



HEAD OF COMMUNICATIONS



WELCOME NOTE

Thank you for your interest in the role of Head of Comms for the Irish Football Association.

"This is a very exciting time to be involved in football in Northern Ireland. At the time of writing, our men's national team have kicked off our European Championship Qualifiers with 2 straight wins and we look forward to welcoming both Germany and the Netherlands to the National Football Stadium later in 2019 whilst our senior women's team are preparing to kick off their 2021 European Championship Qualifying Campaign in August.

We are also preparing to host the Men's UEFA U19 European Championship Finals in 2020 which follows on from hosting the Ladies UEFA U19 Finals in 2017.

This will further raise the profile of the Irish FA and football in Northern Ireland nationally and internationally. Our National Football Stadium at Windsor park has just celebrated it's 2nd Anniversary. It is a state of the art home for the sport in Northern Ireland and the feedback from fans and the atmosphere created within the stadium is at a new level. In the late summer of 2018 we hosted our first major non-football event at the stadium when Carl Frampton realised his dream of fighting in front of 23,000 at the stadium, another truly historic night for sport in Northern Ireland.

There is a record demand for Northern Ireland Campaign cards with more than 30,000 people on the waiting list. Our Elite programme, Club NI, is helping develop the best young players in the country and is widely praised as an example of best practice in football development, and our Foundation continues to grow participation in football at all levels.

In 2017 we launched our new 5 Year Strategy aimed at Promoting, Fostering and Developing Football for All and have already made great strides towards achieving the goals contained within the Strategy. Effective communication with all key stakeholders in Northern Ireland is key to the ongoing success of our strategy and to help us continue on this path we are seeking to appoint a Head of Communications, in return we offer a richly rewarding role and the chance to be part of the future success story of football in Northern Ireland."



Patrick Nelson
Patrick Nelson
CEO, IFA



IFA LONG TERM OBJECTIVES

The Irish Football Association has launched a new Five-Year Strategy aimed at promoting, fostering and developing football for all.

With the Northern Ireland senior men's side having competed at EURO 2016, the new National Football Stadium at Windsor Park complete and open, more people watching the NIFL Premiership and more people playing the game, football in the country is on a high.

However, in January the board of the Irish FA commissioned a new Five-Year Strategy designed to ensure that the game continues to grow at all levels and that the Association continues to deliver for the entire football family in Northern Ireland.

As part of the process of writing the new strategy, the Association held consultations with Divisional Associations, NIFL, the Northern Ireland Women's FA, the Northern Ireland Boys' FA, the Premier Intermediate League, Championship clubs and the Amalgamation of Official Northern Ireland Supporters' Clubs.

The new Irish FA Five-Year Strategy sets six long-term objectives:

- To help Northern Ireland international teams challenge every time and qualify every other time in qualification for major tournaments
- To help rebuild the football estate in Northern Ireland
- To provide assistance for senior clubs in European Competition and to help NIFL Premiership Clubs break the top 40 in UEFA co-efficient ranking
- To reinvigorate the 'everyday' game
- To build a thriving stadium business at the National Football Stadium at Windsor Park
- To serve the Community Better

For full strategy please click on the following link:
<https://www.irishfa.com/media/11437/ifa-5-year-strategy.pdf>





JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Title:	Head of Communications
Department:	CEO Office
Reporting to:	Chief Executive Officer
Hours of work:	35 hours per week. However, the nature of the post will require a high degree of flexibility involving evenings and weekends as dictated by operational requirements of the business.
Salary:	Competitive remuneration package.
Type of contract:	Permanent



PURPOSE OF THE JOB

To deliver and lead a world class communications function (both internal and external) across all companies within the Irish FA group. This role will involve engaging with a diverse range of stakeholders and providing senior counsel to the Chief Executive Officer, President and Chair on a range of matters.





MAIN DUTIES & RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Formulate and deliver a strategic communications plan for the Irish FA encompassing the senior men's and women's teams, the Foundation, the Stadium Development Company, Club NI, corporate communications and internal communications.
2. Work closely with the Head of Sales and Marketing to ensure all partnership communication requirements are delivered and expectations exceeded.
3. Ensure personal management of the media and communications required in this function. Develop good personal relationships with the senior international managers, coaches and key players.
4. Develop and manage appropriate and innovative ways of delivering key messages to staff across all three companies within the Irish FA Group.
5. Manage all press requests. Prepare proactive and reactive press releases, statements and lines. Act as a media spokesperson as and when required.
6. Develop an appropriate crisis communications plan to be utilised and when required.
7. Take ultimate responsibility for the entire digital output of the Association and design and output of the Irish FA website. Work closely with the Digital Manager on content plans, refresh when necessary, seek opportunities to create revenue from the website, sign off on digital strategies and report on performance.
8. Manage the NI brand and use creative executions to change perceptions of the Irish FA and Northern Ireland teams.
9. Lead on stakeholder management, including providing reports to CEO, SLT, President, Irish FA boards, committees and other relevant stakeholders and engage proactively with politicians, opinion formers and leading journalists.
10. Manage and develop the communications team including Digital manager and Senior Media Relations Manager. Set individual KPIs, conduct annual appraisals and half-yearly reviews and award end-of-year bonuses if targets are met.
11. Proactively participate in learning and development opportunities.
12. Comply with Data Protection Policy with regard to safeguarding sensitive customer information at all times.
13. Perform the job in accordance with the company's policies and procedures, especially the Equal Opportunities and Harassment Policy and Procedure.
14. Adhere to and actively support at all times all other company policies, procedures, processes and working practices, including adhering to best practice.
15. Perform any other duties as may reasonably be required from time-to-time.

This job description is not to be regarded as exclusive or exhaustive. It is intended as an outline indication of the areas of activity and will be amended in the light of the changing needs of the business.





PERSONNEL SPECIFICATION

HEAD OF COMMUNICATIONS

CRITERIA	ESSENTIAL	DESIRABLE
1. Education & qualification	<p>1.1 Hold a relevant degree (Bachelor's or postgraduate), such as Communications, Marketing, Business, or a related field.</p> <p>Candidates who do not have a primary degree may still be considered if they have significant relevant experience.</p> <p>NB "Significant experience" means "five years' experience or more". "Relevant experience" means "experience directly related to the duties and responsibilities of the job".</p>	1.2 Holds Professional Membership of Chartered Institute of Public Relations (CIPR) and /or the Chartered Institute of Marketing (CIM).
2. Experience & knowledge	<p>2.1 A senior advisor with a demonstrable track record in delivering:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Delivering a clear and consistent communications strategies b) Developing and leading a successful communications department <p>2.2 Demonstrable experience of being a company spokesperson in both positive and crisis management situations.</p> <p>2.3 A strong network of media contacts both locally and internationally.</p> <p>2.4 A sound understanding of both traditional and new media formats and the value of utilising either/ both types of channels.</p>	<p>2.5 Journalist background ideally in sports.</p> <p>2.6 Previous Public Relations experience, ideally gained through an agency, working closely with external clients to meet their needs.</p>





PERSONNEL SPECIFICATION

(Continued...)

CRITERIA	ESSENTIAL
3. Skills, knowledge & competencies	<p>3.1 Strong presentation skills, and excellent written and verbal communication skills. Highly articulate with excellent written and spoken English language skills.</p> <p>3.2 Commercial acumen, strategic thinker with the ability to deliver results.</p> <p>3.3 Strong leadership, managerial and motivational skills.</p> <p>3.4 Highly developed interpersonal, collaborative and influencing skills. Ability to develop and sustain effective working relationships with a diverse range of stakeholders.</p> <p>3.5 High level of resilience and emotional intelligence. Proven ability to achieve solutions to problems and demonstrate sound judgement in a fast paced, pressurised environment.</p> <p>3.6 Creative and innovative with evidence of thinking outside the box.</p>
4. Personal disposition	<p>4.1 Hardworking, trustworthy and highly confidential.</p> <p>4.2 A flexible attitude and the ability to work across the entire Association with minimal boundaries.</p> <p>4.3 Passionate about football and committed to the values and purpose of the Irish FA.</p>
5. Other requirements (5.4-5.6 are post job offer)	<p>5.1 Proof of eligibility to work in the UK.</p> <p>5.2 Have a valid passport allowing unrestricted international travel. 5.3 Have a clean driving licence and access to a car for business use.</p> <p>5.4 Completion of a medical questionnaire demonstrating the ability to fulfil the Occupational Health requirements for the post and flag any reasonable adjustment required.</p> <p>5.5 Two satisfactory employment references, one of whom should ideally be the current/most recent employer.</p> <p>5.6 Completion of a Declaration of Interest Form.</p>





ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Closing date:

The closing date for the receipt of completed application is 5pm on Friday 14 June 2019. Applications received after the closing date and time will not be considered.

Shortlisting:

Only those applications which clearly demonstrate the requirements set out in the personnel specification will be shortlisted. Please note that the Association reserves the right to implement all or some of the desirable criteria in addition to the essential criteria for shortlisting purposes.

Screening:

There are 2 stages of screening.
Stage 1 will be conducted by Grafton Recruitment.
Stage 2 will be conducted by IFA.

Offer of employment:

Please note any offer of employment is subject to the receipt of two satisfactory employment references, proof of eligibility to work in the UK and proof of any required qualifications.

Reserve list:

A reserve list of suitable candidates may be maintained for the purpose of any similar vacancies (temporary or permanent) that may arise within twelve months of the completion of the recruitment exercise.

The Irish Football Association is an equal opportunities employer and welcomes applications from all sections of the community. All appointments will be made on the basis of merit.





IFA BENEFITS OFFERING

20-25 days holidays (depending upon tenure),
plus 10 bank/customary holidays

7.5% Pension contribution and death in service (4x salary)

Group income protection

Private medical insurance for senior managers

Car allowance for senior managers





PROCESS TIMELINE

Deadline date for CV submission
Monday 17th June at 5pm

Short listing completed
by Wednesday 19th June

Stage 1: selection process completed
by Friday 21 June

Stage 2 : Interviews TBC
(provisionally between Monday 24 June and Friday 5 July)

