

Our ref: PM  
Your ref:  
Date: April 2019

Dear Applicant

Re: Communications Officer Post

Thank you for your interest in SWLLC and the post of Communications Officer. Please find below a copy of the job description and person specification as well as a tender. We are open to suggestions of a part time role as well as delivery through a contracted service. As the role is a new one, we hope the ideal candidate would grow into the role and set their own agenda within the agreed framework. We have initial funding for a year but want this project and work to continue beyond this initial period.

SWLLC is the largest Law Centre and provides a wide-ranging service helping thousands of people at difficult moments in their lives. We are excited by this role to help us grow publicly. We are looking for your help to lead communicating the message of our work clearly. We don't currently actively promote our work and impact enough, but what we do for example on Social Media is well received. The cuts to funding and the legal aid cuts mean the environment we work in is really tough but now we feel it is time to start selling more positively what we do and the value of Law Centres rather than continuing to focus on the negative aspects of the cuts.

Law Centres have previously struggled to get into the news but recently this has changed with the Guardian choosing the LCN as their chosen charity and the Labour Party actively campaigning and promising more Law Centres. Further to this, the Law Centres Network will be launching a national campaign promoting law centres with a hope to money for all law centres. We therefore feel this is an exciting time to develop or communications.

We expect this new role to significantly raise the profile of the law centre with local and national stakeholders, potential funders and the general public so that it becomes an integral part of what the law centre does.

As well as our day time services, the law centre works with many Firms and individual solicitors to deliver one of the largest pro bono clinic services in the country providing free legal advice. Many people have volunteered with the law centre during part of their legal career. We have around 500 legal volunteers per year. We feel that we would gain by keeping touch with all these volunteers and creating an alumni base for the organisation.

We are currently working with a range of volunteers to help deliver our communications and develop our website and newsletter, we are looking for someone to enhance and develop these with some more structured guidance.

This is an opportunity for the right candidate to help to develop our communications a strategy, build on our good reputation with stakeholders, supporters and funders as well as making an impact with the public. You will be supported Senior Management Team, but you will also have autonomy to think creatively and put your own stamp on the challenge.

We have an initial budget of £25,000 available and we welcome credible ideas on how to make this work.

If you share our commitment to address injustice, discrimination, inequality and poverty then this could be the right job for you.

**The application process:**

To apply, please submit your CV of no more than 3 sides, and a letter of application of no more than 3 sides of A4 paper. Your application should address what we are looking for in our job description and person specification. You should tell us how you would propose to deliver this role through either employment through providing a service

Please return this by e-mail to [recruitment@swllc.org](mailto:recruitment@swllc.org).

**The deadline for applications is 11am Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2019** . Applications received after the closing date & time will not be considered.

We intend to invite the successful candidates to **interview on Friday 10<sup>th</sup> May 2019**

If you would like an informal chat about the post, you can email me on [Patrick.marples@swllc.org](mailto:Patrick.marples@swllc.org) to arrange a convenient time to speak.

We look forward to receiving your application.

Yours faithfully,

Patrick Marples  
Chief Executive

**Job Description: Communications Officer**

**Hours of Work** : Flexible and to be negotiated as part of the application process

**Responsible to Senior Management Team**

**Salary** : Up to £25,000 per annum depending on experience and if employed an employee pension contribution of 4% salary £21,000 (pro rata of £35,000 per annum) – 21 hours per week

**Holidays** : If employed -18 days plus bank holidays

**Location** : Croydon with travel to our other offices and locations

**Duration** : Initial Term 12 month period with the ability for further extension if it can be shown to have a significant impact. Probationary period for employment or contract 6 months

**About South West London Law Centres**

South West London Law Centres (SWLLC) is a charity and community based, legal practice working to relieve poverty, suffering and distress for the most disadvantaged and vulnerable members of our communities, in need of help at difficult times in their lives by resolving the legal problems they face. Our support ranges from free legal advice through to representation in social welfare law at courts and tribunals. Alongside a busy daytime service of end to end casework, with the support of city law firms and local solicitors we coordinate hundreds of professional volunteers in running fifteen free evening legal advice clinics across South West London each week.

We are able to trace our roots back to 1974, SWLLC itself was formed by a merger of four law centres in 2004 and now covers six London boroughs: Wandsworth, Merton, Croydon, Sutton, Kingston and Richmond. People also come from further afield to request our expert help.

We provide 3 main services directly assisting 8,098 people in 2017/18. and received over 60,000 calls for assistance. Our website had over one million hits (1,118,924)– with nearly half of hits visiting pages relating to our pro bono legal advice clinics.

- Case work and representation in social welfare law covering, community care, debt, employment, housing, immigration & asylum, public law and in a limited way welfare rights - Typical case - “Our immigration solicitor has just reunited a severely disabled client with his 4 children after 7 years!! Our client is understandably overjoyed. Just another day at SWLLC” (we worked on 2,108 cases last year)
- Provision of emergency representation in housing cases as part of the county court duty solicitor scheme in Wandsworth, Kingston and Croydon County Courts - Typical

case – “Today one of our housing solicitors helped 3 tenants with a combined total of £14k in rent arrears and social landlords. Each with a bailiff appointment. All were women, and all had children. Every single one stopped their evictions today at court with the help of our solicitors” (last year we assisted 1714 clients)

- Around 15 evening and day time pro bono clinics each week covering a range of civil issues. “An investigation into a Sec 21 Notice for possession found that a deposit hadn’t been protected allowing the client to remain and the debt team to resolve his debts” (4,276 people assisted were assisted last year)

We are funded through legal aid, grants, corporate donations and in a limited way now charge for some services in employment and immigration

Find out more on our website about our impact: [www.swllc.org](http://www.swllc.org)

### **About the Role**

Working closely with the Senior Management Team, our Trustee Board and other staff members, you will input into the development of a revised communications strategy. You will work on messaging and positioning to attract new supporters and funding opportunities. You will also attract new volunteers to help with this role

### **About You**

You will be highly organised and eager to support the charity and their cause, supporting those with legal issues. You will be independent in the role and be joining a wonderful team and you will have the opportunity to be creative and offer ideas. You will have experience of working in charities and you will be a problem solver and collaborator, with a willingness to try new tasks and to lead SWLLC’s communications strategies. You will have gained some experience and are now ready to take on your next challenge. You understand the difference between the process and results of raising the profile of an organisation. As a member of a small team, you will be ready to make your own mark and use your creativity and drive to take us to the next level in our communication endeavors.

This creative and fast-paced role is ideally suited to a proactive and organised with a solid understanding of access to justice and a passion for creating captivating communications, who is looking to build up their experience in the sector.

### **Main tasks**

1. To work with the Senior Management Team to redevelop and implement a communications strategy to communicate with staff, stakeholders and a supporter’s base and the public.
2. To co-ordinate, working with other staff to collate and disseminate the stories, the work and impact of the law centre and to regularly write blogs and promotional

pieces on our website and newsletters to promote our work and our achievements.

3. Help the law centre tell the story from the clients' point of view and the impact it has on their lives
4. To review and update our website and how we use various forms of social media.
5. To develop and keep up to date marketing materials on the law centre and make sure it is disseminated to relevant stakeholders and referring agencies
6. To get an article about the law centre in the local press at least quarterly and nationally annually
7. To produce our annual report, prepare and set up our AGM
8. To look at the options and benefits of getting patrons for law centre, and assist in the search and recruitment of them
9. To get us shortlisted at least annually for an award.
10. To set up and develop a supporter's base initially targeting our supporter firms, all those who have volunteered for SWLLC; ex members of staff and trustees etc before targeting and attracting members of the public. The aim is to grow support for the law centre's work.
11. To work with volunteers to get the message across – to help develop and get the stories to promote the law centre.
12. To assist the Senior Management Team in providing evidence from the work you do for other external grants and bids.
13. Keep abreast of policy and practice that is relevant to our areas of work
14. Attend external network events.
15. From time to time you will be asked to work outside of usual working hours including attending quarterly trustee board meetings or sub committees

### **Person Specification**

#### **Essential Requirements**

1. Excellent interpersonal and communication skills, and proven ability to forge new relationships.
2. Excellent written skills and proven ability to get the message across in different formats to attract a wide-ranging audience
3. Evidence of ability to get results in communications rather than to follow a process for it – including evidence of your impact in raising the profile of an organisation and segments of the market you attracted
4. Experience of project management – ideally developing a supporters' base or growing coverage in a segment of the market.
5. Experience in managing website content and good skills in Wordpress or other content management system as well as skills in image editing software
6. Experience in media relations
7. Commitment to our mission and objectives
8. Energy, drive and a positive attitude
9. Highly organised and able to manage own workload

10. Flexibility and willingness to try new tasks
11. Team player and able to work as part of a wider organisation including disseminating work through volunteers