

Communication Officer (Global) Profile

Various Locations

Grade: Junior (P2), Mid (P3) and Senior (P4) Level Positions

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) is mandated to lead and coordinate international action to protect and assist refugees and other persons of concern. It is constantly seeking talented, compassionate candidates with high-integrity to strengthen its capacity to respond urgently to crises, and with the right skills. Given the nature of UNHCR's work, it is essential that its workforce has the right mix of skills and qualities to fulfil its mandate. In this regard, UNHCR is seeking to recruit leading communications professionals with a record in working at strategic level to be part of its high-profile global news teams based in Geneva and New York or out-posted in key regions.

Typical functions may include:

- Serving as UNHCR's lead worldwide communications focal point for designated geographic regions, thematic issues.
- Working alone or in teams developing and implementing creative communication strategies and plans that increase exposure of UNHCR and mobilize public, political, and financial support.
- Coordinating and supporting regional and country communication teams to ensure the delivery of coordinated, impactful messages and news packages to key audiences taking into account global and operational strategies and policies.
- Providing expert communications advice to senior staff of the organization including Bureau Directors, Representatives, and on occasion members of UNHCR's Executive Office.
- Re-packaging, writing, editing, re-writing, and commissioning of information/stories including those submitted by field communication staff and others for dissemination via UNHCR and major non-UNHCR channels to global audiences.
- Acting as a leading UNHCR global spokesperson and public speaker, including with a strong representation and profile on social media channels.
- Liaising with UNHCR bureaus and divisions on communications, messaging, recruitment and other operational issues.
- Maintaining for UNHCR relationships with a range of external actors, including government offices, academic institutions, UN and NGO actors, private sector bodies, donors etc.
- Planning and coordinating closely with communications stakeholders across UNHCR's Division of External Relations on upcoming communications initiatives.
- Producing talking points, messages, background information and context, for sharing across UNHCR's global offices and with the UNHCR regional and field communicator network.

- Ensuring frequent and regular news outputs for UNHCR including briefing notes, press releases, fact sheets, press lines, 'if-asked' guidance notes, social media outputs, etc. for the regions and issues under area of responsibility - working closely with country and regional public information staff, subject experts, and regional and country representatives.
- Maintaining up to date specialist knowledge of matters pertaining to the region and issues under area of responsibility and up to date familiarity with UNHCR's wider global operations, policies.
- Researching, studying, and fact-checking in support of expert communications outputs.
- Maintaining a database of journalists and media organizations, drafting news releases, responding to media enquiries, pitching stories and initiatives, and building dialogue with individual journalists and editors, as well as with news-planning desks.
- Undertaking frequent media interviews in support of UNHCR's global news and advocacy output for competitive positioning of UNHCR for its advocacy and fund-raising purposes and to defend or enhance the organization's reputation.
- Producing and encouraging field staff to produce strategic and general interest news and features content for dissemination to external audiences via online channels including UNHCR's.
- Planning and arrangements of events.
- Ensuring strong visibility and unparalleled positioning of UNHCR vis a vis the news-media on key issues of concern including humanitarian emergencies, via channels including the regular Geneva Palais Briefings, the Noon-briefing at UN Headquarters in New York, and via other means as needed.
- Ensure highest standards of accuracy and editorial content in all external outputs.
- Propose and draft news outputs;
- Ensure clearance of news outputs; and advocate constantly for highest communications standards.

General Requirements for all levels:

- Ensuring UNHCR visibility and positioning as the leading authority on refugee and related displacement matters is rapidly secured with global broadcast and media/social media outlets at the outset of new humanitarian situations and maintained thereafter – including through high frequency news output, through ready availability as a lead spokesperson, and through effective media relations.
- Robustly position UNHCR including via global news channels as a leader in protecting, assisting and finding solutions for the world's forcibly displaced and stateless persons.
- Authority and expertise are supported by well-researched, well-informed media interactions and interviews on global and regional news channels.
- Media relationships with global broadcasters and their news desks, international wire agencies, and prominent media are kept on an active, positive footing.
- Understanding of challenges faced by field operations, problems of implementing programmes and constraints of negotiating with local authorities and persons of concern.
- Professional communication skills, including social media and other media skills, plus strong interpersonal skills.
- Outstanding command of English and/or another UN language associated with the functions of the position (written, oral, comprehension) including highly developed drafting skills.

- Excellent computer skills (MS Word, Excel and PowerPoint essential), and familiarity with working in multimedia contexts

Minimum Qualifications and Professional Experience Required:

For positions at the P2 level

- Education: Degree in Communications, Political Sciences, Public Information, International Relations or a related fields.
- Job experience: Minimum 2 years of relevant experience with graduate degree (equivalent of a Master's), 3 years with undergraduate degree (equivalent of a BA/BS) working in media, journalism, advocacy or communications.
- Outstanding news-writing, headline-writing, re-writing and editing skills.
- Proven social media skills.
- Experience of having worked in sensitive political/protection contexts.
- Developed understanding of the editorial needs of journalists.
- Experience of having worked as a Spokesperson, or dealing with live interview situations.
- Languages: Proficiency in English is required.

For positions at the P3 level

- Education: Degree in Communications, Political Sciences, Public Information, International Relations or a related fields.
- Job experience: Minimum 5 years of relevant (international) job experience with graduate degree (equivalent of a Master's), 6 years with undergraduate degree (equivalent of a BA/BS) working in media, journalism, advocacy or communications.
- Outstanding writing, re-writing, headline-writing and editing skills, including the ability to produce news-writing of high standard on tight deadlines.
- Experience in drafting Op-eds, messages, talking points.
- Strong understanding of the international global media environment.
- Proven strong social media skills.
- Strong knowledge of UNHCR operations, mandate and global affairs.
- High level tactical communications and strategic communications expertise.
- Proven experience of having worked as a Spokesperson, in a leading press office, or dealing regularly with live interview situations.
- Grounded knowledge of the UN's refugee and related human rights frameworks, conventions and treaties.
- Languages: Proficiency in English is required.

For positions at the P4 level

- Education: Degree in Communications, Political Sciences, Public Information, International Relations or a related fields.
- Job experience: Minimum 8 years of relevant (international) job experience with graduate degree (equivalent of a Master's), 9 years with undergraduate degree (equivalent of a BA/BS) working in media, journalism, advocacy, or communications and marketing at international level with a leading national/international organization.
- Advanced media skills, with expert knowledge of journalist needs, advanced understanding of communications tactics and know-how, ideally gained through having worked in a major press office or in a high-profile media setting.

- Proven expertise in developing and implementing communications strategies, and outstanding tactical communications expertise.
- Outstanding professional news-writing, headline writing, and editing skills, with high levels of confidence in spotting news stories and identifying news angles.
- Experience in drafting Op-eds, messages, talking points.
- Strong management and planning skills, including experience of having led media and multimedia teams.
- Ability to manage and cultivate professional relationships upwards and downwards in support of strong communications for UNHCR.
- Experience in preparing key messages, speeches, talking points and delivering them to a targeted audience.
- Flexibility to undertake on a short-notice field missions to humanitarian emergencies and other situations as needed.
- Proven experience of having worked as a Spokesperson, in a press office, or dealing with live interview situations.
- Grounded knowledge of the UN's refugee and related human rights frameworks, conventions and treaties.
- Languages: Proficiency in English and knowledge of a second UN language (Arabic/ Chinese/French/Russian/Spanish) at B2¹ is required.

To apply and read a detailed Job Description, please visit: [Current vacancies](#).

The UNHCR workforce consists of many diverse nationalities, cultures, languages and opinions. UNHCR seeks to sustain and strengthen this diversity to ensure equal opportunities as well as an inclusive working environment for its entire workforce. Applications are encouraged from all qualified candidates without distinction on grounds of race, colour, sex, national origin, age, religion, disability, sexual orientation and gender identity.

¹ See <http://europass.cedefop.europa.eu/resources/european-language-levels-cefr>, the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR).