

# Job Description

November 2024

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<b>JOB TITLE</b>	<b>Parliamentary &amp; Public Affairs Officer</b>
<b>WORK BASE</b>	Aid to the Church in Need UK, UK National Office (Sutton)
<b>RESPONSIBLE TO</b>	Head of Press & Public Affairs
<b>CO-ORDINATING WITH</b>	ACN (UK): National Director Head of Fundraising & Marketing Events Manager Communications & Research Manager & Press Officer Digital Marketing Team ACN (Intl): Director of Public Affairs and Religious Freedom Head of EU Advocacy

*Working as part of a dynamic and growing team, this post would enable the successful candidate to expand the advocacy outreach of ACN (UK), while supporting the department's other responsibilities including press and media work, research and article-writing, and the preparation of fund-raising materials (text and visuals).*

To advocate for persecuted Christians in fulfilment of the ACN (UK) Strategic Plan for Advocacy

## MAIN PURPOSE

- To raise awareness of issues relating to persecution of Christians, reaching out to Government, Parliament, civil society groups, business groups and Church organisations (e.g. Catholic Bishops' Conference of England & Wales and the Catholic Union); working to secure commitment and advocate for change.
- To pursue ACN's advocacy objectives according to an agreed plan of engagement involving the Government, Parliament, benefactors and other constituencies as required.

## RESPONSIBLE FOR

**Areas of Responsibility will include, but not be limited to:**

- To develop and deepen relations with Parliamentarians, Government and civil servants and other groups both individually and through briefings, attending committee meetings, e-newsletters, etc. Developing a database of Parliamentarians and their specific interests re persecution and religious freedom.
- To prepare/co-ordinate information about persecuted Christians and other minorities for use in Parliament – Early Day Motions, Parliamentary debates, written and oral questions, etc.
- Develop ACN supporter advocacy outreach
  - Create a new/expanded social media information flow, discussing topical persecution issues and ACN's engagement with them.
  - Drive advocacy campaigns involving benefactors: e.g. petitions, letters, liaising with Fundraising & Marketing team.
- Organise Parliamentary events around key dates in ACN's calendar, i.e. #RedWednesday, report launches etc., securing attendance of MPs, Peers, and other influencers and key contacts, coordinating with Fundraising and Marketing, Community Outreach, the Board of Trustees, and other relevant stakeholders.

- Formulate, develop and execute longer-term advocacy plans beyond the traditional spheres of politics, Church and the charity sector. Build alliances with e.g. businesses and universities and other professional, cultural, sporting and volunteer organisations committed to the defence of the rights of Christians particularly in persecution hotspot countries.
- Source opportunities to write opinion pieces (Op.Eds) and other articles and papers, setting out advocacy positions, drawing on ACN data and other materials.
- To undertake other writing, proofing and related tasks in support of the general aims of the Press & Information Department.
- Other duties that may reasonably be required in line with your main duties

## **EXTERNAL AND INTERNAL RELATIONSHIPS**

The role will also develop strong working relationships and liaise with individuals both within and outside Aid to the Church in Need. Internally, these include the Communications & Research Manager, the Head of Fundraising & Marketing, and the marketing team, the Senior Administrator and ACN UK staff and ACN International.

The role will also develop strong external working relationships with Parliamentary working groups, sympathetic MPs and Peers and religious freedom stakeholders including Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, Catholic Union and the APG for Freedom of Religion or Belief.

At a time when the persecution of Christians and religious freedom have attracted increased media interest as well as governmental and parliamentary engagement, the role will help foster relations with individual politicians, groups and committees in support of key objectives to help highlight the specific problem of Christian persecution and the wider issue of religious freedom.

### **Deputising:**

- On an *ad hoc* basis the post-holder will attend external meetings, representing ACN, deputising for either the Senior Press Officer or the Head of Press & Information.

## **PERSON SPECIFICATION**

### **Technical Competencies:**

- Awareness of and some experience in UK Parliamentary processes, including law-making, parliamentary groups, government structures and political ideologies/viewpoints.
- Knowledge of and some experience in advocacy campaign work, networking with Parliamentarians and other key influencers, developing and shaping messaging around causes and strategizing to advance them.
- Excellent written and oral skills across a range of platforms, including the media, complemented by experience in journalism.
- Proven organisation, negotiation and team-work skills.
- Knowledge of the Catholic Church, its teachings and structures. Awareness of issues relating to persecution and oppression of Christians and other religious minorities overseas.
- IT literate: Microsoft Office suite including Excel, Word and PowerPoint essential.

### **Personal / Interpersonal Competencies:**

- Excellent inter-personal skills.
- Strong organisational skills – able to prioritise and willing to “own” distinct areas of work.
- A self-starter, able to work both independently and as part of a team.
- Tenacity, persistence and flexibility.
- Ability to work well under pressure.
- Committed to learning and implementing the ACN house style and follow in-house training provided.

- Motivated by the cause supported by Aid to the Church in Need, sympathy with the mission and values of Aid to the Church in Need, and good knowledge and understanding of the Catholic Church, its teachings and practices.
- Ideally some knowledge of persecution of Christians and other minorities.
- Ideally experience of or an interest in the charity sector.