MERTON COLLEGE, OXFORD

Alumni Communications Officer

Further Particulars

Job Title: Alumni Communications Officer
Location: Merton College
Department: Development Office
Contract Type: Permanent
Responsible to: Development Director & Fellow

Merton College
Merton College was founded in 1264, and is the third oldest College in Oxford. It is well known for the outstanding achievements of its undergraduates, and the high performance of its graduates. Its buildings and grounds are widely acknowledged as among the most beautiful in Oxford. It has a strong sense of identity and is known to be a very friendly College. The College has some 300 undergraduates and a similar number of graduate students. It has a Governing Body of over 70 Fellows, supported by more than a hundred staff.

The post holder will join the Development Office at a particularly exciting time in the College’s history, not long after the College’s 750th anniversary year, when £30 million was raised through the Sustaining Excellence campaign, and shortly after the arrival of a new Warden, Professor Irene Tracey, in October 2019. Merton is currently setting out clear goals for the years ahead: to attract the most outstanding people in the world, as undergraduates, graduates and Fellows, to serve the common good and is working on an updated Case for Support.

More information on Merton College can be found on the website www.merton.ox.ac.uk.

Main Purpose of the Role
This is a central position within the Development Office team, requiring an innovative and creative communications professional with varied skills in marketing, publications and communications and a strong interest in engaging a diverse and dedicated alumni community around the world.

The post holder will be responsible for overseeing all communications to Merton’s alumni (print, online, email and social media) and for liaising in this area with colleagues in the Development Office and across the College. The post holder will also be responsible for managing the College’s major alumni print publications, which include Postmaster and The Merton Record, the Donor Report, bespoke print projects and occasional newsletters. He/she will also edit the termly e-newsletter, The Merton Messenger, and oversee alumni and fundraising content on the College website.

The successful candidate will be highly motivated and have an interest in all areas of advancement, including fundraising. He/she will need to demonstrate a close attention to detail – particularly in relation to the origination and proofing of copy – a sound understanding of the issues relating to data protection, and an openness and flexibility to opportunities for communicating the activities of Mertonians and Merton College.
Key relationships

- Development Director & Fellow (line manager)
- Members of the Development team
- Fellows, College Officers and College staff
- Alumni volunteers, including Year Representatives, members of the Merton Society Council and others
- Donors, alumni and friends of the College

Main duties and responsibilities

To be responsible for overseeing all communications from the Development Office to Merton alumni and to liaise with colleagues in the Development Office and elsewhere in co-ordinating communications.

1. Publications

The Alumni Communications Officer is responsible for managing and producing publications for alumni and friends of Merton College. There are currently two major annual publications (*Postmaster and The Merton Record* in September, the *Donor Report* in January/February) and a number of smaller projects throughout the year, including the College’s official Christmas cards. Digital copies of these publications can be found online at [www.merton.ox.ac.uk](http://www.merton.ox.ac.uk).

a. To manage all aspects of each publication, from commissioning, editing and proofing copy to liaising with designers, printers and mailing houses
b. To ensure that publications are delivered within the agreed budget
c. To plan and run tightly-organised production schedules
d. To formulate original content ideas for publications, working with the Development Director, Web & Media Officer and Development Office team
e. To create relevant content for publications throughout the year, including writing copy and taking photographs as records of events or activities
f. To conduct face-to-face, telephone and email interviews with alumni and others
g. To commission and edit copy from students, academics, colleagues and volunteers
h. To commission official photography and co-ordinate photoshoots with students, academics, staff and alumni
i. To ensure that the production of publications runs to schedule and that design is in line with the College Design Guidelines.

2. Communications and Digital Media

a. To oversee all non-print communications from the Development Office, including (but not limited to) email, website and social media
b. To produce and design in-house the termly email newsletter, *The Merton Messenger*, a round-up of College, Development, alumni and events news and to send this to alumni via DARS
c. To assist with the production and design of other email communications, working especially with the Alumni Relations Officer (event publicity), the Deputy Development Director and the Development Officer (fundraising communications and appeals)
d. To organise and promote the College’s alumni social media groups – currently LinkedIn and Facebook – in liaison with the Alumni Relations Officer and others
e. To work with the Web & Media Officer and the Development Operations & Data Manager to maintain the College’s online presence via its website, DARS NetCommunity and social media accounts (with a particular focus on the alumni and development pages)
f. To attend and document particular College events and lectures through social media and photography

g. To take the lead on video projects relating to the work of the Development Office (e.g. the Christmas video message for alumni) and to manage relationships with film production companies, ensuring that projects are delivered to specification, on schedule and within budget

h. To manage and curate the Development Office’s digital media assets, ensuring these are both accessible and organised

3. General print and communications

a. To act as the guardian of the College’s corporate visual identity and to ensure that this is maintained by colleagues across the College

b. To support colleagues with design and print projects and provide guidance as instructed by the Development Director. Such projects are likely to be produced in-house using Adobe InDesign and may include (but are not limited to):
   i. Event posters
   ii. Advertisements
   iii. Advertising events brochures and souvenir programmes
   iv. Fundraising appeal cards and brochures

c. To work with the Development Co-ordinator on the selection, branding and production of College merchandise

d. To liaise with colleagues and volunteers at MC3 (the Merton College Charitable Corporation in the US) on the design and print of materials for events and alumni in North America

e. To research and book advertising, both online and in print, as required

4. Volunteer management

a. To manage the Alumni Year Representatives group (over 50 alumni) in liaison with the Chair and the Development Director

b. To schedule, plan and attend the annual Year Representatives meeting in College

c. To co-ordinate and facilitate newsgathering and contributions from Year Representatives each year for inclusion in *Postmaster and The Merton Record*

d. To identify and recruit enthusiastic Year Representatives where there are vacancies

e. To build a sense of community within the Year Representatives group

5. Other

a. To assist in updating and maintaining good quality alumni data, using the DARS database (shared with the University), including liaising with the Development Officer and Development Operations & Data Manager on regular alumni surveys

b. To maintain records and metrics on the reach of communications activities for the purposes of benchmarking and impact assessment

c. To take an active role in the Development Office by contributing to wider departmental plans and strategy as appropriate

d. To be available to work flexibly in order to attend events and meetings outside of normal working hours, as required

e. To undertake any other duties that may reasonably be requested by the Development Director appropriate to the level of the post
Person Specification: Skills, Qualifications and Experience

Essential

- Strong self-motivation and the ability to work as a good team player
- Robust organisational skills and a high level of attention to detail, with the ability to prioritise in a fast-moving environment, to manage multiple tasks and to work calmly under pressure while meeting tight deadlines
- Excellent use of English for written and oral communications, with a highly-developed sense of grammar and the ability to vary style and tone of voice appropriately according to context
- Experience of editing and proof-reading complex documents
- Excellent sense of graphic design and photographic manipulation skills
- Good knowledge and experience of print production
- Excellent IT skills, including experience of working with HTML, web content management systems and email marketing tools, and competence with spreadsheets and databases (preferably DARS)
- A confident and friendly approach, and the ability to engage and work successfully with a variety of different constituencies, both internally (Fellows, staff and students) and externally (alumni and friends of the College)

Desirable

- Educated to degree level or equivalent professional experience
- Excellent Adobe InDesign and Photoshop skills / Experience of using Adobe Illustrator
- Knowledge and/or experience of the University of Oxford or Higher Education in general
- Experience of recruiting and working with volunteers

Location

The position is based at Merton College, Oxford, with the requirement to attend events and undertake meetings elsewhere in the UK, primarily in London.

Salary and benefits

The salary offered for full-time appointment to this job will be in the range £28,000 to £33,000 depending on qualifications and experience. There is an annual ‘cost-of-living’ salary review, which normally takes place in the summer each year. In addition to the normal English bank and public holidays the post-holder will be entitled to 30 working days’ holiday.

The appointment is subject to satisfactory completion of a six-month trial period, during which the notice period will be one week on either side. Once the appointment has been confirmed, the notice period will be 8 weeks on either side.

The post holder is eligible for membership of the University of Oxford Staff Pension Scheme (OSPS), which is a contributory scheme, and free medical insurance. Meals in College are provided free of charge when on duty.

Application Process

Those wishing to apply for this post should complete the online application at www.merton.ox.ac.uk/about-merton/vacancies and upload the following documents by 12:00 noon on Monday 27 January 2020:

- A detailed covering letter outlining their motivation for applying and how their skills and experience equip them to undertake the role.
- A CV.
- An Equal Opportunities Recruitment Monitoring form. The information collected on the equal opportunities recruitment monitoring form does **not** form part of the selection process and will **not** be circulated to the selection panel. It will be used solely to monitor the effectiveness of the College’s Single Equality Scheme which is published at [www.merton.ox.ac.uk/about/college-policies](http://www.merton.ox.ac.uk/about/college-policies).

It is anticipated that interviews will be held in the **week commencing 3 February 2020**.

For an informal discussion about the role before application please contact Dr Duncan Barker, Development Director & Fellow, on +44(0)1865 276307 or duncan.barker@merton.ox.ac.uk.

This appointment will be determined only by personal merit and the application of criteria related to the duties of the post. No applicant will be treated less favourably than another because of their sex, marital status, racial group, disability, age, religion and beliefs or sexual orientation.

**Merton College is an equal opportunities employer**

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