

Partnerships Manager

Recruitment pack

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A message from our CEO, Vivienne Stern

Universities UK (UUK) is the collective voice of universities in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. We bring them together to pursue a common cause: thriving universities, serving society.

My journey at UUK started as a Parliamentary Officer and I have progressed through the organisation from there, with the opportunity to work across a range of different teams, up to becoming CEO. This is testament to the fact that at UUK we support our people to succeed, helping us achieve our ambitious goals as an organisation as a result.

At UUK we believe that supporting our people to succeed involves prioritising wellbeing at work and being an inclusive employer. We employ a total of around 160 staff across the UUK Group. In our 2025 staff survey, we scored highly for caring about our employees and treating them with fairness and respect. We also have active staff networks, an equality, diversity and inclusion champions group, and mental health first aiders, who all play an important role in making UUK a friendly, safe and inclusive place to work.

I am continually inspired by the passion and talent of the team at UUK. If you care about higher education, its ability to transform people's lives and its impact on wider society, then, in my opinion, there is no better place to do it than here.

Who are we?

At Universities UK, we harness the power of the UK's universities and create the conditions for them to thrive. We are the collective voice of 142 universities, bringing them together to pursue a common cause: thriving universities, serving society.

This mission forms the core of our strategic plan which runs to 2030 and sets out our ambitions for the sector. Our influence, convening power, and insight will enable our universities to:

- transform the lives of more people from the UK and around the world through high-quality education.
- drive greater growth and prosperity through the knowledge and skills they generate, creating places that allow communities to flourish.
- be globally competitive centres of research, at the forefront of making ground-breaking discoveries with the power to change our world.

To help them achieve this we will:

- secure sustainable funding that enables our universities to serve society better.
- build trust and confidence that our universities are a national asset to be proud of and are acting in the best interests of society.



Role description

Post title: Partnerships Manager

Responsible to: Head of Strategic Partnerships

Salary: £45,405 – £51,825 (dependent on experience) (C Regional)

Location: London

The team: This role sits within the UUK International (UUKi) team. UUKi represents the UK's higher education institutions and supports their global engagement. We enable institutions to develop and deliver their international strategies, promoting the collective interests of the sector to create new opportunities for partnership and collaboration.

As part of UUKi, the Partnerships and External Affairs (PEA) team represent our member universities on the international stage by influencing the funding, operational, and policy environment surrounding international higher education. We do this through the delivery of UUKi's contracted work, engagement with UUKi's networks, and management of UUKi's analysis and insight activities, as well as capacity building opportunities for members. We are also responsible for events throughout the year and lead on our external communications such as the website, campaigns, social media, and blogs.

Job summary: As Partnerships Manager, your role will be the development, management, and implementation of new and existing partnerships and programmes which benefit the UK higher education sector and our member universities. This includes all aspects of the development and implementation of contract work streams for UUKi, from programme design and setting up workflows, to financial management and reporting on programme impact. You will also play a key role in developing and maintaining excellent relationships with stakeholders, including UK government officials, partner organisations (both in the UK and overseas), funding bodies and UK universities.

Main responsibilities:

- Be responsible for the day-to-day management and delivery of existing and new high-value partnership schemes and programmes being implemented by UUKi.
- Develop and manage relationships with a variety of stakeholders, building the organisational networks through targeted outreach activities and working with partners/funders to solve any issues and communicate programme needs.
- Support the Head of Strategic Partnerships in the scoping and development of new opportunities for the UK sector as they emerge, preparing business cases, funding proposals, and project documentation in support of new opportunities, as required.
- Work as part of the wider UUKi team to liaise with partner organisations in UK and overseas to identify and build opportunities for partnership related activities.
- Lead on the development and improvement of effective workflows, systems, and processes as they relate to new and existing UUKi partnership programmes. This includes designing and developing relevant programme documentation and other resources.
- Proactively identify opportunities and risks in relation to programme delivery, developing action plans and strategies to mitigate risk, and devising solutions to ensure successful project delivery.
- Work closely with the Head of Strategic Partnerships and the UUK finance team to ensure robust financial and contractual management and reporting of schemes under UUKi's responsibility, ensuring records are kept accurately and appropriate reconciliation with Finance Office records is completed.
- Prepare written updates or reports on the progress of any initiatives as required for the UUK board, advisory committees, funders, government stakeholders or for other evaluation purposes.
- Work with the Head of Strategic Partnerships to set up the relevant frameworks and agreements to allow expansion and sustainability of the UUKi Partnerships programme portfolio.

- Undertake any other duties as required by the Head of Strategic Partnerships or Deputy Director, Partnerships and External Affairs.

Compliance and governance

- to take responsibility for own health and safety in line with UUK H&S policy and current legislation and undertake such responsibilities as they relate to any employees, volunteers or contractors for which the post is responsible.
- to ensure compliance with UUK's internal procedures and all external legal requirements.

Personal effectiveness

- to take responsibility as far as is practical for own personal development to ensure that personal knowledge and skills are updated to ensure effectiveness in meeting work objectives.

General

- to show respect to colleagues, external partners and stakeholders, and to understand and adhere to UUK's Equal Opportunity policy, UUK Staff Standards of Conduct, and UUK's organisational capabilities.
- to work collegially, and to support all the teams which the post has contact with, in achieving the organisation's objectives.
- any other duties commensurate with the grade and level of responsibility of this post, for which the post holder has the necessary experience and/or training.
- This job description will be reviewed and amended in the light of changing professional demands. A job description is not a rigid or inflexible document but acts to provide guidelines to the duties expected while in post.

Last reviewed: *October 2026*

Person specification

Essential skills:

Essential skills	Assessment
Qualification A degree or equivalent qualification	Application form
Work experience Demonstrable programme or scheme management experience. Experience of managing programme budgets and finances. Experience of delivering high quality stakeholder relationship management. Experience of risk management processes.	Application form Interview
Knowledge An understanding of the context within which UK universities operate and of the global higher education environment.	Application form Interview
Skills Strong interpersonal and intercultural skills, with a proven ability to work in small, high-performing teams and with colleagues in different parts of an organisation. Ability to plan and manage own time effectively, with demonstrable experience of working across multiple projects to prioritise activity and to meet deadlines. Excellent attention to detail and ability to multitask. Excellent written and oral communication skills, including report writing skills.	Application form Interview

Competencies

Resilience, with an ability to work calmly under pressure and to respond flexibly to new developments and changing priorities.

Political and cultural sensitivity.

Application form

Interview

Demonstrable experience of embedding inclusivity into your work.

Application form

Interview

Desirable skills:**Desirable skills****Assessed by****Qualification**

Application form

Project management qualification

Work experience

Interview

Experience delivering partnerships, grants and contracts.

Experience of working on international projects, particularly those with a focus on mobility, e.g. student exchanges, scholarship or fellowship schemes.

Knowledge

Interview

An understanding of the funding landscape, particularly as it relates to international research collaboration.

Knowledge of university processes, particularly related to partnerships and grants.

Competencies

Interview

Ability to build, develop and maintain networks and partnerships that help an organisation to achieve their strategic goals.

Skills

Professional and cultural judgement in balancing diverse stakeholder interests when resolving sensitive issues.

Proven analytical and problem-solving skills to develop creative and workable solutions to challenges.

Interview

Working at UUK: Benefits

If you care about higher education, its ability to transform people's lives and impact wider society, joining our team is a great opportunity.

Universities play a huge part in our everyday lives, and we want to help them make even more of a difference. We bring together leaders of UK universities to discuss higher education issues and represent and campaign on their behalf to the government, business, the media and beyond.

People drive our success, and we value everyone's work.

Universities UK operates a hybrid working framework involving the opportunity to work from home and in the office. There will be a small number of roles where employees will be required to work from an office, but typically the majority of employees will be able to work remotely on average 60% of their working week. All employees are welcome to use their contractual office for their whole working week if that is their preference.

"I joined Universities UK three months after leaving university, and I immediately felt so welcomed and supported. I've been given opportunities to develop new skills, get involved in such a variety of interesting projects and work with colleagues across the organisation. It's a really friendly place to work and I feel trusted and valued to put my own views and ideas into practice."

Sofia Henderson, Senior Content Producer

TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT STAFF BENEFITS AND WELLBEING, VISIT OUR [WORKING AT UUK PAGE](#)

Staff benefits

Leave



- 27 days annual leave rising to 30 days after 3 years' service and 32 days after 5 years' service plus bank holidays (England and Wales).
- 26 days annual leave rising to 29 days after 3 years' service and 32 days after 5 years' service plus bank holidays (Scotland).
- 4 closure days between Christmas and New year.
- 2 days paid leave each year for volunteering activities.
- Up to 5 days paid carers leave in a year.

Wellbeing



- Access to 24 hour 7 day a week Employee Assistant Programme which extends access to close family.
- Virtual Medical Care – 24 hour access to GP consultations and physio.
- Mental Health First Aiders.
- Staff network groups.

Financial wellbeing



- Interest free season ticket loans after 6 months.
- Staff benefit fund loan scheme.
- 'Learn for you' – claim £100 each year tax free towards hobbies and activities outside of work.
- Funding support for continuing development, up to 2/3 of course costs paid with the remaining funded through an interest free loan recovered through monthly pay.
- Generous pension scheme (USS or SAUL depending on role).
- Salary sacrifice Cyclescheme.
- Salary sacrifice Electric Car Scheme.
- A £45 contribution every two years towards eye tests and the purchase of glasses where required.



Home working



- Hybrid Working policy – 40% of time averaged over a month to be spent in the office or meeting face to face with stakeholders, allowing 60% of time to be worked from home.
- Support for homeworking set up and furniture/equipment loan for the life of your employment with us.

External schemes



- As employees of a registered charity you will be able to access:
 - [Charity worker discounts](#)
 - [The Company Shop](#)
 - [Tickets for Good](#).
- Access to Able Futures for mental wellbeing support.
- Apple hardware discount scheme.

Our office facilities



- Tea/coffee/milk provided for refreshments.
- Kitchens available in all offices with access to fridges and microwaves.
- Shower facilities available (London and Cardiff).
- Cycle storage facilities.

Equality, diversity and inclusion

We want every member of staff to feel that they belong, can be themselves and that their opinion counts.

We can only reach our ambitious goals with multi-skilled, multi-experienced teams. Different perspectives make our work better.

What unites us is a passion for higher education and the enthusiasm to spread the message about the positive impacts UK universities have on our society.

We are committed to the equal treatment of all current and prospective employees and do not condone discrimination on the basis of age, disability, sex, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity, race or ethnicity, religion or belief, gender identity, or marriage and civil partnership. We aspire to have a diverse and inclusive workplace and strongly encourage suitably qualified applicants from a wide range of backgrounds to apply and join UUK.

An equal, inclusive and diverse place to work

Equality, diversity and inclusion help create new ideas and approaches to teaching, learning and research. With that in mind, we're building a culture where difference is valued. We're constantly evolving the programmes and tools that help all employees grow and manage rewarding careers.

**TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION AT UNIVERSITIES UK,
READ OUR [INCLUSION AND DIVERSITY ACTION PLAN](#)**

Staff engagement and wellbeing at work

Staff engagement

In our 2023 staff survey, we scored higher than similar organisations for caring about our employees and treating them with fairness and respect, and that 86 per cent felt proud to work for UUK.

Wellbeing at work

We care about the mental health and wellbeing of all our staff. Having open and honest conversations about mental health is important to us. Our commitment to staff wellbeing includes:

- Training some members of staff to become mental health first aiders so they are there for colleagues who need support and advice.
- Raising awareness by recognising Mental Health Awareness Week with external speakers, opportunities to come together and talk and take part in activities
- Training for managers and all staff on mental health awareness
- Employee Assistance support helpline.



Universities UK is the collective voice of 142 universities in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Our mission is to create the conditions for

UK universities to be the best in the world; maximising their positive impact locally, nationally and globally.

Universities UK acts on behalf of universities, represented by their heads of institution



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