

Candidate Information Pack

Communications and Campaigns Officer



Applications close: 11.59pm on 4 February 2024

About Detention Action

Detention Action is a small organisation with a big impact. Since 1993, we have worked to improve the welfare of people in detention centres and tirelessly campaign alongside our beneficiaries to reduce the use of immigration detention. We work on the frontline with people in immigration detention, as well as challenging injustice in asylum, detention and deportation systems in the UK.

We have 15 full-time staff who work together with around 70 volunteers. Our work is divided into three main areas: Campaigns, Casework and our Community Support Project. Our Campaigns team works to reform immigration detention policy and practice, drawing on evidence obtained from our frontline work and working together with our two lived-experience networks, Allies for Justice (AFJ) and Families for Justice (FFJ). AFJ is a group for people with lived experience of navigating the asylum, detention or deportation systems. FFJ is made up of mums, wives, partners and daughters who have gone through the experience of having a family member face deportation.

We continue to campaign for the introduction of a time-limit on immigration detention. Over the past year, we campaigned against the introduction of the Illegal Migration Act. Previously, we campaigned for an end to the Detained Fast Track asylum process, successfully bringing a strategic legal challenge which led to the suspension of the process in 2015 and we continue to campaign against the re-introduction of fast-track processes. In 2020, we brought several prominent legal challenges, preventing the removal of those due to be deported on a charter flight to Jamaica in February. In 2022, we brought a challenge to stop the government's attempt to remove people to Rwanda.

Our Casework team provides emotional and practical support to people detained in immigration removal centres and prisons through in-person visitors and a casework service which is accessible through a free-phone helpline. We also provide holistic and accessible advice and support on-site at removal centres and prisons by holding regular advice workshops.

Since 2014, we have been running the Community Support Project, an alternative to detention scheme that works with people who have experienced or are at risk of long-term detention. The team provides tailored support to each participant to achieve their goals.

We are an equal opportunities, disability confident and living wage employer. We want our staff team where possible to reflect those we support and the wider community that we are part of. We welcome and encourage applications from people from all backgrounds, including those from minority groups that are underrepresented in the workplace. We strongly encourage those with lived experience of the asylum, deportation and/or immigration detention systems to apply.

About the team

The Communications and Campaigns Officer is part of our Campaigns team, which is made up of five full-time members of staff – our Deputy Director, Communications and Campaigns Manager, Communications and Campaigns Officer (this role) and two Lived Experience Campaigns Coordinators – together with members of AFJ and FFJ. The work of the team is overseen by our Deputy Director. The role will be line managed by the Communications and Campaigns Manager. The Communications and Campaigns Officer will also work closely with staff and volunteers from our Casework and Community Support Project teams and with our Fundraising Officer.

Overview of the role

Job title:	Communications and Campaigns Officer
Managed by:	Communications and Campaigns Manager
Length of contract:	12 month fixed-term contract with a strong possibility of extension
Hours:	This post is offered on a full-time basis (35 hours per week Monday to Friday). However, we will also consider candidates who want to work part-time.
Salary:	£31,000 to £35,000. New starters will be appointed at the bottom of this range unless exceptional circumstances apply.
Place of work:	We currently operate a hybrid-working model and expect staff to come into our office in East London (E2) one day each week. You must be based in the UK and able to travel to the office at your own expense.
Benefits:	5.5% employer pension contributions; 25 days of leave per year (pro rata), plus public holidays; Full organisational induction and support; Generous working arrangement policies to promote staff well-being, including parental leave, flexible working and public engagement considerations.
Learning and development:	All staff benefit from opportunities for professional development through training. We also offer clinical supervision to all staff.

Job description

The Communications and Campaigns Officer will work across our communications and campaigns activities, taking on a varied set of responsibilities. Alongside working with the rest of our Campaigns team to develop strategies to achieve our longer-term campaign goals, they will also provide ongoing policy and parliamentary support, and work on our press office function. We are keen for the post holder to develop their skills and knowledge to allow them to lead on engagement with certain stakeholders and/or on certain issues.

They will take a leading role in managing our social media channels and work to build and engage our support base, deliver digital campaigning activities and contributing to the creation of digital fundraising appeals.

They will also work closely with our two lived experience campaigning networks, helping to train and support people with experience of the asylum, deportation and/or immigration detention systems to campaign for change.

Key responsibilities will include:

- Working as part of the Campaigns team to develop and deliver our campaigns strategy and activities, including digital campaigns;
- Providing research and policy support to aid the development of our campaigns strategy and aims;
- Developing content for our supporters and the public across a range of formats such as supporter emails, newsletters and parliamentary briefings;
- Managing and developing our social media channels and developing multimedia content for them;
- Keeping our website up to date;
- Taking a lead role in our press office function, responding to media queries and growing our media presence;
- Providing support to our two lived experience campaigning networks, including with media and social media engagement;
- Engaging with key stakeholders, such as civil servants, media, parliamentarians, NGOs, academics and legal practitioners to gain support for our campaigning aims;
- Briefing and supporting staff engaging with the media and parliament;
- Supporting the Communications and Campaigns Manager with digital fundraising appeals; and
- Undertaking other tasks as may be allocated by the Director, Deputy Director or Communications and Campaigns Manager.

The job description sets out the duties that exist at the moment. Duties may vary from time to time without changing the general character of the role or the level of responsibility.

Person specification

We operate a guaranteed interview scheme for applicants with a disability who can demonstrate that they meet the essential criteria below. Please see how to apply below for more information.

Essential criteria:

- Excellent drafting and editing skills and proven ability to develop compelling campaign messages for a range of audiences and across a variety of formats such as parliamentary briefings, newsletters, and social media.
- Well-developed research and analysis skills to support the development of evidence-based campaign aims.
- Ability to manage social media accounts, delivering a regular schedule of engaging content.
- Excellent organisational skills in order to manage own workload and deliver work to deadlines.
- Strong communication skills and ability to build strong working relationships with key stakeholders, including those with lived experience, media, civil servants, parliamentarians, NGOs, academics and legal practitioners.
- Knowledge of one or more of the following areas relevant to our work: human rights, immigration, asylum, detention, removal/deportation, law/rule of law, mental health, access to justice, bail, equality and non-discrimination, alternatives to detention.
- Demonstrable commitment to equality.

Desirable criteria:

- Previous experience working in media, campaigns, communications, policy, parliamentary engagement, fundraising and/or law.
- Lived experience of the asylum, deportation and/or immigration detention systems.
- Experience working with individuals who may be vulnerable or who are from marginalised backgrounds such as those held in detention, torture or trafficking survivors, children and persons with disabilities.
- Experience creating multimedia content such as graphics, photography and video content and/or with supporter management tools such as Engaging Networks.

How to apply

To apply for this role, please submit your CV (no longer than three pages) and a cover letter (no longer than two pages) through the CharityJob portal by 11.59pm (GMT/UK time) on 4 February 2024.

You will be asked when uploading your application if you would like to take part in our guaranteed interview scheme (you will not be asked to disclose the nature of your disability). After the closing date, all applicants will receive a link to complete an equal opportunities monitoring form.

We will not consider incomplete applications. **Please read the following instructions carefully before applying.**

Your cover letter must demonstrate how you meet each of the essential criteria and where relevant, how you meet any of the desirable criteria. We recognise that skills and knowledge are gained outside of formal work experience - please use any voluntary, school, university or life experience to tell us about yourself. Please also include any other information about your skills, knowledge, experience or values outside of our specified criteria which you think demonstrates your ability to carry out the role.

We operate an anonymous shortlisting process. Prior to shortlisting, your name and personal details will be redacted and the shortlisting panel will not have access to your name or personal details. Please do not include the following details in your CV or cover letter:

- Current or past salary;
- Age or date of birth;
- Photo;
- National Insurance or other identifying numbers;
- Names of any school or university attended; and
- Grades/marks.

We do not require the names of referees at shortlisting stage but will ask for the names and contact details of at least two recent professional (workplace or academic) referees prior to making any offer of employment. We recognise that it may sometimes be difficult for refugees to safely provide

references and we are therefore happy to discuss individual circumstances with candidates in this position if they are selected for interview, which may include providing one professional and one character reference.

Recruitment process and timeline

The recruitment process and timeline for this role will be:

- 4 February 2024 - applications close at 11.59pm (GMT/UK time).
- By 9 February 2024 - shortlisted candidates invited to interview.
- Weeks commencing 12 and 19 February 2024 – interviews take place. Candidates will be asked to make a short presentation at interview, details of which will be provided to each candidate one week prior to their interview date.
- Week commencing 26 February 2024 – offer made to successful candidate. Please note that second round interviews will take place in this week if necessary.
- On or before 1 April 2024 – proposed start date.

We will endeavour to follow the above process and timetable but changes in circumstances may mean we are not able to do so. We will advise applicants of any changes to the timetable and process.

Interviews will take place online and will be with a small panel drawn from our staff, volunteers, trustees and lived experience networks. We will provide further information about panellists ahead of interviews taking place.

Help completing your application and further information

We will meet any reasonable adjustments to allow you to participate in this recruitment so please inform us of any requirements as soon as possible by emailing recruitment@detentionaction.org.uk or calling 020 7062 4211.

If you have any questions about the process, role or wish to discuss part-time working arrangements please call us on 020 7062 4211. Please note that in the interests of fairness to all candidates, we are not able to discuss your suitability for the role or to provide any tips on applying.

