more information on how we process data and your rights please read our [privacy policy](#).

Safeguarding

RFUK is committed to Safer Recruitment and all appointments are subject to satisfactory references and pre-employment checks (including a DBS check) as required and in line with our Safeguarding Policy and Procedures.

RFUK has a zero-tolerance approach to any attitudes or behaviours that put our staff, those impacted by our programmes, or the wider community we work with at risk of harm. Safeguarding incidents are considered acts of gross misconduct and are grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal and referral to relevant authorities. More information, including a copy of RFUK's Safeguarding Policy, is available [here](#).