



Digital Communications and Design Manager

Candidate Pack

Closing Date: 11 November 2026

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An introduction from our CEO, Professor Libby Hackett

Thank you for your interest in working for the Russell Group.

This is a rare opportunity to join a high-performing advocacy team, working with 24 leading UK universities. We're looking for an outstanding Digital Communications and Design Manager to provide support on all aspects of the Russell Group's media activity.

Through collaboration and advocacy, the Russell Group works to advance and champion the positive economic, societal and cultural contributions of our universities. The Russell Group represents the interests of our 24 university members at the highest level of government, with media as well as with key research and innovation funders, with business, third-sector partners, regulators, and internationally with like-minded bodies.

At the Russell Group, we value our people as our greatest asset and strive to create a positive and stimulating working environment. This pack includes information about our organisation, its working structure and culture, as well as specific details of the vacant post.

I wish you all the best in your application.

Professor Libby Hackett

About the Russell Group

The Russell Group represents 24 leading universities across the UK.

Our universities share a deep commitment to public service, advancing knowledge, and an ambition to change the world for the better.

Across every part of the UK, Russell Group universities deliver groundbreaking research and deliver the high-level skills needed to make a difference: turning ideas into jobs, translating knowledge into skills for the economy, and creating opportunities for our cities, regions and nation to thrive. Our universities are:

- Advancing excellence; through world-leading teaching, research and innovation
- Powering progress; through driving growth and productivity across the UK
- Unlocking opportunity; by transforming lives and equipping future leaders

Many of the challenges we face today are global in scale but local in their impact. Our experience, expertise and pioneering ethos – sustained over decades – help us tackle the complex and fast-moving problems that hold people and communities back. From delivering life-saving medicines to the NHS, to transforming local infrastructure, Russell Group universities are committed to investing in the research that breaks new ground, moves the boundaries of human knowledge and improves the lives of people across the country.

Through collaboration and advocacy, the Russell Group works to advance and champion the positive economic, societal and cultural contributions of our universities. We seek to create the best conditions for our world-leading universities to maximise their public benefit and impact for the country and the world.

Our Mission

To advance, amplify and champion the positive economic, societal and cultural impacts of these leading UK universities through collaboration and advocacy.

Our Vision

For Russell Group universities to maximise their public contribution – advancing excellence, powering progress and economic growth, and transforming lives – supported by a flourishing ecosystem for research, innovation and high-level skills.

Our Values

Our organisational values are:

Relevant and influential

- We seek to make impactful change through the work we do, by demonstrating relevance and engaging constructively across a range of audiences. We are positive, forward-thinking and provide credible solutions that have real influence.

Autonomy, trust and ownership

- We want to get the very best out of people, supporting them to reach their full potential by fostering expertise across the team, with individuals given appropriate responsibility and opportunities to drive their work and their development.

Collaboration

- We work together as a team, where everyone has an integral role to play. We work together and we support one another. We strive to be inclusive and respectful. We collaborate constructively with our members as well as with external stakeholders.

Excellence

- We work in a fast-pace, agile environment and operate with integrity, honesty and rigour. We are committed to ensuring our work is both high quality and highly impactful, developing and utilising a wide range of advocacy tools and techniques for different purposes.

Governance and Structure

The Russell Group was originally founded in 1994 and was incorporated as a Company Limited by Guarantee (company no. 06086902) in 2007. It is wholly owned by its [24 university members](#).

Our Board is made up of the leaders of our 24 Russell Group universities. They meet regularly and provide guidance and direction to our policy development, as well as directly supporting our engagement activities.

Professor Evelyn Welch (Vice-Chancellor of the University of Bristol) took over the role of Chair of the Russell Group in August 2026. **Professor Shearer West** (Vice-Chancellor of the University of Nottingham) is Deputy Chair, since 2023.

Professor Jane Norman (Vice-Chancellor of the University of Nottingham) will take over as Deputy Chair from January 2027.

Vacancy Description

Digital Communications and Design Manager

1. About the Role

- 1.1 Reporting to the Head of Media Relations, the Digital Communications and Design Manager will deliver expertise in digital design, communications, graphic design and creative content production. They will work across a range of digital platforms, including developing video, multimedia and other creative content to influence a broad variety of stakeholders.
- 1.2 They will apply their expertise to support impactful digital publication and communications activities and enhance the Russell Group positioning through consistent, high-quality design and digital outputs.

2. Key Responsibilities

- 2.1 The Digital Communications and Design Manager will:

- Act as design lead for the Russell Group, taking a hands-on role in creating website and social media content and high-quality brand assets (e.g. infographics, video content briefings and reports).
- Develop and oversee Russell Group 'house style' for all publications and digital assets, ensuring consistency of use across the organisation.
- Maintain oversight of core digital and design assets such as briefing and presentation templates and photo/video library, and support a consistent visual identity for the Russell Group across all outputs and platforms.
- Oversee day-to-day operational management of the Russell Group's social media channels, ensuring content is tailored to platform audiences and optimised for reach and engagement. Working with the Head of Media Relations, planning and delivering proactive social media and web campaigns across owned channels, aligning content planning and activity with key advocacy priorities. This includes working closely with colleagues with media, public affairs, data and policy responsibilities to represent our outputs and positions effectively.
- Support the delivery of paid digital campaigns, including implementation and optimisation, working with senior colleagues to align spend with strategic priorities.
- Oversee all publication design, including managing external contractors for larger-scale outputs.
- Support day-to-day management of the Russell Group website and microsites, and contribute to their ongoing development.
- Build strong working relationships with communications teams across Russell Group universities to identify, gather and curate high-quality case studies and visual content to support advocacy activities.
- Ensure the Russell Group's digital strategy and content plans are data-driven, monitoring the impact of activity and using insight to refine approaches, enhancing reach and informing wider communications planning.
- Maintain an up-to-date understanding of social media and digital communications principles relevant to a leading advocacy and policy organisation, including emerging approaches such as Generative Engine Optimisation.

- Help colleagues across the wider team develop their understanding of digital and social media and act as effective digital advocates for the Russell Group.
 - Monitor and manage the authorised use of brand assets by members and external stakeholders, and liaise with the Operations team on protection of the organisation's brand and associated intellectual property.
 - Participate fully in an integrated External Relations team which covers public affairs, media, partnerships and engagement and includes social media.
 - Undertake a number of core tasks which apply to all members of the External Relations team, including being part of an out-of-hours on-call rota, and occasionally carry out other assignments in response to workload and capacity requirements within the organisation.
 - Finally, they will be responsible for delivering any additional tasks, at the request of the Head of Media Relations and/or Director of External Relations, in accordance with their experience and the broad purpose of this role.
- 2.2 All Russell Group staff have a personal responsibility to manage data in accordance with the organisation's data protection policies.

3. Person Specification

- 3.1 The post-holder will be a highly-motivated individual with previous experience in digital communications and design.
- 3.2 They will have strong professional expertise and experience of digital content production, publication design, and social media management in a political, public sector, charity or business environment. This includes hands-on media production skills such as photo and video editing.
- 3.3 They will have a proven track record of devising and delivering digital strategies, knowing how to communicate with a range of audiences online. They will demonstrate that they can work proactively, taking ownership of their portfolio and share expertise to build digital capabilities across communication teams and the wider organisation.
- 3.4 They will have experience of developing and delivering or implementing a 'house style' to ensure consistency of design and brand across an organisation.
- 3.5 They will be expert in publication design and relevant design and graphic design platforms.
- 3.6 The Digital Communications and Design Manager will demonstrate that they can manage and prioritise a challenging and varied portfolio of work, understand the perspectives of different political actors and stakeholders, meet tight deadlines as well as managing longer term work and work co-operatively as part of a small team.
- 3.7 Previous experience working in a fast-paced communications environment would be an advantage.
- 3.8 Knowledge of the higher education and/or research and innovation sector, and an understanding of the UK political context, would be an advantage but is not essential.

Package and Process

Employment Package

This appointment is for a permanent, full-time, London-based position with a starting salary of between £52,000-£57,000. This is dependent on skills and experience. A higher salary may be available for exceptional and highly experienced candidates.

Our offices are based in the heart of Westminster, with proximity to key stakeholders and easy access to public transport links. To maximise effective team-based working, we offer flexibility for staff to work from home up to two days a week, subject to work priorities.

As well as a competitive salary, our employment package includes generous additional benefits, including:

- Membership of the USS pension scheme – a defined benefit scheme with an employer contribution of 14.5% (<https://www.uss.co.uk/>)
- 25 days of Annual Leave at start, increasing by 1 day annually to a maximum of 30 days
- Discretionary closure days at Easter and Christmas holidays (in addition to Public Holidays)
- Private healthcare insurance
- Generous approach to learning, training and development, including monthly 'lunch and learn' sessions with external speakers
- Access to Employee Assistance Programme
- Interest-free travelcard loans
- Cycle scheme

Application Process

We welcome applications from anyone with the required experience and qualifications, regardless of their background.

Applications should be submitted via our [Careers site](https://russellgroup-ac-uk.pinpoonthq.com/) (<https://russellgroup-ac-uk.pinpoonthq.com/>).

Please submit the following by the closing date: **17:00 on Wednesday, 11 November 2026**:

- 1) An up-to-date *curriculum vitae* (max. two sides of A4) including:
 - a. a summary of your relevant skills and experience
 - b. full details of your current and past employment
 - c. your degree or postgraduate qualifications, including subjects and grades
 - d. two references:
 - o your current or most recent employer (who would not be approached until a job offer had been made and accepted); and
 - o a former line manager who could be contacted during the process
- 2) A cover letter no more than two sides of A4 addressing the following points:
 - a. how your knowledge, skills and experience meet the requirements of the role
 - b. why you are interested in working for the Russell Group
- 3) We ask all applicants to complete an Equal Opportunities Monitoring form which you can download from our Careers site.

We anticipate that in-person interviews will be held in **w/c 30 November 2026**.

Further information on the Russell Group can be found at <https://www.russellgroup.ac.uk/>