

# HEAD OF COMMERCIAL

## 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 long term success of the organisation and how much we can do for our members depends to some extent on the incremental and unrestricted revenues that we can generate outside of our funding from player generated revenues or “player monies”. Developing income channels through a combination of sponsorship, endorsements, advertising, events, broadcast/media content and data and digital technologies, is the focus of this role.

Importantly the RPA wishes to develop long term partnerships with organisations who share our values, who operate with integrity and whose ambitions for the game and the players who make it what it is, align closely with our own mission. Ideally these relationships will go beyond just the simple commercial transaction and deliver added value to both parties.

In addition there is the opportunity to collaborate with other rugby stakeholders to deliver collective partnerships and commercial opportunities that cannot be delivered by the RPA or any other rugby stakeholder alone, this will require new ways of working and an innovative approach to commercial contracts. It will also require us to ensure our members are well informed and up to date in these commercial matters with an understanding of their value and the protections that are in place to ensure that we always act in their best interests.

### THE ROLE IN A NUTSHELL

**To initiate, develop, and deliver a Commercial strategy that optimises existing income streams and builds new revenue channels for both the RPA and our players. This will require new ways of working and a creative and innovative approach to both identifying new opportunities, and the commercial models that are generated as a result. In doing all of this at the same time protecting and enhancing the reputation of the RPA, and our collective and individual members.**

## WHAT YOU NEED TO DO

### STRATEGY

- Initiate and co create a strategy for all parts of the organisation that generates income for both the RPA and its members and provides longer term certainty of commercial income and supports our mission and values.
- Ensure the strategy looks at all channels of income and create opportunities for a broader group of stakeholders to invest in our players, setting targets for a four year horizon that dovetails with the Professional Game Partnership funding.
- Specifically focus on building a strategic plan that creates a membership that is actively engaged, well informed and supportive of our commercial plans and the growth of the game more broadly.
- Create regular moments in the Board calendar to update on progress against the strategy, performance against budgets and forecasts, and to make recommendations for any actions required.

### CAPABILITY

- Build a team of talented and motivated individuals to help drive the commercial agenda, Identify the skills gaps within the team and provide the necessary upskilling to ensure we deliver high quality interactions with our commercial partners.
- Work closely with leadership team members to ensure that they are well briefed, clear on our commercial priorities and are capable of supporting the strategy as appropriate.
- Make clear recommendations on what should be done in house and what may be outsourced.

### INSIGHT

- Build feedback mechanisms with our commercial partners so that we understand how they rate their relationship with us and the value of what we are delivering.
- On events, experiences, and what we deliver, ensure we evaluate the end customer experience and identify areas for improvement and innovation.
- Keep a watching brief on our competitors in this space, how we measure up against them, and our action plan as a consequence of those insights.

### FORESIGHT

- Identify new and emerging opportunities that enable us to be well prepared and ahead of the game.
- Understand where we don't have the expertise or capacity to commercialise specific opportunities and make recommendations to rectify this.

### COMMERCIAL PERFORMANCE

- Ensure the highest standards of financial governance and work closely with the Finance Director to agree what is required.
- Create and maintain upto date and detailed records of contracts and partnerships.
- Create and maintain the required financial performance reporting mechanisms and provide regular updates to both the RPA Management Board and the relevant business partners.
- Manage and improve the profitability of the commercial activities in place through the diligent control of costs and new ways of working.

**COMMUNICATIONS**

- Work with the Head of Corporate Affairs and Engagement to ensure our communications with our commercial partners and associated stakeholders are first class, aligned to our brand messaging, enhance our reputation and are timely.
- Ensure our internal communications include and support our commercial ambitions and engagement of our players.

**PEOPLE**

- This role has two direct report and some outsourced functions, and will work closely with the communications 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. Our positive relationships with them are key to a sustainable partnership.
- Ensure all team members and our business partners have an induction programme that delivers our key messages and understanding of the RPA.
- Day-to-day people management within the Commercial Team, including objective and target setting, performance appraisals, and building personal development programmes to deliver a high performing team.
- Providing technical expertise and coaching for junior team members.
- Ensure the calendar of activities manages our resources well and that we choreograph activities to complement our capacity and capability.

**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.
- Strong negotiating and influencing capabilities.
- Ability to sell a compelling vision and opportunity through engaging communications.
- Tenacity and resilience with the ability to work under pressure and to tight deadlines.
- Knowledge of elite level sport and the “ecosystem” with previous experience in a Commercial Sport Environment.
- Strong interpersonal skills, emotional intelligence with the ability to build effective teams.
- Budget accountabilities with a results focussed mentality.
- Strong commercial skills and financial know how.
- Creative commercial mind that can spot new opportunities and committed to achieving results.
- Agility in both thoughts and actions to respond to complex and changing agendas and demands.
- Engaging and charismatic personality who is well respected, networked, has the ability to build excellent relationships, both internally and externally, and who leads by example.

## 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
- Agreed commission/incentive scheme
- 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 one 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](mailto:careers@theRPA.co.uk)

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