

JOB DESCRIPTION

Job title: Head of Partnerships and Engagement (Updated Dec 2024)

Hours: Full time (35 hours per week)

Salary range: £50,694- £ 56,921 p.a.

Contract length: Permanent (with initial 6-month probationary period). Secondments may be considered (minimum period 2 years).

Reports to: Chief Executive

Line manages: Membership, Communications and IT Manager

Location: Hybrid with three days a week in office

The Association operates internationally, and some travel and overnight stays of varying lengths will be expected. Occasionally, travel and work may fall outside Monday to Friday working and there is no additional remuneration available as this is reflected in the salary.

THE REGIONAL STUDIES ASSOCIATION

The RSA is the global community for regional and urban research, development and policy. As a learned society for regional studies, it provides an authoritative voice for researchers, students and practitioners from disciplines including economics, geography, political science, planning, urban sociology, transport planning and other fields. The RSA delivers its charitable aims through knowledge exchange and policy engagement activities, its portfolio of journals and publications, its programme of conferences and events and its worldwide territorial and research networks. The RSA also runs a grant funding programme and recognises good practice in regional studies through its awards. It is an inclusive, diverse and environmental responsible organisation.

OVERALL PURPOSE OF THE POST

This is a key role within the RSA, responsible for developing and leading strategies to grow the number and value of our partnerships and engagements, our reach, reputation and impact, and our member community.

The post holder will work closely with colleagues, volunteers and trustees to foster relationships, partnerships and collaborations with individuals, networks and organisations across the regional and urban research, practice and policy sectors, in line with the Association's objectives, priorities and values.

Identifying and cultivating business development and income generation opportunities, their work will make a demonstrable contribution to the sustainable financial growth of the Association.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Engagement leadership

Regional Studies Association (Reg Charity No. 1084165; Company No 4116288)

- Advocate for the RSA and for the importance of regional research, complementing the Chief Executive, Chair and President in their respective advocacy roles.
- Proactively nurture and sustain partnerships and relationships with individuals, networks and organisations across the regional and urban research, practice and policy sectors.
- Engage effectively at all levels including with senior figures and decision-makers in government and non-governmental organisations within the UK, European Union and internationally.
- Ensure engagements effectively promote knowledge and appreciation of the RSA and regional research, leading to demonstrable influence on regional policy and practice.
- Enable the RSA to seize engagement and partnership opportunities by maintaining knowledge of trends and developments across the sector.

2. Partnership development

- Play a lead role in identifying, cultivating, securing and managing effective and impactful partnerships with networks, organisations and consortia within and beyond the regional and urban research, practice and policy sectors.
- Working closely with the Chief Executive, scope and develop new opportunities for partnerships, collaborations, joint projects and sponsorships by preparing business cases, funding proposals, project bids and supporting documentation.
- Ensure partnerships are developed in line with strategic objectives, add value to the work of the Association and maintain an appropriate balance between financial performance, organisational values and charitable objects.
- Where appropriate, lead and manage projects and partnerships, onboarding operations and delivery teams and ensuring initiatives meet key performance indicators.

3. Membership development

- Engage with RSA members, prospective members, partners and stakeholders, understanding what they value and how the Association can best support them.
- Working closely with the Chief Executive and Membership, Communications and IT Manager, utilise market and member insights to develop the membership proposition in order to maintain the value and relevance of the RSA to regional and urban researchers, practitioners and policymakers.
- Work collaboratively with colleagues to implement and monitor effective marketing and communication campaigns to recruit and retain organisational and individual members.
- Working closely with the Membership, Communications and IT Manager, develop the work of RSA territorial networks by forging productive relationships with network leaders, supporting international membership development and extending the reach and impact of networks on the membership and wider community.

4. Organisational and strategic leadership

- As part of the RSA management team, contribute to the RSA's overall operations, planning and strategic and business development.
- Working with the management team, analyse market intelligence and stakeholder feedback to identify and develop valuable and sustainable services for member and others.

- Attend RSA and RSA Europe Board meetings as required, preparing and presenting appropriate reports on activity performance and progress.
- Deputise for the Chief Executive as required and be prepared to step up as Acting Chief Executive should the circumstances require it and the Board request it.

GENERAL DUTIES

- Contribute to the effective management of finances, suppliers and contractors, budgets and risks in line with internal controls and external regulatory and legal compliance.
- Line manage reporting staff and support their performance and personal development.
- Work closely with cross-functional teams, trustees and volunteers, building effective relationships to ensure alignment and support for development initiatives.
- Support a culture of continuous improvement by providing feedback from members and partners and suggestions for improvements or new products and services.
- Contribute to RSA communications, publications and events activity as required.
- Contribute to working groups and other project work as required, including producing papers and reports.
- Make full use of all information and communication technologies to meet the requirements of the role and to promote organisational effectiveness.
- Undertake national and international travel as required, supporting events, partnerships and collaborations.
- Any other duties as may reasonably be required within the remit of this post.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Education and training	Essential	Desirable
Educated to degree level or equivalent experience	✓	
Post -graduate or management qualification in business or related discipline		✓
Experience and Knowledge		
Demonstrable record of developing and maintaining third-party engagements, relationships and partnerships	✓	
Experience of developing and delivering engagement plans to drive organisational reputation and growth	✓	
Good knowledge of government policies and programmes for knowledge exchange and innovation		✓
Track record of project bidding and/or contract negotiation	✓	
Expertise in customer journey mapping		✓
Experience of working across complex, multi-partner programmes or of interacting with senior stakeholders in UK and European institutions		✓
Good knowledge CRM systems and the use of digital channels to market professional services	✓	
Experience of business development planning and managing budgets	✓	
Knowledge of professional membership, charity or HE settings		✓
Skills		
Strategically minded with a practical hands-on approach	✓	
Excellent communications and interpersonal skills and ability to represent RSA externally in UK and internationally	✓	
Negotiation, commercial and contract management skills	✓	
Excellent self, team and project management skills	✓	
Strong numeracy and analytical skills to generate market and customer intelligence and insights	✓	
Good level of IT literacy, including the use of CRM systems	✓	
Personal abilities		
Initiative, entrepreneurship and drive	✓	
Relationship-building, collaboration and networking skills but with ability to work alone and under pressure	✓	
Champions service excellence and achievement of goals	✓	
Convincing advocate and representative for the RSA with empathy for its vision and goals	✓	
Able to travel with overnight stays in UK and internationally	✓	
Proficient in one or more languages other than English		✓