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Communications Officer Application Pack

About the role and CLES

We are the Centre for Local Economies (CLES) – an independent economics think tank and charity. We work collaboratively across the UK and beyond to develop solutions to ensure economies are rooted in the places people call home. We are internationally recognised experts in Community Wealth Building, which we use to improve public services, strengthen social infrastructure, accelerate innovation and facilitate a just climate transition.

Now is an exciting time to join us. In 2026 we will celebrate our fortieth year, launch our new-look brand and website, and step up our news and advocacy profile. To help us achieve this, we are looking for a Communications Officer to join our team, based out of our Manchester office.

Reporting to the Associate Director of External Affairs and working collaboratively with the whole CLES team, you will help us give a voice to local economic transformation, through the delivery of our communications workstream. This will include creating engaging digital content, high quality publications, and inspiring events. In joining us, you will have the opportunity to become part of a small yet impactful team, hone your skills across the full suite of think tank external affairs activities, and have a tangible impact on improving local economies.

Who you are

Someone with strong communications and editorial skills

- You may have some experience of working in communications in-house for a charity, local or central government, a cooperative, campaign or other organisation, or perhaps you are a journalist. However you have gained your experience, you have a clear working understanding of what impactful communications and marketing looks like.
- You have the strong ability to proofread and edit using house style and brand guidelines, to a high degree of accuracy.
- You believe that clear, succinct writing is powerful and you know how to adapt messages to persuade different audiences.
- You are confident in supporting others to translate complex policy concepts into easily digestible messages.

Someone with fantastic design and digital skills

- You are interested in social media, audiences, trends and analytics and have exciting new ideas to use these to reach CLES's audiences.
- You are adept at working with digital systems like the Adobe Suite, Canva, Wordpress etc, and can use them to do everything from lay out reports, to displaying visual data on websites, to creating and editing video.
- You would be confident creating professional, engaging content for CLES's platforms.

Great at organising events

- Whether you have organised conferences, fundraisers, panel events, or a get together in your local community – you have the events-organising nous to build an audience, liaise with suppliers, and act on-the-spot when last minute events mean changes happen.

Interested in local economic policy, politics and current affairs and excited about the idea of doing things differently

- You care about economic justice, sustainability and CLES's mission to foster local economic resilience.
- You may have lived or learned experience of social injustice.

Open to learning, and developing and being a great team player

- You have brilliant interpersonal skills, and can deal with people at all levels in a professional manner, as a confident representative of our organisation.
- You can work creatively and kindly in a high-pressure environment, solving problems, prioritising a busy workload, and chipping into our small but impactful team.
- You love to learn and develop, and you are proactive about upgrading and honing your skills.

What you'll do

This is a varied and exciting role, and no two days will be the same. However, most of your time will be spent creating digital content and growing CLES's digital presence, producing beautifully designed, professional publications, and supporting the delivery of inspiring events. In more detail, here is an overview of what you will get up to:

Digital production

You will support CLES's digital presence, including creating graphics and video for social media, managing content on our website, and supporting colleagues to develop their own digital profile.

Design and publications

You will support the creation of our research outputs by proofreading, copyediting and designing reports, briefings and essays, readying them for publication. You will be an ambassador for our brand and house style, both within and outside the organisation.

Events

You will support our annual conference event (the Community Wealth Building Summit, held every year in June/July), as well as events at political party conferences, webinars or other one-off or programmatic events to support our work or strategic positioning. This will include tasks like booking and liaising with speakers and suppliers, building an audience, ordering refreshments and more.

Communications

You will work closely with the Associate Director of External Affairs to deliver CLES's communications workstream, with the opportunity to learn about media and supporting spokespeople.

Contributing to the CLES team

We are a small team and we all pitch in together to make things work. For example, some days we might need support to deliver quick turnaround blogs, whereas another we will need help preparing digital content for a major report launch. You certainly won't get bored!

Location

You will be based out of our Manchester office. We offer hybrid working but this post will require office attendance on at least one day per week.

Our offer to you

CLES is committed to equality of opportunity and welcomes applications from all sections of the community, and from applicants with a range of professional and lived experiences. As an organisation engaging in critical debate about a wide range of progressive policy issues, we value the creativity and range of perspectives that a diverse team can provide. In line with our values and our commitment to progressive employment practice, CLES operated a four day/full pay working week, having become one of the first think tanks in the UK to do so.

We are a disability confident employer and guarantee an interview to anyone who self-certifies as disabled who meets all the essential criteria. Please indicate if this applies to you in your cover letter.

The salary for this role is £32,000 FTE (based on our four day working week). We are open to applications for either full time or part time working. The part time salary for three days per week, would be pro-rated to £24,000 per year.

How to apply

Please apply for the role by submitting a cover letter (no more than one page) and a CV (no more than two pages long) to jobs@cles.org.uk. You should use the letter to explain what attracts you to the role and your suitability for it based on your skills and experience.

Please also ensure that you complete our [equal opportunities monitoring](#) form before submitting your application.

The deadline for applications is Monday 16th February 2026 at 9am. Interviews will be held on Monday 23rd February and will include a practical task.

For an informal and confidential discussion about the post, please contact Rosie Lockwood, Associate Director of External Affairs on rosielockwood@cles.org.uk.

