

HEAD OF CORPORATE AFFAIRS AND ENGAGEMENT

REPORTING INTO THE GENERAL SECRETARY OF THE RPA

BACKGROUND

The RPA is the representative body and collective voice of professional rugby players in England which was established in 1998 to look after the interests of all professional players, from Academy players to the superstars of the international game. The RPA offers members Player Welfare and Representation services as well as a comprehensive Player Development Programme to help prepare them for life after rugby. The RPA has also acted as the exclusive commercial representative of the England Team since February 2004.

The RPA is a Not for Profit organisation consisting of three separate entities; The Rugby Players Association (Registered Trade Union), RPA Management Ltd (commercial entity whose activities provide financial support to the RPA) and Restart Rugby (Registered Charity).

The success of the organisation is in the main part dependent on great engagement, communications and ultimately stakeholder management. As such this role works closely with the General Secretary of the RPA to build the policies, practices and the RPA voice on the topics we would be expected to have an opinion on. This all starts with our own colleagues and members as well as our external rugby stakeholders.

THE ROLE IN A NUTSHELL

To initiate, develop, and deliver a corporate affairs and engagement strategy that puts the RPA at the centre of any discussion about the game of rugby both at home and abroad. Enabling our members to influence and drive an agenda that creates a game that thrives in the future, is the envy of the world and at the same time develops a positive reputation for the RPA.

WHAT YOU NEED TO DO

STRATEGY

- Initiate and co create a strategy for all parts of the organisation that connects expertise, first class advice, policy formation, engaging communications and impact.
- Ensure the strategy looks at all channels of communication from the RPA Brand, Public Affairs, PR, Media, Marketing to Internal Communications.
- Specifically focus on building a strategic plan that creates a membership that is actively engaged, well informed and made up of strong, vocal, and influential advocates for rugby and for the RPA.
- Create regular moments in the Board calendar to update on progress against the strategy and to make recommendations for any review processes required.

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CAPABILITY

- Challenge, recommend and advise RPA colleagues and members on where we need expert input and advice to ensure we are well informed and up to date as an organisation.
- Identify the skills gaps within the teams and provide the necessary upskilling to ensure all RPA Colleagues feel confident, are capable, and know what good looks like when it comes to engaging communications.
- Work closely with Board members to ensure that they are well briefed, clear on outcomes, have confidence in the content you have provided, and are able to deliver compelling communications. Provide support and guidance as appropriate.

POLICY FORMATION

- Identify and lead the formation of future policies, the review of existing policies and the horizon scanning activities that enable us to be prepared and ahead of the game.
- Work with Government, Parliament and Whitehall to ensure we are present, visible and always add value to the debate.
- Proactively respond to Government Consultations, contribute to Parliamentary activities and ensure the RPA is well represented across all parties.
- Identify, manage and mitigate future risks to the organisation.

STAKEHOLDER MANAGEMENT

- Create and manage an active stakeholder engagement strategy that is constantly reviewing how we show up for stakeholders and act upon that insight.
- Focus efforts on our Tier One key stakeholders ensuring they are our priority and that they rate us favourably.

INSIGHTS

- Investigate, recommend and implement a comprehensive and effective programme of stakeholder research and put in place regular feedback mechanisms in order to assess our performance against our goals and gather precious and actionable insights.
- Provide specific insights to the relevant internal stakeholders that enable them to do a great job of delivering relevant communications that resonate well with their respective audiences.
- Devise and implement evaluation of impact of communications and engagement strategies.

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FORESIGHT

- Put in place horizon scanning processes that will enable the organisation to see emerging risks and opportunities this will include areas of developing policy and regulation, channels of communication, media and broadcast, as well as emerging technologies that will impact the game and our players.
- Ensure our foresight covers the international space as well as the UK and English rugby ecosystem to enable us to be thought leaders and influence from World Rugby down as well as from English rugby upwards.
- Produce an annual review of risks and opportunities for discussion at the Board and review half yearly.

COMMUNICATIONS

- Build a proactive communications and engagement programme that is proportionate, appropriate and aligned to our priorities as an organisation and that champions the players voice.
- Instigate a calendar of events that leads the debate, driving the agenda as well as providing space for tactical and reactive commentary.
- Identify areas for collaboration with other rugby stakeholders both in the short term tactical and for longer term campaigns where the united voice of rugby is key.
- Understand the communication needs and challenges of all parts of the organisation and ensure they have the tools to do a good job by building well practised routines and rituals into day to day operations.

PEOPLE

- This role has one direct report and some outsourced functions, and will work closely with the commercial events team to create engaging events and experiences.
- Importantly we will work closely with strategic partners, commercial sponsors, and external agencies these are important stakeholders and an extension of the RPA what we do and what we stand for. Ensure all people have an induction programme that delivers our key messages and understanding of the RPA.

WHAT YOU NEED TO HAVE

- Proven track record of operating in a senior environment and managing a diverse and complex group of stakeholders.
- Excellent strategic and organisational skills.
- Tenacity and resilience.
- Knowledge of elite level sport and the “ecosystem”.
- Strong interpersonal skills, emotional intelligence with the ability to build effective teams.
- Budget accountabilities
- Strong written communication and narrative skills.
- Agility in both thoughts and actions to respond to complex and changing agendas and demands.
- Engaging and charismatic personality who is well respected and has the ability to build excellent relationships, both internally and externally.

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CULTURE AND VALUES

We are a strong values driven organisation and it is likely that if you share these values you will fit in well at the RPA. Those values are:

- **Authentic** - Our agenda is co-created with our members. We work to build honest relationships and seek to add value to every room we enter. The RPA will always act with integrity.
- **Driven** - Stepping forward to create positive change. We wish to be re-evaluated. We are passionate about Rugby Union, working relentlessly to create a united game.
- **Open** - We work to build a more inclusive game, empowering players to speak up about things that matter to them. We are agile, adaptable and transparent, always wanting feedback.
- **Supportive** - We exist to support players past, present & future. We are caring and dependable, always working behind the scenes. Our team goes above and beyond for each other and our members.

REWARD PACKAGE

- Salary
- Pension
- Private Medical Insurance (optional)
- Life Insurance
- Critical Illness Cover
- Gym contribution

OTHER INFORMATION

At the RPA we are committed to the personal growth and development of both our colleagues and our members, and as such we place a real emphasis on everyone having a personal development programme in place, including continuous professional development where appropriate. Working with your line manager you will identify the areas of your own development that deliver your personal ambitions, and the skills and expertise that meet the needs of the organisation, both now and in the future. Cocreating this plan, and being creative and resourceful in how that plan is delivered is part of the overall appraisal process. More importantly we see this as an important part of everyone's overall reward package and what makes the RPA a special place to work.

DETAILS

Salary: Competitive plus comprehensive company benefits

Location: Hybrid working, with in person co-working days currently 1 day per week in the Kingston/Twickenham area. Preferably live within commutable distance to Central London.

Closing date: 5pm – Friday 17th November 2023 (Please assume that you have been unsuccessful on this occasion if you are not contacted within 14 days of the closing date)

How to apply: Please send your CV and covering note, including salary expectations, to: careers@theRPA.co.uk

Interview dates: Week commencing 27th November or 4th December 2023