



Every smile  
tells a story

# Communications Officer Recruitment Pack



## Equal Opportunities & Safeguarding

CLAPA is an equal opportunities employer and we are committed to ensuring all applications are treated fairly.

CLAPA is committed to safeguarding and ensuring the welfare of children, young people and adults at risk, and expects all employees and volunteers to share this commitment. **The suitability of all prospective employees or volunteers will be assessed during the recruitment process in line with this commitment.**

## About Cleft Lip and Palate

Early on in pregnancy, different parts of the face form and come together just above the top lip. If this doesn't happen quite as it should, the result is a gap or 'cleft' in the upper lip, the palate (roof of the mouth), or both. It's usually caused by a mix of genetic and environmental factors interacting in a way which can't be predicted or prevented.

A cleft can affect feeding, hearing, speech, teeth placement and more. The treatment pathway can last 20+ years, including several surgeries.

**Around one in 700 people are born with a cleft – that's 1,200 each year in the UK alone.**

## About CLAPA

**The Cleft Lip and Palate Association (CLAPA) is a small charity supporting people born with a cleft and their families in the UK.** We bring together people affected by cleft to help them connect with others who share their experiences, welcoming them into a supportive community for life.

**Our vision** is of a society where everyone affected by cleft feels supported, connected and empowered to take control wherever they are on their cleft journey.

## CLAPA's Services

- Vibrant **social media channels** which promote positivity, bust myths and celebrate differences.
- **Online support groups** moderated by trained volunteers provide an instant connection for those looking for an informal support network.
- **Regular online events** give people the chance to talk about their experiences and worries and hear from others at all stages of the cleft journey.

- Confidential **one-to-one support** provided by trained volunteer patients and parents who reassure those most in need that they can cope with whatever lies ahead.
- Accredited **information** on cleft led by our community, reflecting their experiences and emotional needs as well as medical facts.
- An **Advocacy Service** that provides tailored information and signposting to those with complex enquiries.
- A **Children and Young People’s Council** made up of 9-17-year-olds who meet to share their thoughts and experiences, helping to improve our support services as well as cleft research and NHS care.
- A consultancy service for **researchers** which connects their work with our community.
- A **feeding service** that supplies 15,000 subsidised items of specialist equipment for babies born with a cleft each year, including free of charge items for new and vulnerable families.

*“When my Sonographer told me about my baby's cleft I was devastated. Soon after, I found CLAPA who introduced me to a whole new community of smiles and support. The experience has been amazing.”*

– Parent of young child



## CLAPA’s Values

- **Inclusive.** Everyone affected by cleft in the UK, regardless of background, identity or socioeconomic status, should be able to find a warm and welcoming community with CLAPA. We value all voices and want everyone to see themselves reflected in our work.
- **Trusted.** We passionately believe in doing what is best for the UK cleft community. Their needs and voices are at the front and centre of everything we do. We take responsibility for our mistakes and use them as chances to learn.
- **Adaptable.** We seek authentic feedback to help us raise the bar in everything we do. We don’t stay stuck in our ways. We follow the evidence, try new things, and change with the times.
- **Collaborative.** We work best when we work together, whether this is as a staff team, as a community, or in partnership with others.

## CLAPA's Strategy

Following a year of global upheaval, CLAPA launched a one-year, digital-first strategy in April 2021 which built on the innovative work trialled during lockdown. This strategy had us re-imagine our services from the ground up with a digital focus that aims to improve accessibility, diversity and sustainability across the board.

As we look ahead to launching a new longer-term strategy in April 2022, we plan to continue to this work to develop a suite of high-quality, community-led, online services which will be able to keep pace with whatever challenges the future may bring.

## Working for CLAPA

Most of CLAPA's 16 staff are part-time, and all are partly or wholly home-based. Core working hours are Monday-Friday, 9am-5pm, but all staff have some flexibility around their hours of work and can request changes to their working patterns as per our Flexible Working Policy.

CLAPA is structured around a small Senior Management Team and CEO who report to the Board of Trustees (the majority of whom have a personal connection to cleft lip and palate), and has a constructive, collaborative culture where all voices and contributions are valued. CLAPA encourages cross-team working to give staff a chance to test their skills and learn about every area of how a modern charity operates.

Although we work remotely, we keep in constant contact using CLAPA's Slack workspace and regular Zoom catch-ups, so staff are never alone when questions, concerns or ideas pop up.

## This Post

This post is ideal for junior staff, interns or volunteers looking to take the next step in their career in the charity sector. You'll have the creative freedom to try new things and will be encouraged to develop your skills and knowledge across the board. While there are few opportunities to advance in a small charity like CLAPA, we take pride in ensuring that your time with us will give you a fantastic springboard to continue your career.

"The two years I have spent working, learning and growing at CLAPA have vastly increased my skillset and confidence, and have provided me with a very strong base from which to launch my communications career. Working in a small team at CLAPA means you learn to juggle multiple responsibilities at once and sometimes take on tasks that might lie outside your job description but, in return, you gain a wide range of skills and can try new (usually exciting!) things. You will get to know the whole team and play a crucial role in making the charity's work possible, and the culture of 'getting stuck in' makes CLAPA not only an incredibly friendly place to work, but also means you can exercise your creativity and use your initiative. A rewarding part of the position is speaking directly to members of the cleft community, which gives you the chance to learn a lot about cleft through people's stories and lived experience. All of this makes the role of Communications Officer at CLAPA a very varied but vastly fulfilling one, where you can expand your skills surrounded by a supportive team who genuinely believe in being there for the UK cleft community."

- *Communications Officer November 2019 – February 2022*

# Communications Officer

## Job Description

**Salary:** £25,000

**Hours:** Full-time (35 hours per week), permanent position

**Reporting to:** Impact and Influence Manager

**Based at:** Home-based, with the option to work from CLAPA's office in London E2 2 days/week as per CLAPA's Hybrid Working Policy

### Benefits:

- 25 days paid annual leave (pro rata), plus bank holidays and closure over Christmas from 24<sup>th</sup> December to 2<sup>nd</sup> January inclusive.
- Flexible working hours as agreed by manager, access to unpaid leave and 'Time off in Lieu' policy.
- 5% non-contributory pension.

## Job Description

The Communications Officer is responsible for creating and publishing content across CLAPA's communication channels. Every day, you'll use your excellent copywriting and design skills to put together posts, newsletters, graphics, videos and articles that engage and inspire the UK cleft community. Working closely with staff and volunteers across the charity, you'll need to understand these competing needs and priorities and translate them into high-quality content published in a busy schedule. You'll have the freedom to try new things, share ideas, learn from feedback, and work with others to solve problems. While you're expected to be proactive in fulfilling key tasks, you'll be supported in every aspect of your work and development by the Impact and Influence Manager.

The successful candidate will be a creative and confident communicator who shares CLAPA's values and our staff team's dedication to supporting the UK cleft community.

## Key Tasks

- Ensure the safeguarding of volunteers and beneficiaries by complying with CLAPA's Safeguarding Policies and Procedures and attend all compulsory training
- Plan, create and publish content across CLAPA's social media accounts, including Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and YouTube.
- Create and send e-mailings using Campaign Monitor software, including monthly e-newsletters
- Design graphics for various communications and resources using Canva
- Edit videos and create subtitles for publication across a range of channels
- Take day-to-day responsibility for the sourcing, storage and usage of photos, stories and other submissions from the cleft community. This may include conducting written and video interviews.
- Work closely with the Engagement & Services and Fundraising teams to bring their messages to the UK cleft community, including event promotion
- Support the Children and Young People's Coordinator and the Children and Young People's Council to produce content for CLAPA's communication channels
- Moderate CLAPA's two community Facebook support groups, alongside volunteer moderators

- Monitor CLAPA's 'info' mailbox and social media accounts and deal with or forward on emails and comments as appropriate
- Keep up-to-date with communications from the Diversity Committee and ensure that CLAPA's communications are delivered in line with the latest guidance
- Complete various ad hoc tasks which make the most of your skillset, such as:
  - Drafting and editing copy for other team members
  - Taking brief minutes at monthly staff team meetings
  - Providing technical support during Facebook Live events
- Ensure the wellbeing of colleagues, volunteers and beneficiaries in all areas of work
- Any other duties as deemed appropriate

## Person Specification

Note that while paid professional experience is preferred, we will consider volunteer work for established organisations as well.

### Essential

- Excellent written and oral communication skills, and the ability to communicate effectively with people of all ages and backgrounds
- Creative, with an eye for good graphic design and an engaging use of photographs
- Proven record of using communications platforms (Facebook, Twitter and Instagram in particular) for promotional purposes and user engagement at a professional level
- Ability to follow brand guidelines and use an appropriate voice and tone in crafting communications for a wide range of channels and audiences
- Strong interpersonal skills and the ability to work with staff and volunteers at all levels
- Ability to self-motivate and juggle competing priorities to meet deadlines and targets
- Genuine enthusiasm for supporting people affected by cleft to tell their stories, and the proven ability to produce stories like these to a high standard
- Good technical know-how, including a high level of proficiency with Microsoft Office and an ability to get to grips with new software quickly
- Willingness to learn about and get involved with all areas of CLAPA's work

### Desirable

- Personal experience of cleft lip and/or palate, or a general knowledge of cleft
- Professional graphic design and/or copywriting experience
- Experience with social media and communications management platforms such as Buffer, Campaign Monitor and WordPress
- Experience in customer service
- Experience in online community management
- Experience with CRM and other data management systems such as Salesforce and Formstack
- Experience with business communication and planning platforms such as Slack and Trello

## How to Apply

Please complete the online Application Form: [https://clapa.formstack.com/forms/clapa\\_application\\_form](https://clapa.formstack.com/forms/clapa_application_form)

You may request an application form in another format by emailing [info@clapa.com](mailto:info@clapa.com) with 'Communication Officer Recruitment Pack Request' in the subject.

All applications are subject to our shortlisting process; so if you're shortlisted we will contact you and invite you to attend an interview. We'll also tell you if there will be any skills tasks to complete as part of the recruitment process. If you are shortlisted you will be asked to complete a criminal records disclosure. To check how information should be disclosed and your rights check [NACRO guidance](#).

If you have not heard from us by Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> February, please assume your application has been unsuccessful.

**Applications close:** Monday 7<sup>th</sup> February at 9am

**Interviews:** Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> February

**Start date:** ASAP from Monday 19<sup>th</sup> February

## Criminal Record Background Checks

If you are invited for an interview, you will be sent a **Criminal Record Declaration form**. You will need to complete this form prior to the interview, but it will be stored securely and will only be looked at if we wish to make you an offer of employment. If you have declared that you have a criminal record on this form, we will complete a risk assessment process in line with our Safeguarding Policies.

**This role requires a basic background check** which will be completed prior to the successful candidate starting in post. This will be completed through the **Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)** for those in England and Wales, **the Protecting Vulnerable Groups (PVG)** scheme in Scotland, or the **Access NI** scheme in Northern Ireland.

## Contact

Contact Impact and Influence Manager Anna Martindale at [anna.martindale@clapa.com](mailto:anna.martindale@clapa.com) or call the CLAPA office on 020 7833 4883 if you have any questions about the role or the application process.

Due to COVID restrictions, our office is closed, but if you leave a message on the answerphone we will call you back as soon as possible. Please leave your full name and phone number when leaving a message.