

Candidate Information

Position: Director of Public Engagement
School/Department: Vice-Chancellor's Office
Reference: 21/109000
Closing Date: Monday 9 August 2021
Salary: An attractive remuneration package, commensurate with the seniority and responsibilities of the role, will be provided.
Anticipated Interview Date: Early September 2021

Job Purpose:

Acting as a specialist advisor, the Strategic Engagement Director will provide direct specialist support and advice to the Vice-Chancellor and University Operating Board (UOB)/University Executive Board (UEB) on the University's strategic engagement agenda, nationally and internationally.

This is a strategic collaborative role and the post holder will be the Institutional lead for:

- The University's high level strategic engagement, lobbying and advocacy initiatives, particularly, but not exclusively, with governments (often at ministerial level), government departments, arms-length bodies and other major stakeholders, to meet the needs of the University
- Supporting the development and delivery of strategic communications to complement this engagement, with an overall purpose of growing the University's reputation and relevance, nationally and internationally, supporting the delivery of the University's strategic ambitions.

The post holder will be responsible for the over-arching strategic leadership of the University's strategic engagement plan. They will work with members of UOB/UEB and with all Schools and Directorates to ensure a co-ordinated approach is adopted in moving forward ambitious strategic engagement plans.

The post holder will be an organisational leader responsible for managing a team of professional specialists within the Public Engagement team.

Major Duties:

1. Develop and lead the University's overall strategic engagement plan, nationally and internationally and be responsible for its successful implementation and delivery in order to achieve the University's corporate vision and ambitions.
2. Provide strategic direction, leadership and oversight for Public Engagement on civic, governmental, political and business engagement.
3. Working closely with the Vice Chancellor, provide specialist advice and guidance to him and UOB/UEB on international, national and regional policy and its potential impact to the University. Take the lead on initiatives and manage these through to fruition.
4. Identify, prioritise and address the key challenges, risks and opportunities in the external environment, providing context, assessment analysis and developing options and potential initiatives for the University's response, including areas of a sensitive and secure nature.
5. On behalf of the University and in particular the Vice Chancellor, act as the University's key liaison and partner with a range of internal and external stakeholders on national and international platforms.
6. Work in collaboration with the PVC Internationalisation, colleagues in Marketing, Recruitment, Communications and Internationalisation and Development and Alumni Relations Office specifically and across the University to deliver effective strategic engagement plans and ensure maximisation of strategic impact.
7. Lead and manage the Public Engagement team including responsibility for professional development.
8. Responsible for financial and budget management of the Public Engagement team.
9. Lead on developing and managing communications plans complementary to specific strategic engagement activity.
10. Support the Vice Chancellor, or nominee, at various external representative and sector bodies, i.e government committees etc and any other meetings as required.

11. Represent and champion Queen's University experience at local and global events.
12. Develop and lead on horizon scanning, stakeholder mapping, research, analysis, and development projects, to support the delivery of the University's vision.
13. Undertake any other duties commensurate with the role and level in the organisation, as directed.

Stakeholder Management:

1. Work with the Vice-Chancellor to determine how all strategic engagement initiatives are best implemented.
2. Advise and support UOB/UEB.
3. Communicate effectively and work collaboratively with senior leaders in all Schools and Directorates within Queen's, in particular, DARO to identify and deliver new strategic engagement opportunities.
4. Represent the University externally in sector groups and in negotiations. Extensive engagement with The Northern Ireland Executive, Legislative Assembly and Departments. Councils and agencies; Business, Government (UK & NI), Voluntary, Civic Society and Higher Education sectors, both locally and globally, in the development of an ambitious strategic engagement plan.

Essential Criteria:

1. Honours degree (or equivalent qualification).
2. Substantial relevant senior level experience gained in a public affairs or a related role at board or senior leadership/executive management level gained within a high performing complex structure/ organisation.
3. Substantial relevant experience and a track record of networking and lobbying; establishing, brokering and building major strategic relationships with multiple external stakeholders and networks on a national and international platform.
4. Relevant experience of environmental scanning.
5. Relevant experience in financial and people management.
6. Proven leadership in managing and developing an effective team.
7. Experience of developing innovative solutions and the practical implementation of strategy.
8. Proven ability to develop effective relationships with key stakeholders both internally and externally and influencing change through engagement up to and including government level.
9. Proven ability to plan, implement and deliver successful project and change management initiatives.
10. Excellent oral and written skills including a well-developed critical and analytical approach to reviewing documentation.
11. Articulate, confident, able to deal with difficult situations and the ability to negotiate and influence at all levels.
12. Proven ability to undertake a representational role at the highest level both internally and externally, and to communicate with people and organisations.
13. Prepared to take ownership for achieving ambitious goals.
14. A commitment to professionalism and excellence, drive, initiative, energy, enthusiasm, resilience.
15. Ability to successfully manage competing demands on time and resource and to delegate when appropriate.
16. Excellent team ethos – demonstrable ability to work on own initiative and as part of a team.
17. Demonstrate clear alignment with and commitment to the Nolan Principles and the University's core values.
18. Ability to work flexibly to meet demands of the role and respond to unpredictable developments in the external environment, delivering to short deadlines.
19. Ability to meet the business travel requirements of the post (full valid driving license and access to a car for business purposes or ability to fulfil the mobility requirements of the post) and willingness to undertake travel including international travel by any means, as required in accordance with the needs of the post.

Desirable Criteria:

1. Postgraduate qualification in a relevant subject.
2. Professional qualification/membership in a relevant area.
3. Experience of strategic communications including development of strategic communications plans.
4. Experience working with government and legislative processes.
5. Experience of working at a high level on public affairs projects within the Higher Education sector.
6. Experience of working in a large, complex organisation.
7. Demonstrable understanding of higher education within a local and national context.