



Health Innovation
Yorkshire & Humber

**Transforming Lives
Through Innovation**





Health Innovation Yorkshire & Humber

Associate Director of Communications, Marketing and Engagement

**Recruitment Pack
including Job description and Person Specification**

Thank you for your interest in joining **Health Innovation Yorkshire & Humber**, one of England's Health Innovation Networks. This is an exciting moment for us - and an exceptional opportunity for an experienced communications leader to shape how we tell our story, influence the system, and strengthen our role as a strategic partner to the NHS, government, industry and academia.

This role will lead on how the organisation presents itself: **Who we are, what we offer, the problems we solve, and the difference we make.**

We're entering a period of renewed ambition, and organisational growth and are looking for a senior communications leader who can help drive that evolution with confidence, clarity and creativity.



About Us

Health Innovation Yorkshire & Humber (HIYH) exists to **improve the health and prosperity of our region through innovation.**

We:

- Accelerate the adoption and spread of proven innovations.
- Convene partners across the NHS, government, industry and academia.
- Champion the region's role in the national and international health innovation ecosystem.
- Are part of the **National Health Innovation Network**, working collaboratively with regional and national partners to deliver meaningful change across healthcare.





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The Moment of Opportunity

The changing landscape (internally & externally) has highlighted a pivotal opportunity for HIYH:

- Our impact is real – and we're determined to reach as many people as possible
 - We are proud of the value HIYH delivers and want to be even clearer and more confident in how we communicate our impact.
- We benefit from strong and visible leadership - and are now focused on ensuring this is matched by a clear, consistent organisational story that resonates widely.
- The wider health innovation landscape is changing rapidly, and HIYH is well placed to play an even stronger role as a trusted partner and convenor to help shape collective thinking.



www.healthinnovationyh.org.uk



Our values

Our values are the things that we hold dear and are important to us, reflecting how we work and who we are collectively. Through our behaviours, we apply these values internally to create a supportive and innovative culture and enable high impact collaborations with external partners and stakeholders.



Stronger Together

We're confident in the results we can achieve when we're united with our colleagues, stakeholders and partners.

We are: **Connected, Trusting and Honest partners**



Always Learning

Every day's a school day. We constantly develop ways to excel and work tirelessly to build our expertise.

We are: **Switched-on, Improvers and Grafters**



People People

We love catching up for a cuppa and a natter but, more than that, we're curious to learn more about other people's perspectives.

We are: **Caring, Inclusive and Open-minded**



Energetic Pioneers

We find new things and ideas that can make a difference to the health and prosperity of our region. This is what gets us out of bed in the morning.

We are: **Adventurous, Passionate and Resourceful**

Purpose



**Transform lives
through innovation**

Vision



**Improve the health and prosperity
of our region by unlocking the
potential of new ideas**

5-year mission



Our knowledge,
skills, and expertise
will demonstrate that we
are world leaders in unlocking
innovation to address current
and future health, economic,
and societal challenges.



Our 5-year strategic aims

Our strategic aims provide direction and focus for us as an organisation, supporting progress towards our mission. They provide greater detail on the 5-year ambition of the organisation, whilst providing a framework for decision-making and resource allocation.



Strengthening our foundations

Investment in our future starts at our heart. By continuing to invest in, and develop our people's skills and leadership, we will be equipped for further growth.



Enhance our role and reputation

We hold a unique role as trusted thought leaders with global reach. We'll use this position to drive lasting change and improve life outcomes by empowering our communities.



Be fit for the future

We will ensure our ways of working are innovative, agile, and continually challenge the status quo. We will equip ourselves to better identify and respond to societal challenges of the future.



Foster connections

Our continued commitment to collaboration will strengthen strategic partnerships for the benefit of our population. We will ensure visibility of our work and its impact to foster advocacy and grow new business.



Grow our region

We will lead the way in promoting Yorkshire and the Humber and its assets to create a thriving, globally-connected innovation ecosystem. We commit to growing and diversifying our role to accelerate economic growth and prosperity, recognising our own success contributes to the region's success.



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The Role

Are you an experienced, forward-thinking communications leader ready to tell a powerful story - and help shape one too?

Health Innovation Yorkshire & Humber is looking for an exceptional **Associate Director of Communications, Marketing & Engagement** to lead our strategic communications, position our brand, and strengthen our influence across the regional and national health innovation landscape.

This is a rare opportunity to shape the narrative, reputation and visibility of an organisation working at the forefront of health innovation - from NHS transformation and digital health to industry partnerships and economic growth.

About the role

This is a senior leadership role: accountable for strategy, governance and outcomes; delivery is through a team and commissioned partners (with personal leadership on high-profile/sensitive issues).

You will provide strategic leadership for all aspects of HIYH's communications, marketing and stakeholder engagement, shaping a clear and compelling organisational narrative that strengthens our influence, visibility and reputation at regional and national level.

You will:

- Lead the development and delivery of an integrated communications, marketing and engagement strategy aligned to organisational priorities.
- Shape and articulate HIYH's narrative and brand, telling powerful stories that demonstrate our impact through people, partnerships and innovation.
- Provide expert strategic counsel to the Chief Executive, Board and Senior Leadership Team on reputation management, organisational positioning and complex communications issues.
- Oversee digital channels, content strategy, public affairs and stakeholder engagement activity, using insight and analytics to drive impact.
- Build and maintain strong relationships across the NHS, local authorities, government, academia, industry, the voluntary sector and national bodies.





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- Lead, develop and inspire a high performing communications team, ensuring capacity, capability- and high professional standards.
- Anticipate and manage reputational opportunities and risks with professionalism, confidence and clarity

About you

You will be a senior communications leader with a strong track record of operating at organisational or system level in complex, multi-stakeholder environments.

You will bring:

- Proven experience leading strategic communications, marketing and engagement functions.
- Strong political and system awareness, with the ability to influence at senior levels.
- Expertise in organisational narrative, brand and reputation management.
- Confidence working in ambiguity, handling sensitive issues and influencing at senior levels.
- Experience building and leading high performing, modern and digital first- teams.
- A passion for translating innovation into compelling stories that drive engagement, improvement and impact.

Why HIYH?

You will work at the intersection of innovation, policy and practice, helping to shape how innovation is adopted and spread across health and care systems. This role offers **genuine strategic influence**, a regional and national remit, and the opportunity to make a visible contribution to better outcomes and more sustainable health for patients and populations across Yorkshire & Humber.

What we give

- Salary circa £75k to £80k per annum, depending on experience
- Flexible and agile working – hybrid working between home and office plus other locations as required
- 25 days holiday + statutory days (fte)





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- 3-day office closure between Christmas/New Year bank holidays
- Holiday buy-back scheme via salary sacrifice
- Contributory matched pension (up to 10%)
- Learning and Development opportunities
- Wellbeing programme
- Employee Assistance Programme/Mental Health First Aiders
- Electric Car Scheme
- Financial Wellbeing Programme

Selection process

We want the recruitment process to reflect the senior, strategic nature of this role. The Associate Director is accountable for setting direction and assuring quality, delivering through a team and partners, while personally leading only the most high-profile or sensitive communications.

- **Optional informal conversation:** an opportunity to ask questions about the role, remit and operating model (see 'How to Apply').
- **Application review:** assessment of evidence against the essential criteria in the Person Specification.
- **Panel interview:** focused on strategic leadership, influencing, governance/assurance, reputational risk and working effectively in complex systems.
- **Scenario / strategic exercise:** a short exercise, to be presented at interview and shared in advance, to explore how you would set direction, commission delivery, and step in personally on high-stakes issues.





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Recruitment Timeline

- Closing date for applications: **28.04.2026 at 4pm**
- Candidates will be informed if they have been invited to interview on 01.05.2025. Scenario/strategic exercise details will be given at this time.
- **Interview panel 05.05.2026 in person at Huddersfield** (location to follow) – candidates should ensure they are able to attend in person, on this date, before applying.

How To Apply

Once you have read the job description and person specification, please submit the following:

- Your CV **and**
- A supporting statement (max 2 pages) outlining how you meet the essential criteria and your motivation for the role.

Applications should be sent to hr@healthinnovationyh.com no later than 4pm on 28.04.2026. Late applications will not be accepted.

If you would like an informal conversation about the role prior to applying, please contact Kate Openshaw who can arrange this:
kate.openshaw@healthinnovationyh.com





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Associate Director of Communications, Marketing and Engagement Job Description

ACCOUNTABLE FOR: HIYH communications team, organisation reputation, strategic marketing and market positioning, stakeholder engagement and internal and external communications.

JOB SUMMARY

This is a pivotal senior leadership role within Health Innovation Yorkshire & Humber (HIYH), accountable for setting the strategic direction, governance and standards for communications, marketing and stakeholder engagement, and for ensuring delivery through a high-performing team and commissioned partners to strengthen the organisation's influence, visibility and reputation across regional and national health innovation systems.

As HIYH's most senior communications professional, the Associate Director will shape and lead a clear, compelling organisational narrative that articulates the organisation's value, impact and strategic role in accelerating the adoption of innovation across health and care. The post-holder will oversee an integrated communications, marketing, digital engagement and stakeholder engagement function that positions HIYH as a trusted partner, thought leader and system influencer, setting expectations for quality and consistency across internal and external communications and personally leading the highest-profile, most sensitive or complex communications.

The post-holder will advise the Board and Senior Leadership Team on organisational positioning, reputation management and complex communications challenges, ensuring HIYH maintains credibility and influence with NHS leaders, policymakers, industry partners, academia and the wider innovation ecosystem.

A highly effective operator, the Associate Director will oversee a portfolio of communications and engagement products, systems and processes, acting as senior responsible owner for key developments (e.g. the implementation and adoption of a CRM) and assuring benefits realisation, data quality and effective use across the organisation. The post-holder will lead, inspire and develop a high-performing communications team, ensuring resources are effectively deployed, delivery standards remain high and the organisation's communications capability continues to evolve to meet the needs of a growing and dynamic organisation.





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VALUES AND BEHAVIOURS

At all times the post holder will behave in ways consistent with HIYH purpose and values

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

The Associate Director is accountable for strategy, governance, standards and outcomes, delivering through a team and commissioned partners, while personally leading on the highest profile, most sensitive or complex communications.

- **Strategic Leadership & Organisational Positioning.**
Provide strategic leadership for an integrated communications, marketing, digital and engagement function. Set direction, assure quality, drive performance and deploy resources effectively. Develop and lead a high-performing team that ensures HIYH is recognised as a regional and national influencer and thought leader in health innovation.
- **Ownership of Narrative, Brand and Reputation.**
Lead and evolve the overarching organisational narrative, visual identity and brand ensuring consistent, compelling messaging, high quality corporate publications which clearly articulate the organisation's value and impact.
- **Lead a strategic, insight driven marketing and stakeholder engagement approach.**
Lead a data driven marketing approach using audience segmentation and insights to support organisational objectives. Develop tailored engagement plans and value propositions that strengthen existing partnerships and supports business development across the NHS, industry and academia.
- **Reputation & Risk Management.**
Act as primary communications advisor to the CEO, Board and Senior Leadership team, providing expert counsel, challenge and guidance on organisational positioning, policy developments, complex communications challenges and issues of strategic significance including emerging risks and other high level reputational, crisis and sensitive issues.





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- **Digital Strategy, Governance & Performance.**
Hold overall accountability for the strategy, governance and optimisation of all digital channels and platforms, setting priorities, standards and performance measures. Ensure effective day-to-day management of the website, social media and digital content through the team, using analytics and insight to maximise reach and engagement with priority audiences.
- **Internal Communications & Organisational Culture.**
Lead a strategic internal communications approach that ensures clarity, alignment and timeliness of messaging. Strengthen organisational culture, support staff engagement and ensure teams understand HIYH's priorities, performance and impact - particularly through periods of change.
- **Stakeholder Engagement & Public Affairs.**
Establish and lead strategic, insight-led engagement with priority national and regional stakeholders, including policymakers and system leaders. Embed systematic CRM-based stakeholder management and use intelligence to support strategic decision-making and influence national policy. Proactively identify engagement opportunities, media moments and policy shifts, strengthening HIYH's position as a thought leader and ecosystem influencer.
- **Events, Networks & Engagement Products.**
Oversee the planning and delivery of high-quality events, communities of practice and engagement products including delivery of Strategic Advisory Board meetings, programme level communication plans, knowledge management outputs, horizon scanning and engagement with the national Health Innovation Network.

Specifically, devise and implement strategies for:

- **Stakeholder engagement** – establishing a robust, insight-led stakeholder engagement approach that identifies stakeholder needs and priorities, informs decision-making, and strengthens organisational position.
- **Events and networks / communities** – Shaping and





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commissioning a programme of events and communities of practice that convene key stakeholders and support collaboration. Provide overall leadership for planning, organising and delivering Strategic Advisory Board meetings

- **Intelligence gathering, sharing and issues management** – establishing and managing systems to gather, analyse and synthesise intelligence from internal and external sources. Identify emerging issues and risks and provide timely briefings to internal teams and external stakeholders to support organisational positioning, reputation and marketing activity.
- **Knowledge management** – identifying priority themes and leading the collection of insight, good practice, opinion and ideas from stakeholders and wider networks; ensuring this intelligence is translated into high-value outputs including alerts, editorial led newsletters and authoritative website content.
- **Media relations** – proactively identifying and securing media opportunities, commissioning or producing high-quality content, managing enquiries, and building strong, strategic relationships with relevant media to enhance HIYH's profile and influence.
- **Public affairs and policy engagement** – developing and delivering a strategic public affairs approach that builds relationships with policymakers, anticipates policy developments and positions HIYH to capitalise on the opportunities presented by national and regional system priorities, policy direction and funding decisions focused on health innovation.
- **Internal communications leadership**, providing clear, consistent and timely communication across the organisation that supports staff engagement, strengthens organisational culture and enables high performance by ensuring teams understand organisational priorities, objectives and impact.

LEADERSHIP

As a member of the Senior Leadership Team, the Associate Director will provide strategic leadership for communications, marketing and stakeholder engagement, ensuring alignment with organisational priorities, growth ambitions and external positioning.





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Provide strategic advice to the Chief Executive, Board and Senior Leadership Team on communications, reputation management and organisational positioning ensuring HIYH's voice is influential within the regional and national health innovation landscape.

Lead proactive management of reputational risk, ensuring emerging issues are identified early and addressed through effective communications and engagement strategies.

Undertake horizon scanning across the health, innovation and policy landscape to identify opportunities, risks and emerging narratives that may impact the organisation.

Build strong relationships with communications leaders across the national Health Innovation Network and wider ecosystem to build a strong, coordinated and effective communications network.

Represent HIYH on internal and external communications and engagement forums, demonstrating professionalism and credibility while supporting the organisation's ability to influence policy, thinking and practice in health innovation.

Lead and oversee a proactive, strategic stakeholder engagement approach, ensuring key messages are targeted, timely and effectively communicated to priority audiences.

Hold overall responsibility for HIYH's visual identity and brand, ensuring consistent, high-quality application across all communications and engagement activity.

Ensure complex, sensitive and technical information is translated into clear, engaging and accessible messaging across a wide range of channels, setting standards and providing senior sign-off where appropriate, and personally shaping content for the most high-profile, sensitive or complex communications.





Person Specification

Criteria	Essential / Desirable	Assessed by
Qualifications & Professional Development		
Degree level education or equivalent professional experience in communications, marketing, PR, public affairs or related discipline	Essential	A
Evidence of continuous professional development relevant to senior communications leadership	Essential	A, I
Postgraduate qualification or professional accreditation (e.g. CIM, CIPR, PRCA)	Desirable	A, Q
Formal leadership or management training	Desirable	A
Experience		
Senior level experience leading a strategic communications, marketing and stakeholder engagement function	Essential	A, I
Experience developing and delivering integrated communications and marketing strategies that enhance organisational reputation and influence	Essential	A, I, P
Experience advising Boards and senior leaders on organisational positioning, reputational risk and complex communications issues	Essential	A, I
Experience managing complex, senior level stakeholder environments across multiple sectors	Essential	A, I
Proven experience leading, managing and developing high performing teams	Essential	A, I, R
Substantial experience of media relations, including handling sensitive or contentious issues	Essential	A, I
Experience leading digital communications strategy, governance and performance measurement	Essential	A, I
Experience developing and owning an organisational narrative and messaging	Essential	A, I, P
Experience working in health, care, innovation, research or policy driven environments	Desirable	A, I
Experience of public affairs or policy engagement at regional or national level	Desirable	A, I
Experience of implementing a CRM or structured stakeholder management systems	Desirable	A





Experience working within a national network or multi-organisation partnership	Desirable	A, I
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Knowledge & Expertise

Expert knowledge of strategic communications, marketing and engagement at organisational level	Essential	I, P
Strong understanding of stakeholder engagement methodologies and audience segmentation	Essential	I, P
Understanding of reputational risk, crisis communications and issues management	Essential	I
Understanding of digital communications governance, analytics and performance metrics	Essential	I
Knowledge of the health and care system and health innovation landscape	Desirable	I
Understanding of policy development and influencing processes	Desirable	I

Skills & Abilities

Exceptional written communication skills with highly developed interpersonal and relationship building skills	Essential	A, P
Exceptional verbal communication and influencing skills at senior level	Essential	I
Ability to provide clear, impartial advice and professional challenge to senior leaders and Boards	Essential	I
Strong strategic thinking and planning skills with the ability to translate complex, sensitive or technical information into clear, engaging messaging	Essential	I, P
Strong leadership and people management capability	Essential	I, R
Excellent organisational skills and ability to manage multiple priorities	Essential	A, I
Strong analytical skills, using insight and intelligence to inform decisions	Essential	I, P

Leadership & Behaviours

Demonstrates credibility, professionalism and integrity	Essential	I, R
Operates confidently in complex, ambiguous and politically sensitive environments	Essential	I





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Proactive, resilient and solutions focused approach to challenge and change	Essential	I
Collaborative and inclusive leadership style	Essential	I, R
Commitment to organisational values, continuous improvement and learning	Essential	I

Other Requirements

Willingness and ability to act as a senior ambassador for the organisation	Essential	I
Ability to work flexibly and travel as required	Essential	I

- **A** = Application form / supporting statement
- **I** = Interview
- **P** = Presentation
- **Q** = Qualifications / professional membership check
- **R** = References

