Public Engagement Officer

Job advert

20/10/2023

Do you believe in the power of data to improve people’s lives and know that working with the public is vital to our mission? Research Data Scotland needs you!

Are you a strong communicator with experience of developing and delivering content for multiple audiences? We’re offering a brilliant opportunity to work at the cutting edge of data research in Scotland. Working with Scottish Government, Scottish Centre for Administrative Data Research (SCADR) and Research Data Scotland (RDS), we’re seeking an engagement professional who has experience of developing and delivering successful consultations and an understanding of how to engage with relevant groups.

# About us

Research Data Scotland (RDS) is a charity set up by the Scottish public sector and leading universities. We help researchers find and make use of data that can improve the lives of people in Scotland. Working in partnership, we do this by widening the range of data available, creating new data assets and providing a single point of contact for safe, secure and effective access to public data in a trustworthy manner.

Data is often locked away in lots of individual systems, across many different organisations, and isn’t in a format that makes access or integration easy. We can help researchers to unlock the potential of this data by giving them information and advice that speeds up and simplifies their work.

RDS aims to provide a step change in the service to researchers, whilst maintaining the high standards of information governance and data security already in place. We aim to work as openly as possible, maintaining standards in transparency and ethics. Our focus is on providing a streamlined service for researchers, as well as extending the range of data available through the service, particularly in the areas of Covid-19, NHS imaging, geospatial data, children and justice services.

Our partners include: Scottish Government, Public Health Scotland, National Records of Scotland (NRS), and the Universities of Aberdeen, Dundee, Edinburgh and Glasgow. We work closely with the national and regional safe havens. And we are in contact with other organisations in Scotland and across the UK in the data research sector, including public sector, research and commercial bodies.

# About the job

Public engagement is at the core of RDS's work and a commitment has been made to involve the public in the changes RDS is bringing to the data landscape as well as to carry out public engagement activities around data more broadly.

The Public Engagement Officer will lead and deliver specific work programmes related to RDS’s public engagement strategy and work closely with the Public Engagement Manager. This post will be varied and a mix of working with colleagues in RDS, our partner organisations and members of the public including the Scotland Talks Data public panel.

There is a strong focus on public engagement, relationship management, project management and creativity. For instance, you will facilitate and create content for our public engagement initiatives such as the Scotland Talks Data public panel, public consultations on funded projects as well as at public facing events such as festivals. You will also support on user engagement activities, aimed at involving our stakeholders and users in the changes RDS are making. You’ll be an important member of our team, sharing your expertise with colleagues and partner organisations, as well as independently leading on activities.

# About you

You are a self-starter, with experience of working with the public and potentially other groups. You are organised, like to stay ahead of the curve on sector trends and thrive on managing multiple projects with different deadlines. You are keen to deliver. You will have a keen interest in how data, research and innovation can transform services and improve society. You’ll also understand the importance of engaging the public on how we use data in research and get their input into our work and support transparency.

# Life at RDS

We are a small friendly and highly engaged team of people. We promote continuous learning and work hard to build an inclusive and supportive workplace culture. We live our values of; integrity, transparency, courage, collaboration and humility.

Our people typically work a 35-hour week, with hybrid working on offer from day one. You can choose to work flexibly from home or use one of our desks in the Bayes Centre in central Edinburgh. The whole RDS team meets one day per month in-person in Edinburgh or at an off-site away day in the Central Belt. Individual teams organise their own in-person days to collaborate, develop and socialise together.

We offer 33 days’ annual leave (including public holidays) and have no set closure days. We have a generous pension and enhanced pay for parental/adoption leave. This list of benefits is being added to as the organisation develops, and you can help shape it as part of the team. Our Culture Group helps us seek feedback from colleagues across the organisation to make RDS an even better place to work.

# Apply

We like to keep our application processes as simple and human-centred as we can.

To apply, we just need your CV and a cover letter outlining how your skills and experience match the job and person specification.

If you’re ready to apply, send your CV and covering letter to jobs@researchdata.scot Or email us for an informal chat about RDS and the role.

If we can make any adjustments to our standard application or selection process to make things easier for you, please let us know.

# Equal opportunities

Research Data Scotland is an Equal Opportunities employer that is committed to diversity and inclusion in the workplace. All our hiring decisions are based on merit, qualifications and business needs. We’d really appreciate you sending a completed [equalities monitoring form](https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https%3A%2F%2F60d35c09-b88c-4d02-8184-6a0c0438a7fa.usrfiles.com%2Fugd%2F60d35c_a1f635f43bf24b619bd55ea959af7e83.docx&wdOrigin=BROWSELINK) with your application, so we can ensure we are meeting our commitments.

# Other information

[Skills for Success](https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https%3A%2F%2F60d35c09-b88c-4d02-8184-6a0c0438a7fa.usrfiles.com%2Fugd%2F60d35c_ff9d527d8ee34d0db0d6fa40aa59adb3.doc&wdOrigin=BROWSELINK) and [Candidate Privacy Notice](https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https%3A%2F%2F60d35c09-b88c-4d02-8184-6a0c0438a7fa.usrfiles.com%2Fugd%2F60d35c_5185eb9161334891ba8fca98f32e9e59.docx&wdOrigin=BROWSELINK).

# Job description and person specification

Role Public Engagement Officer

Pay B2: £36,822- £43,443. RDS employees start at the first point on the scale. For roles where there are recognised recruitment difficulties or under other exceptional circumstances, a level of flexibility may be considered.

Hours 35 per week

Employment type 2-year fixed term contract. We are happy to discuss a secondment from similarly minded organisations providing you have prior agreement from your department director or line manager.

Closing date 12 November 2023

Reports to Public Engagement Manager

Direct reports Not applicable

## Responsibilities

**Managing the public panel**

* Supporting the planning of public consultations on Research Data Scotland work and external projects.
* Co-ordinating the 20+ participants of the Scotland Talks Data public panel to meet regularly.
* Capturing comprehensive notes from the meetings and using those to prepare reports for different stakeholders (internal and external).
* Facilitating sessions with the public panel.
* Preparing content and agendas for meetings.
* Liaising with speakers and participants beforehand to manage expectations and help refine content.
* Paying participants after the meeting (ordering vouchers).

**Supporting user engagement**

* Developing focus groups.
* Facilitating discussions.
* Capturing notes and preparing reports for internal stakeholders.
* Creating engaging material for the forums.
* Writing blog posts and website content on public engagement work at Research Data Scotland and on external projects.
* Preparing information for external agencies.
* Represent RDS on cross-organisation initiatives such as PEDRI.
* Supporting on other areas of engagement with stakeholders and key service users such as researchers and academics.

**Public Engagement**

* Develop talks/workshops/activities for public engagement events such as science festivals.
* Conducting desk-based research to support funding bid applications.
* Staying up to date with existing and current public engagement work in the sector.

**Representing RDS**

* Planning and organising RDS attendance at events and festivals.
* Attend conferences and external meetings to represent RDS.

## Person specification

### Knowledge, skills and experience

**Essential**

* Excellent written and verbal communications skills, as well as interpersonal and event management skills.
* Experience of producing and delivering effective and creative public engagement activities for a range of groups.
* Knowledge and understanding of public engagement practices, tools and techniques.
* The ability to build and maintain strong relationships with a large and varied group of internal and external stakeholders.
* Experience of working in an environment that attracts heavy public scrutiny.
* The ability to manage reactive work; prioritising and working to tight deadlines.
* Proficient IT skills - Microsoft suite etc.

**Desirable**

### Experience of facilitating public dialogue sessions.

### Experience of developing public-facing communications outputs.

### Experience working in a public engagement/science communication environment.

### Degree or other relevant qualification in science communication or public engagement, or equivalent professional experience.

### Key competencies

* Interpersonal Skills
* Communication and Engagement
* Analysis and use of evidence
* Relationship Management