

## Communications & Engagement Officer (July 2020)

### This candidate information pack includes:

1. About Scottish Rural Action      page 1
2. About the role                      page 2
3. Job description                    page 3
4. Person Specification            page 4
5. How to apply                      page 5

### About Scottish Rural Action

---

Scottish Rural Action (SRA) was established in 2013 as a Scottish Charity (SC048086) and Company Ltd by guarantee (SC461352).

Through our ongoing communications and engagement work, including the now-established biennial Scottish Rural Parliament, we aim to connect Scotland's rural communities and enable them to take rural issues into the mainstream of policy making.

We are a small organisation and to achieve impact we collaborate with multiple partner organisations and groups, some national and some local and rooted in the communities they serve, both communities of place and communities of interest.

Against the backdrop of Brexit, Climate Change and now COVID-19, Scotland's rural communities, like the rest of the UK, are contending with great uncertainty. Whilst this creates challenges, it also presents with unique opportunities in terms of advancing community learning, activism and influence.

We need to give our communications and engagement more reach and for this reason, the Board of SRA has decided to invest additional resources into building our network of organisations, community groups and individual stakeholders, especially with a view to enabling participation from those voices less heard in community and government structures.

In parallel, SRA's Board is keen to offer more diverse and better-quality engagement platforms taking full advantage of social media and the widespread adoption of online tools.

At the core of this process of organisational growth is the need for SRA to remain accessible, inclusive, authentic and relevant. You will be joining the organisation in a role that has enormous capacity to shape how SRA delivers its work, ensuring that Scotland's rural communities are connected and have collective agency over their future.

## About the role

---

|                            |   |
|----------------------------|---|
| <b>Salary</b>              | £28,000 to £32,000 pro rata depending on experience                     |
| <b>Pension</b>             | 6% employer contribution  |
| <b>Hours</b>               | 22.5 hours / week. Occasional weekend and evening work may be required. |
| <b>Leave entitlement</b>   | 28 days FTE   |
| <b>Location</b>            | Home based  |
| <b>Responsible to</b>      | SRA National Coordinator  |
| <b>Expected Start date</b> | September/October 2020  |

---

We are looking to appoint an individual with a high level of energy, drive and passion about connecting communities to be our Communications & Engagement Officer. You will need to be a self-starter and someone who is comfortable working collaboratively in a small team of staff, volunteers and Trustees/Directors where everyone has a significant level of autonomy over their area of work.

This role will be line managed by SRA's National Coordinator and you will work with SRA's Board and staff to develop and implement a Communications & Engagement Strategy that targets the following stakeholder groups:

- National, regional and local organisations or groups (third sector, business sector, academic, statutory etc.) whose interests intersect with those of rural Scottish communities'
- Groups who are under-represented in vision-shaping and decision-making at community and national levels e.g. younger people, BAME rural residents, people with a disability etc.
- Policy and decision-makers in Scotland and beyond
- Individuals who are not affiliated or involved in any organisation group but wish to support SRA or contribute to our work
- SRA's network of volunteers
- SRA's own membership base which may overlap with any of the above groups
- The media

Your main task will be to help create the communications infrastructure and engagement processes which will enable SRA and our stakeholder groups work together effectively. Within this, the immediate focus is to build engagement with rural individuals and communities, especially those individuals or communities who face barriers to being heard and included.

This is a one-year contract which will run from September 2020 to August 2021. Prolongation of the contract beyond August 2021 is envisaged but will be subject to Scottish Rural Action obtaining the necessary funding.

Please note that we try to minimise travel across Scotland as much as possible, but once COVID-19 restrictions are lifted you will be required to attend a certain number of meetings and events each year. We are happy to consider flexible working opportunities including, but not limited to condensed hours, flexible hours of work, part-time/reduced hours and job share. We are open to discussing individual requests.

## Job description

---

The overall purpose of the job is to create the communications infrastructure and engagement processes which will enable SRA and our stakeholder groups work together effectively. Within this, the immediate focus is to build engagement with rural individuals and communities, especially those individuals or communities who face barriers to being heard and included.

Specific responsibilities include:

1. Undertake a stakeholder analysis and mapping exercise of our existing networks (general mailing lists, social media, targeted stakeholder networks) and report to Board on profile, gaps etc.
2. In conjunction with Board members and staff, conduct ongoing sector mapping to ensure SRA is connecting with those who can strengthen our impact, including our network of volunteers
3. Work with our Finance and Administration Officer to develop and maintain SRA's contacts databases and mailing lists, including press contacts
4. Support SRA to develop and implement a Communications & Engagement Strategy ensuring, in the first instance, that we put in place relevant and consistent communications with stakeholders according to their expectations and requirements.
5. Identify, understand and develop opportunities for rural communities in Scotland to become involved with Scottish Rural Action's action research, engagement and policy mainstreaming activities. This will involve actively contributing to the delivery of these activities e.g. developing surveys, producing briefings for participants, facilitating working groups and collating emerging learning
6. Demonstrate a commitment to equality and diversity and enable the participation of 'less heard voices' in SRA's networks, including our network of volunteers. This may involve co-producing and piloting new approaches to engagement linked to SRA's ongoing programmes of work such as the Scottish Rural Parliament.
7. Lead on developing engaging content for SRA's newsletters, blogs and social media feeds and support the Board and your colleagues to produce impactful policy briefings and press releases
8. Be competent in a variety of communication tools, including CMS software and social media, to support their safe use and maximise SRA's networks' effectiveness.

## Person Specification

---

### Skills & Personal Attributes – Essential

- Understanding and demonstrable commitment to the principles and values of participation and involvement
- Proven understanding of inclusive communications strategies
- A self-starter, able to work efficiently and under pressure, manage multiple projects and prioritise
- Highly developed communication skills – digital, written and verbal, with a proven ability to communicate effectively with a wide range of people in the community and public sectors
- Working knowledge of a variety of campaigning and communications tools, including digital tools and social media
- A commitment to rural development

### Experience – Essential

- Experience in a similar job(s)
- Experience in developing and facilitating networks
- Experience in marketing and/or communications work, ideally in a campaigning capacity
- Experience of facilitating groupwork and participation activities and evaluating their impact
- Experience in distilling complex information into accessible written communications e.g. briefing papers, reports, presentations etc.
- Experience of managing contacts databases

### Experience - Desirable

- Experience of organising and delivering online sessions and events
- Experience of web-editing (including WordPress or other CMS systems)
- Experience of designing small-scale research activities – surveys, focus group consultations – and analysing data arising from these

The post-holder will be expected to work from a home base, subject to agreement.

The post-holder should have the ability to travel throughout Scotland. This includes access to a car or other appropriate means of travel. Travel and other expenses will be reimbursed in accordance with SRA's policy.

## How to apply for this post

---

Closing Date                      Friday, 31<sup>st</sup> July 2020 @ 12 noon

Interview                            circa 17<sup>th</sup> August 2020 (online)

---

After reviewing this information, if you have any questions about the role or would like to discuss it further, please contact our National Coordinator, Artemis Pana by emailing [artemis@sra.scot](mailto:artemis@sra.scot) or telephoning 0773 059 6842. Any such contact will be treated anonymously and will not impact your application.

**If you would like to apply for this post, please return your CV and a covering letter explaining how you meet the job criteria to Barbara Grieve, our Finance and Administration Officer at [barbara@sra.scot](mailto:barbara@sra.scot)**

We will aim to contact you by the 4<sup>th</sup> August to let you know the outcome of your application.

Thank you for your interest in working with Scottish Rural Action.

Vanessa Halhead

Acting Chair of the Board of Directors