

Heritage Open Days

Head of Communications



SUMMARY

Heritage Opens Days (HODs) is England’s largest festival of history and culture. Every September volunteers across England organise thousands of events to celebrate our fantastic heritage, offering everyone the chance to see hidden places and try out new experiences for free.

This role is responsible for developing and delivering our national press, PR and communications strategy. A key member of the central Heritage Open Days team, you’ll ensure maximum media impact for our 5,700 events in September. Your work will reflect the breadth and diversity of our outputs and our partners, helping to re-position HODs as a flagship event in the cultural calendar and a movement for community cohesion and local creativity.

Note: This role will cover national media, a separate HODs Communications Officer handles local and regional press

TERMS OF EMPLOYMENT

Contract type	Freelance
Contract period	February – October 2020
Hours	55 days, flexible according to programme needs. Periods of high work intensity around registration launch in March, our annual party in June and during the eight weeks leading up to the September event
Location	National Trust London office and home based (some attendance in London to include team meetings)
Contract value	£15,300 including expenses
Equipment & infrastructure	A personalised Heritage Open Days email address and access to the HODs database and NT Gorkana account will be provided. The use of own phone and IT equipment is expected.
Expenses	Travel costs to locations other than the usual place of work will be reimbursed, if agreed in advance with National Trust Head of Producing
Reporting to	National Trust Head of Producing

BACKGROUND

Heritage Open Days was set up in 1994 as England’s contribution to the European Heritage Days. The founding principle was simple but compelling: to open the doors to historic buildings and monuments, especially those normally closed to the public. The hope was that this access would raise appreciation for the astoundingly rich cultural assets and history that lie on people’s doorstep and help build awareness of the need to protect them.

A quarter of a century later, Heritage Open Days is now England's largest festival of history and culture, with over 5,700 events in 2019. Over 2,000 organisers and 50,000 volunteers use imagination and innovation to connect an audience of 2.5 million people to the stories and places that make their local community unique. The festival has developed from being an event focusing on built architecture to encompass green spaces, coastal areas, archaeological sites, walks, talks, pop-up workshops, art exhibitions and spoken word events—and it's all free! Heritage Open Days is a unique chance for communities nationwide to come together to learn, explore and have fun by sharing the treasures on their doorstep.

The National Trust, through a dedicated HODs team, co-ordinates the event, on a national level, with funding from players of People's Postcode Lottery, providing participants with guidance and support and running a national PR and marketing campaign.

Working with a range of new partners, HODs is repositioning itself as a key player at the heart of the cultural sector and as a national festival of local creativity and community spirit. 2020 is a key year for the festival, with a theme of 'Hidden Nature,' we're developing new initiatives and collaborations that support and reflect a more diverse and contemporary understanding of heritage.

For more information, visit www.heritageopendays.org.uk

ROLE OBJECTIVES

- ▶ To work with the Head of Producing and HODs team on ways to re-position Heritage Open Days as the country's flagship festival of history and culture
- ▶ Raise the festival's national profile, ensuring its public facing and internal communications are aligned with HODs values, mission and objectives and achieve the greatest possible impact
- ▶ Achieve positive publicity and wide-spread national and regional coverage across print, broadcast and online media
- ▶ As required, provide media leadership and guidance to local participants, building them up as regional spokespeople
- ▶ Drive visitors and participants to HODs through diverse and compelling campaigns and coverage

BRIEF IN DETAIL: MAIN TASKS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- ▶ Devising and delivering a press and PR campaign that supports and advances the in-year festival activity and promotes the overall profile of HODs
- ▶ Work with the Head of Producing and Heritage Open Days Marketing and Projects Manager to ensure that HODs cultivates and communicates an image and voice consistent with the diversity, nature and power of our work
- ▶ Work with the Heritage Open Days Marketing and Projects Manager to ensure alignment across all communications, including social media, website and print materials, both those shared with HODs organisers, and the wider public
- ▶ Ensure efficient and effective research, writing, dissemination and follow up of media releases to national, regional and specialist press, broadcast and online media

- ▶ Oversee the work of the Heritage Open Days Communications Officer (who is responsible for regional and local press) including sign-off of all releases and monitoring coverage through regular updates and oversight of work with National Trust's Gorkana database account
- ▶ Liaise with national partners and funders to obtain quotes and sign-off of national news releases as needed.
- ▶ Liaise with National Trust Press team and other National Trust staff as necessary to ensure mutual benefit and synchronicity across communications.
- ▶ Take a lead on cultivating and developing key media relationships, including potential partnerships and commissioning opportunities.
- ▶ Support the HODs team in developing and delivering the annual HODs party in June
- ▶ Assisted by the HODs team, source high-quality images for the online press gallery
- ▶ Attend monthly team meetings to understand the evolving needs and challenges of the cycle and to ensure an integrated approach across all HODs communication platforms including social media, website and e-bulletins
- ▶ Produce evaluations and reports of media coverage and impact as required

REQUIREMENTS

Essential

- ▶ At least five years' experience of working in public relations, communications and/or with national print and broadcast media
- ▶ High-standard verbal and written communication skills and a creative flair for producing catchy copy
- ▶ Strong networking capability and interpersonal skills
- ▶ A strong strategic thinker
- ▶ Experience of working with a wide range of stakeholders and partners
- ▶ Ability to think creatively and be able to provide ideas and inspiration in communication and strategic activities
- ▶ Ability to work on own initiative, excellent time management skills and the ability to multi-task
- ▶ Ability to work flexibly in accordance with the requirements of the role

Desirable

- ▶ Understanding of the cultural sector
- ▶ Insight into the travel and tourism sector
- ▶ Experience leading workshops and training
- ▶ Interest in heritage, architecture and culture

HOW TO APPLY

To apply please submit a full CV and covering letter to info@heritageopendays.org.uk by 9am on 27th January

We welcome applications from agencies and collectives as well as individuals.