

# Communications Officer Recruitment Pack

*For any practical queries, please email  
[diana@ivar.org.uk](mailto:diana@ivar.org.uk)*

# Welcome

Thank you for your interest in working at IVAR – the Institute for Voluntary Action Research.

We exist for charities, especially the smallest and least heard. We challenge power imbalances in how the voluntary sector is funded: whose voice counts, whose knowledge shapes decisions, and how resources flow. Through research and learning partnerships, we amplify the experiences of under-represented communities. Through our Open & Trusting grant-making community, we upend harmful dynamics and inspire practical change.

This is a key moment for IVAR. For 25 years, we have worked shoulder to shoulder with charities, helping to turn experience into change. Our new strategy arrives at a time when charities face mounting pressures and growing complexity. It is a moment when IVAR has the most to offer – and when our work has the potential for the greatest impact.

Our Communications Officer will play an essential part in seizing this moment. With our brand refresh and new website on the horizon, communications are at the heart of our new strategy. This role is key in ensuring our research is clear, accessible and compelling; sparking conversations; inspiring action; and strengthening movements for change. You will bring creativity, energy and curiosity to how we tell stories, explore new tools and formats, and connect more people with IVAR's mission.

This is a hands-on role in a smart and talented team. If you thrive on combining creativity with delivery, enjoy working collaboratively, and are motivated by strengthening the voluntary sector, we'd love to hear from you.



Ben Cairns  
Director, Institute for Voluntary Action Research

# About IVAR

At IVAR, we're more than researchers – we're sense-makers and bridge-builders. We turn real-world challenges in the voluntary sector into clear, practical insights that inspire change and action.

For 25 years, we've worked shoulder-to-shoulder with charities, funders and community organisations: listening, learning and tackling tough problems together. Our work is curious, grounded, human and hopeful.

If you're excited by ideas, motivated by making change, and eager to bring clarity to complexity, you'll feel right at home here.

## Our strategy

Our enduring focus is to strengthen the voluntary sector and transform the funding system, so that charities can do their best work.

In our 2025-2030 strategy we are committed to:

- **Strengthening charities:** Expanding our peer support and learning offer for charity leaders, generating useful, usable research and resources and building stronger networks of smaller charities connected to IVAR.
- **Transforming the funding system:** Driving forward Open and Trusting Grant-making, influencing more equitable, flexible and confident funding and learning practices across trusts, foundations and public agencies.
- **Being a healthy, fit-for-purpose organisation:** Sustaining a strong and diverse research portfolio, embedding equity in all that we do, investing in our people, and maintaining the systems and culture needed to deliver our best work.

## Our principles

- **Grounded:** We deal with practical problems, challenges and opportunities. We start by helping to pin down what really needs to be addressed.
- **Collaborative:** We know that those with direct experience of an issue are key to resolving challenges and opening up opportunities.
- **Curious:** We listen and learn with an open mind, and we always want to hear a wide variety of perspectives.
- **Flexible:** We notice when things aren't working and change our approach to meet the needs and circumstances of each partner. We evolve continuously in response to voluntary sector need.

## Our people

We are a small, dedicated team of 13 staff, nine trustees and a network of associates and advisors, who have worked in and around the voluntary sector as volunteers, staff, leaders, trustees and researchers.

## What we do

- **Deliver quality research:** We use action research methods and existing literature to support the voluntary sector to develop practical responses to real challenges and opportunities.
- **Act as a trusted sounding board:** We listen, encourage and challenge when necessary – helping partners navigate through complexity, drawing on insights from 25 years' work alongside communities.
- **Shape the system:** We work with funders and public agencies to inform and support changes in practice and behaviour that improve the day-to-day experience of voluntary organisations.

# Job Description

## Purpose

Twenty-five years since we were founded, IVAR is at an exciting point in its journey, with a growing team, a new strategy, and an upcoming brand and narrative refresh.

The Communications Officer will play a vital role in bringing this to life. You will make our research clear, accessible and compelling – ensuring it reaches and inspires the people who can use it. You'll embed a new visual and narrative style, exploring new tools and formats to expand our reach and connect more people with IVAR's mission.

You'll work closely with the Director of Communications, taking strategic direction while also exercising your own judgement and creativity. This is a hands-on role within a smart and welcoming team of 13 members of staff, plus associates. We're looking for someone who will bring creativity, dedication, warmth, ideas and commitment – a proactive communicator who enjoys trying new things, managing the day-to-day essentials, and contributing to a supportive, flexible and collaborative environment.

## Position in Organisation

- Reports to Director of Communications.

## Key Responsibilities

### Key responsibilities

- **Content and storytelling**
  - Write, edit and proof-read high-quality content across reports, blogs, newsletters and social media.
  - Translate complex research into engaging, accessible outputs for diverse audiences.
  - Ensure all communications are accurate, consistent, inclusive and aligned with IVAR's brand and tone of voice.
- **Digital and design**
  - Manage IVAR's LinkedIn channel: plan, create and schedule posts; support colleagues to engage; monitor reach and engagement.
  - Manage and update IVAR's website (WordPress), ensuring content is accurate, engaging and accessible.
  - Produce and send newsletters, manage subscriber lists and monitor performance.
  - Create and support visual assets (graphics, presentations, short videos).
  - Support implementation of IVAR's upcoming brand refresh.
- **Systems and analytics**
  - Manage and maintain IVAR's CRM (Beacon), ensuring data is accurate, segmented and used effectively for communications.

- Track and analyse performance across LinkedIn, newsletters, website and CRM; report insights and make recommendations.
- Monitor mentions of IVAR in external channels, flagging opportunities or risks.
- **Collaboration and coordination**
  - Coordinate with the wider staff team to plan content and capture learning and stories.
  - Support colleagues to communicate about their projects and share findings effectively.
  - Liaise with external partners, agencies or freelancers (e.g. designers, video editors) as needed.
  - Support internal communications (e.g. internal newsletter, updates, team events).
  - Contribute actively to team meetings, content planning and cross-organisational discussions.
- **Events and campaigns**
  - Support IVAR events, including promotion, communications materials and follow-up content.
  - Assist in developing and delivering communications campaigns linked to Open and Trusting and other initiatives.
- **Learning and development**
  - Bring fresh ideas by testing new tools, formats and approaches for engaging audiences.
  - Undertake training and development relevant to the role.

## *Person specification*

### Interest

- A commitment to IVAR's approach and ways of working – including a commitment to continuous learning.
- An interest in IVAR's research and how it can be used to inform/influence changes to practice.
- Passion for the voluntary sector, and commitment to improving the conditions that enable charities to do their best work – particularly more equitable grant-making

### Experience, skills and attributes

- **Excellent communicator** – strong writing and editing skills, with the ability to adapt tone and style for different audiences, while keeping content clear and accessible.
- **Attention to detail** – confident in proofing and copy-editing, ensuring accuracy, consistency and inclusivity across all outputs.
- **Digital know-how** – experience managing organisational social media (ideally LinkedIn) using website CMS and producing newsletters.
- **Analytical mindset** – comfortable using analytics tools (e.g. Google, LinkedIn) and CRM systems (e.g. Beacon) to track performance, segment audiences, and share insights.

- **Creative and resourceful** – brings ideas and energy, willing to test new formats and approaches to engage different audiences.
- **Visual storyteller** – strong design skills (e.g. Canva, Adobe, PowerPoint) and video/audio editing, with an eye for clear and engaging visuals.
- **Collaborative team player** – enjoys working with colleagues and external partners, offering support and encouragement, and contributing to a positive, inclusive team culture.
- **Organised and adaptable** – able to juggle multiple priorities, manage deadlines, and stay calm and flexible when plans change.
- **Values-driven** – shares IVAR's passion for the voluntary and funding sectors, and commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion in all aspects of communications.

**If you feel that we are describing you in most of the above, and you're excited by our strategy and mission, then we'd love to hear from you.**

# Key Details

<b>Responsible to:</b>	Katy Oglethorpe, Director of Communications
<b>Works closely with:</b>	<a href="#">All staff</a>
<b>Location:</b>	Hybrid – we expect all staff to work in the office at least one day a week (Thursdays) at The Foundry, 17 Oval Way, London, SE11 5RR
<b>Salary:</b>	£30,000 per annum
<b>Contract:</b>	Permanent
<b>Hours:</b>	Full-time and part-time (3-4 days per week) considered
<b>Leave:</b>	30 days (pro rata for part time)
<b>Pension:</b>	Workplace Pension scheme operated by the Pensions Trust; employee contribution matched by employer up to 5%
<b>Other benefits:</b>	<p>We operate a flexible working policy, with hybrid working and core hours designed to support staff wellbeing and collaboration.</p> <p>We are committed to supporting your personal and professional development. This includes providing both internal training and learning sessions and supporting you to attend external training and conferences.</p>

## Application process

If you would like an informal conversation about the role, please email [diana@ivar.org.uk](mailto:diana@ivar.org.uk).

<b>Closing date</b>	Monday 27 April, 10.00am	
<b>In-person interviews</b> (including a task at the start of the interview)	Wednesday 20 May	

***If you cannot make the proposed interview date, please let us know when you apply.***

To apply please send a CV and cover letter (maximum of two A4 sides) to [diana@ivar.org.uk](mailto:diana@ivar.org.uk). Your cover letter should include:

- Why you are applying
- How you meet the person specification
- Your availability to start
- What in particular you would bring to IVAR.

**We value, welcome and respect all the differences that make us who we are, including: age, cultural background, disability and mental health, ethnicity and race, gender, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, and social background.**

## Data Protection Note

Any personal data you provide (e.g. addresses, telephone numbers, employment history) will be used for recruitment purposes only, and only shared with individuals involved in the recruitment. Data will be stored securely in accordance with our [Privacy Policy](#). If you have any questions about the processing of your data, then please contact IVAR's Data Protection Lead [diana@ivar.org.uk](mailto:diana@ivar.org.uk)