



JOB DESCRIPTION

ROLE: Director Communications

SALARY: £65,000

HOURS: 40 hours per week

CONTRACT: Permanent

RESPONSIBLE TO: Artistic Director/Co-CEO & Executive Director/Co-CEO

RESPONSIBLE FOR: Head of Marketing, Box Office Manager, Insights & Analysis Manager

BACKGROUND

Throughout 2026 the iconic Royal Exchange Theatre is celebrating 50 years of producing award-winning theatre, creating courageous work and thrilling audiences. We sit at the centre of a fast-paced, diverse and expanding global city with artists, audiences and communities at the heart of everything we do. Our brave and bold programming, both on and off our stages, has been critically acclaimed and celebrated for its artistic excellence, originality and relevance. and artistic risk.

Our theatre auditorium in the vast Grade II listed trading hall of the Royal Exchange building is one of the most remarkable architectural theatre designs of the 20th century – a breathtaking must-see for locals and visitors. With a capacity of 750, our in-the-round theatre is uniquely capable of being at once epic and intimate, local and international and classical and contemporary.

Our 50th anniversary season is just the start, a statement of intent that has won critical praise for productions and revitalised the appetite of the best artists to work with us.

Looking forward, we have ambitions to re-launch our flexible Studio Theatre, redeveloping is as an engine house for new talent, and to reimagine our Swan Street building in Manchester's vibrant Northern Quarter.

Our innovative creative exchange work with communities across Greater Manchester continues to have real and lasting impact on the confidence and creative aspirations of those involved. We are focused on shaping new and nurturing long lasting relationships between the Theatre and the people on our doorstep.

For nearly five decades, the Royal Exchange has played a crucial role in shaping the future of theatre playing an integral part in a global conversation about artistic excellence, pioneering theatre practice, talent development and sharing universal, human stories.

We are looking for a Director of Communications who is excited to help us craft the story of our future.

JOB OVERVIEW

The Director of Communications will help lead the next chapter of the Royal Exchange Theatre's story. This is an exciting opportunity to shape how we connect with our audiences, communities, partners and supporters, ensuring our voice, brand and reputation reflect who we are and what we stand for.

We're looking for a strategic and imaginative leader who believes in the power of culture to inspire, connect and transform. You'll be an exceptional communicator and relationship builder, comfortable shaping long-term vision and delivering creative campaigns that engage audiences and deepen impact.

As a member of the Executive Team, you'll play a key role in helping shape the future direction of the organisation. You'll contribute to senior decision-making and work closely with colleagues to ensure our communications, marketing and audience development activity is ambitious, inclusive and impactful.

You'll lead the development and delivery of our communications and brand strategy, overseeing public affairs, public relations, marketing, audience insight and Box Office. Working alongside colleagues across the organisation, you'll help us grow and diversify our audiences, strengthen engagement and support income generation through innovative and audience-focused approaches.

Partnering closely with the Artistic and Executive Directors, you'll help bring our artistic vision and business plan to life through compelling storytelling and clear, consistent communications. You'll build strong relationships with key stakeholders and ensure our messaging inspires confidence, supports our organisational ambitions and reflects our role as one of the UK's leading cultural institutions.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

Leading Our Story and Reputation

You'll lead the Theatre's communications, public affairs and relationship-building activity, helping to strengthen the Royal Exchange's reputation as one of the UK's most exciting and influential producing theatres.

You'll help us tell our story in meaningful and engaging ways, developing confident and compelling messaging that resonates with audiences, staff, funders, politicians, media partners and stakeholders both locally and internationally.

Working closely with the Marketing & Communications team, you'll deliver our communications, marketing and audience strategies, identifying opportunities to grow and diversify audiences, increase Box Office income and deepen engagement with our work.

You'll also work closely with the Artistic and Executive Directors and colleagues across the theatre to nurture relationships with funders, donors, partners and supporters.

Internally, you'll help foster open and effective communication across the organisation.

You will provide leadership and support to the Marketing, Box Office and Insights & Analysis teams while ensuring all Royal Exchange projects and activities are promoted with creativity and impact.

Strategy and Public Affairs

- Lead the delivery of our communications and marketing strategies, ensuring they support organisational priorities and ambitions.
- Oversee reputation management, media relations and public affairs activity, providing expert advice on sensitive issues and helping the organisation respond confidently to public, political and media scrutiny.
- Contribute actively to the development and delivery of the theatre's artistic, audience and business strategies, ensuring clear objectives and meaningful measures of success are in place.

- Ensure the Marketing and Communications team continues to evolve and thrive, supporting innovation, professional development and continuous improvement.

Public Relations

- Develop and deliver effective PR strategies that raise the profile of the Royal Exchange.
- Build and maintain strong relationships with journalists, broadcasters and key media contacts.
- Create, approve and distribute high-quality press and communications materials.
- Identify opportunities for features, profiles, podcasts, radio and TV appearances, and develop compelling pitches to relevant media, preparing key talent for interviews and supporting where appropriate.
- Navigate the ethical, legal and reputational considerations of public relations with confidence and good judgement.
- Manage relationships with external communications agencies, consultants and suppliers, ensuring they support and enhance the work of the team.

Brand and Communications Leadership

- Lead the continued development of the Royal Exchange brand and ensure it is represented consistently and authentically across all channels.
- Work closely with the Artistic and Executive Directors on public affairs and external communications.
- Inspire and support colleagues, partners and stakeholders to become ambassadors for the Royal Exchange.
- Shape key internal organisational messages and provide communications support to the Executive Team.
- Oversee ambitious marketing campaigns that engage a broad and diverse range of audiences.
- Build strong relationships with government bodies, funders, sector partners and key stakeholders, ensuring the Royal Exchange is an active and influential voice within the wider cultural landscape.

Stakeholder Engagement

- Help shape and deliver a strategic and proactive approach to stakeholder engagement and public affairs.
- Work closely with the Artistic and Executive Directors and Executive Team to support fundraising and income generation activity.
- Provide regular updates and reports on communications, audience development, marketing and media activity to the Executive Team and Board.
- Represent the Royal Exchange Theatre through presentations, industry events, media opportunities and stakeholder briefings.

- Attend performances, events and meetings as needed, helping to welcome and host guests, supporters and partners and championing the organisation locally, nationally and internationally.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

We're looking for someone who brings a combination of strategic thinking, creativity, and strong leadership skills. The ideal candidate will have:

- Significant experience in a senior communications, marketing, public affairs, or similar role.
- A good understanding of, and experience working within the arts, culture, or a related sector.
- Experience leading teams and projects, with a track record of developing artistic and business strategy, engaging stakeholders, and inspiring others.
- Excellent communication and relationship-building skills, with the ability to connect confidently and effectively with a wide range of internal and external stakeholders.
- A positive, solutions-focused mindset and the ability to navigate challenges with confidence and creativity.
- Experience of developing and delivering brand and marketing plans that achieve meaningful results.
- Strong analytical skills, including the ability to evaluate performance and use audience insights, market research, and effective use of CRM systems to inform decision-making.
- Experience managing budgets and financial resources responsibly and effectively.
- The drive to work independently when needed, alongside a willingness to embrace change and help others through it.
- Flexibility to attend performances, events, and other activities outside of normal working hours when required.
- A creative and imaginative approach to problem-solving, with a willingness to explore new ideas and opportunities.

Desirable

- A genuine passion for theatre, the arts, and culture, along with the ability to communicate that enthusiasm to a range of audiences.
- An understanding of the important role that arts and cultural organisations play in enriching communities and creating meaningful experiences for people