###

**Senior Press Officer – London Zoo**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Job grade** | **Level 4** **(Professional Level 2)** | **Reports to** | **Media Manager** |
| **Directorate** | **Zoos** | **Function** | **Marketing and Engagement**  |
| **Contract**  | **18-month full-time/fixed term** | **Location** | **Regent’s Park/Hybrid** |

**Responsibility for resources**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Direct line reports** | **Supports management of PR team in absence of Media Manager**  | **Responsibility for other resources** | **Reputation Management** **Confidentiality**  |
| **Financial resources** | **Responsible for delivering media KPIs within budget** |

**Our vision and mission**

We’re ZSL, a science-driven conservation charity working to restore wildlife in the UK and around the world. We work to help wildlife and people thrive together. Guided by a scientific approach and passion for nature, we lead conservation, shape agendas and influence change to protect and restore nature.

**Purpose of the role**

At ZSL, we inspire, inform, and empower people to protect and restore wildlife. The Senior Press Officer for London Zoo embodies this ethos to help London Zoo meet key commercial targets while building, reinforcing and protecting London Zoo’s position as the world leading conservation zoo.

Reporting into the ZSL Media Manager and working within the wider ZSL (Zoological Society of London) PR and publishing team, the Senior Press Officer for London Zoo primarily focuses on formulating and implementing an ongoing programme of strategic media activity for London Zoo, while also promoting London Zoo’s contribution to ZSL’s global conservation efforts.

The Senior Press Officer supports the marketing team with timely and impactful media outreach to meet London Zoo’s visitor targets and maintain its world-class reputation. They are responsible for delivering media coverage which ensures the conservation goals of ZSL are appreciated and understood by London Zoo’s audiences - specifically targeting UK national mass media and key online and regional outlets.

The Senior Press Officer for London Zoo will deputise to the media manager, ensuring the delivery of day-to-day outputs of the team as well as contributing to long term strategic communications plans, and take a lead on copywriting and reputational management issues in the absence of the media manager.  In addition to establishing a clear rolling programme for London Zoo media coverage, the Senior Press Officer will develop a process for generating a consistent supply of high-quality brand-building news releases.

An excellent writer and enthusiastic storyteller, the Senior Press Officer for London Zoo is a self-starter with a strong news-nose and has a thorough understanding of the needs and workings of national, local and online media (ideally having firsthand experience of working as a journalist themselves). The Senior Press Officer must have a thorough understanding of working with content creators, and ability to create multimedia content themselves.

**Key responsibilities**

* Develop and implement a programme of hard-hitting news stories and establish an effective process of identifying and creating media opportunities for London Zoo.
* Create a programme of impactful news stories for London Zoo which encourage potential visitors at key periods and maintain awareness of our conservation and science work. Manage press conferences, media launches, briefings and photo calls on a regular basis.
* Develop and run publicity campaigns using owned and earned channels to maximise reach and impact, and ensure London Zoo’s news output is adequately and accurately represented on our websites and social media channels.
* Contribute to daily outputs required of the ZSL press team, including daily news reports, responding to incoming press queries and creating internal reports about media coverage.
* Develop strong working relationships with key members of ZSL staff – particularly with the London Zoo senior management team, veterinary teams and animal keeping teams.
* Foster and develop ZSL’s relationships with key national and local journalists, including TV production units and long lead magazines. Maintain up-to-date contact lists of key media in keeping with ZSL’s GDPR policy.
* Identify and approach appropriate high-profile individuals to secure their support and endorsement, with the aim of securing press coverage for ZSL, for both opportunistic media outreach and long-term campaigns.
* Ensure any negative coverage is swiftly and effectively responded to, and work with the ZSL media manager to produce position statements on any controversial issues, ensuring they are regularly kept up to date.
* Maintain awareness and understanding of issues on the horizon and plan effective mitigation strategies to protect London Zoo’s good reputation.
* Deputise to the media manager when absent or otherwise engaged, to ensure that outputs and duties of the PR and Publishing team continue seamlessly.
* Ensure that communications colleagues are kept abreast of media plans for London Zoo so that our outreach can be factored into emails to supporters, internal communications and marketing campaigns.
* Work with ZSL’s public affairs officer to stay abreast of policy work related to zoos and keeping of animals, to ensure that the ZSL press team is equipped at all times with up-to-date information and responses for media queries.

The duties and responsibilities described are not a comprehensive list and additional tasks

may be assigned from time to time that are in line with the level of the role.

**Person Specification**

|  |
| --- |
| Experience |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Essential | * An excellent writer and enthusiastic storyteller, the senior press officer is a self-starter with a strong news-nose and has a thorough understanding of the needs and workings of national, local and online media.
* The post requires a strong track record in producing a programme of high impact media releases. It would ideally require experience of working as a journalist or similar in a busy news environment.
* Experience of working with content creators and creating multimedia content.
* Experience of managing multiple stakeholders, and excellent project management skills.
 |
| Desirable  | * Having firsthand experience of working as a journalist.
* Educated to degree level or equivalent.
* An interest in conservation is desirable, and the post-holder will be able to demonstrate understanding of how media outreach can be used to affect behavioural or policy-change.
 |

|  |
| --- |
| Knowledge and skills |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Essential | * A flexible approach to work, and an ability to adapt to last-minute changes to plans will stand the Senior Press Officer for London Zoo in good stead, and they will take part in a duty-rota for covering out of hours press queries related to the full breadth of ZSL’s work and be expected to take an active role in delivering ZSL’s wider communications objectives.
* Expected to be up to date with global events, and able to recognise opportune news moments, the ideal candidate will be seeking out opportunities for ZSL to provide media commentary or share expertise on relevant topics – while being considerate of any risks associated with doing so.
* Innovation is one of ZSL’s core values, and creativity is a key attribute of the postholder. Working in a competitive news and media environment, with ZSL’s current profile and relatively small budgets means there is a strong need to be original, impactful and distinctive.
* The post will be expected to be able to interface at all levels across the organisation in order to maintain excellent internal awareness and buy-in for the press and publication team’s work, as well as to source content and produce the necessary media schedule.
* The post holder will be responsible for managing ZSL’s relationships with a variety of important stakeholders, from senior journalists to high-profile individuals and celebrities, and is expected to maintain ZSL’s positive reputation with these.
* The post holder will have excellent relationship management skills and be able to maintain key links with relevant policy and external partners.
 |
| Desirable | * Advanced skills in using MS office packages, specifically Excel and PowerPoint or equivalent software packages will be acceptable.
 |

|  |
| --- |
| Additional requirements |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Essential | * Flexibility is essential to this post. This is required at a strategic level; where media plans need to account for short notice revisions, as challenges or opportunities arise.
* It is also required on a day-to-day basis in the management of internal and external contacts, with autonomous decision making placed on the role-holder to prioritise requests from high profile journalists, individuals or influencers.
* Due to the nature of the role, the majority of the working week needs to be spent onsite at London Zoo – to oversee and manage planned and reactive media activity in the Zoo, maintain important relationships and ensure awareness of content opportunities, news and developments.
* The position will be based at the ZSL offices in London Zoo, where Tuesdays are a fixed day in the office for the entire ZSL communications department. The senior press officer sits in a department with a hybrid working culture, and working remotely is possible when onsite media commitments allow. The job may also require working away from the main office, either at Whipsnade Zoo or ZSL’s field projects, or in meetings at other locations where media services are based.
* Working hours is a basic 37.5 hours; however the job will require occasional evening and weekend work. Occasional travel may be required to support ZSL’s media outreach at field sites or conferences.
* A duty phone rota is in operation within the Press Office to cover weekend press enquiries. This involves being on call on a work mobile phone one in approximately every four or five weekends.
* A driving licence is desirable.
* Strong commitment to creating a culture that lives ZSL values and commitment to safeguarding, equality and diversity (collaborative, inspiring, inclusive, innovative, impactful and ethical).
* To comply with and promote Health and Safety policies and procedures.
 |