



Head of External Affairs, Gambling with Lives
Candidate Information Pack
January 2021

Candidate Brief for the position of:

Head of External Affairs – Gambling with Lives

Gambling with Lives was established in 2018 by the families and friends of people who had taken their own lives as a direct result of gambling. These were all very normal, bright, popular and happy young people who had great futures ahead of them ... gambling was their only problem.

Their deaths were sudden – “out of the blue” with no warning. They were not the result of massive gambling debts; rather what gambling had done to their hearts and their heads.

Research indicates that there are between 250 and 650 gambling related suicides every year in the UK ... a minimum of one every working day.

Gambling with Lives aims to:

- Improve mental health and save lives through raising awareness of the risks to health of gambling
- Provide support to the family and friends of the victims of gambling related suicide and those suffering gambling addiction

To deliver against the objectives the Charity is developing a range of activities, including:

- Promoting the reform of gambling legislation, regulation, and treatment through convening and championing experts by experience; disseminating research and challenging the current status quo and perceptions about people with gambling disorder
- Providing direct support to bereaved families including practical support with the administration of a death, peer support, enabling advocacy and therapy
- Promoting the treatment of gambling as a health issue, including identifying the need for increased integration with the NHS
- Giving a voice to families and friends bereaved by gambling and bringing the health issues surrounding gambling to the attention of policy makers and bodies responsible for regulating the gambling industry
- Developing pilot programmes in the fields of treatment, training, and education to influence national programmes in these areas

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Background to the role

Gambling with Lives (GwL) has had a remarkable impact on the discourse surrounding the risk of gambling since it was established in 2018. Prior to GwL's contribution there was little to no mainstream recognition of the link between Gambling Disorder and suicide. The charity's founders have become central to the case for gambling reform and were instrumental in campaigning for the review of gambling legislation in the UK which was announced at the end of 2020.

The campaign and the charity's broader development are now at a critical and exciting juncture, which makes the role of Head of External Affairs a fantastic opportunity.

The purpose of this newly created role is to develop and deliver an external affairs strategy, aimed at influencing the reform of gambling legislation and regulation in the UK and of promoting GwL's programmes. This will involve building on the charity's existing leadership role in advocating for reform, supporting the creation of a research and policy function to underpin the advocacy strategy, and developing and delivering high-impact communications.

The role holder will work to influence policy. They will build relationships with partners in the campaign for reform, and at different levels of government including Westminster, and the assemblies of the devolved nations. The role holder will have a considerable budget at their disposal for new campaign activities and for support from external experts.

This is a fantastic opportunity to join a start-up environment, and to create a role with the backing of a charity that has access to substantial resources.

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GAMBLING – SOME KEY FACTS

- Almost 20% of the UK population experiences gambling harm either directly or through the addiction of another
- At least 55,000 young people aged 11-16 are addicted to gambling
- UK and international research has found that 4-11% of suicides are related to gambling ... equivalent to 250-650 deaths per year in the UK
- Research from Sweden found that gambling addicts are 15 times more likely to take their own lives than the general population
- People suffering from Gambling Disorder are 3-4 times more likely to attempt to kill themselves than those suffering from other types of addiction
- Some gambling products are extremely dangerous:
 - Over half of people playing FOBTs are addicted to gambling or at risk
 - Nearly half of people playing casino games online are addicted or at risk
 - 27.9% of people gambling online are addicted or at risk
- Only 33% of people think that gambling is fair and can be trusted; 71% think that it is dangerous to family life
- The industry made nearly £14 billion gross profit in 15/16 ... but contributed just £8m to pay for research, education and treatment
- Just 2% of people with Gambling Disorder are able to access treatment - compared to 15-20% for drugs and alcohol addictions

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Job description

Salary	£50-55k plus benefits
Location	London office with the flexibility to work from home – our Co-Chairs of trustees are based in Sheffield so some travel to Sheffield will be required after the Covid Pandemic
Reports to	The CEO and will work closely with the Co-Chairs
Direct reports	Anticipated to build a team of up to two direct reports in the initial stages of the role
Target start date	ASAP
Tenure	Permanent, full time

About the role:

The new Head of External Relations will:

- Develop and deliver a communications strategy for the charity covering the campaign for reform and also the promotion of programmes across family support, research, education and treatment
- Develop the charity's communications across a range of channels including leading the creation of a new website, and the development of social media activity
- Work with the Family Support function of the charity to support families bereaved by gambling related suicide to engage with the campaign for reform, and to protect them from the press wherever necessary
- Work with GwL's partners and public affairs support providers to shape and place media stories, articles and interviews which help support the achievement of legislative change as well as changes to the provision of education and treatment for Gambling Disorder
- Act as one of a number of spokespeople for the organisation in the media
- Take a leadership role in the articulation of the charity's policy positions on gambling reform
- Scan and monitor the research landscape, particularly internationally, for new evidence to support the charity's aims and objectives
- Work closely with GwL's partners to encourage close collaboration with those promoting the reform of gambling legislation in the UK
- Ensure a strategic approach to engaging with politicians, advising the Board, CEO, and senior staff across the organisation on matters relating to parliamentary and key stakeholder relations.

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- Ensure that strong internal communications are built and that all the media spokespeople are appropriately trained, briefed and supported

Person Specification

Essential

- Significant experience of working at a senior level in a campaign or policy environment, probably gained through a campaigning organisation, public affairs agency, public sector organisation, or trade body
- Excellent knowledge of the workings of government at different levels in the UK
- Track record of successfully influencing public policy at one or more levels of government
- Experience of delivering high impact communications across a range of channels
- Proven capacity to operate in a rapidly changing internal and external environment to ensure the charity can maximise opportunities and manage the challenges it faces
- Experience of leading or contributing to a communications function and of working with the media
- Gravitas, experience and the ability to influence in order to operate successfully at a senior leadership level
- Strong analytical ability and independent judgement with the confidence to develop the skills required to identify and eliminate the industry friendly 'safer/responsible narrative' from all communications
- Exemplary interpersonal skills. Ability to demonstrate empathy, diplomacy and thoughtfulness in all communications, verbal and written
- Persuasive and passionate about GwL's aims and objectives with a strong belief in and commitment to our mission, vision and values
- Tenacious and resilient with strong attention to detail and ability to consistently demonstrate this across a breadth of communications
- Ability to demonstrate empathy, diplomacy and thoughtfulness in all communications, verbal and written
- 'Can do' attitude. Ambition and a capacity for hard work
- Persuasive and passionate about GwL's aims and objectives with a strong belief in and commitment to our mission, vision and values
- A commitment to equality and diversity in a meaningful way
- Educated to undergraduate level and/or relevant professional qualifications

Desirable

- Track record of managing high-impact research to underpin policy or advocacy work
- Experience of managing the creation of a new website and broad social media presence

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We would look favourably upon candidates who are experts by experience of either gambling related harm or suicide. GwL is fully committed to equality of opportunity and diversity to ensure that we reflect the full breadth of the people we aim to support. We warmly welcome applications from all suitably-qualified candidates.

How to apply?

Application is by CV and a covering letter which should indicate why you are interested in applying for the role and how you meet the role requirements. Eastside Primetimers are supporting us in recruiting to this role and applications should be sent to Bernice Rook, bernice@ep-uk.org. If you would like to discuss the role in more detail, please email Paul Venning p.venning@ep-uk.org to arrange a convenient time.

The closing date for applications is Monday 15th Feb with shortlisting telephone or online interviews taking place that week and the week after. Interviews with GwL will take place in the week commencing the 1st March.

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