

Further Particulars



Communications Assistant (Ref 325) STEPS Centre (Social, Technological, Environmental Pathways to Sustainability)

Part-time, one year fixed term contract

28 hours a week (4 days)

Grade 5

The STEPS Centre (Social, Technological and Environmental Pathways to Sustainability)

www.steps-centre.org

The STEPS Centre is a major ESRC-funded research centre run jointly by IDS and SPRU Science and Technology Policy Research. Started on 1 October 2006, STEPS is building an innovative research, policy, training and networking agenda to help make technologies work for the poor. This is an exciting opportunity to join and contribute centrally to the success of this new initiative.

The Communications Assistant will be employed by and based at IDS, but work across both IDS and SPRU.

About IDS www.ids.ac.uk

The Institute of Development Studies is a leading global organisation for research, teaching and communication on international development.

IDS was founded in 1966 and enjoys an international reputation based on the quality of its work and its commitment to applying academic skills to real world challenges. Its purpose is to understand and explain the world, and to try to change it – to influence as well as to inform.

IDS hosts five dynamic research programmes, eight popular postgraduate courses, and a family of world-class web-based knowledge services. These three spheres are integrated in a unique combination – as a development knowledge hub, IDS is connected into and is a convener of networks throughout the world.

The Institute is home to approximately 100 researchers, 70 information staff, 65 support staff and about 150 students at any one time. But the IDS community extends far beyond, encompassing an extensive network of partners, former staff and students across the development community worldwide.

Our vision and mission

Our vision is a world in which poverty does not exist, social justice prevails and the voices of all people are heard in national and international institutions. We believe that generating, mobilising and sharing knowledge, through research, teaching and communications, plays a key part in realising this vision.

Our mission is to work with a global network of partners to:

- Develop dynamic ideas and analysis on the global issues that shape our world
- Provide practical solutions that accelerate sustainable poverty reduction, promote social justice and ensure that all people's voices are heard
- Use authoritative research, innovative teaching and cutting-edge communications to influence key audiences in order to achieve our vision.

Our core values

The IDS strategy is built upon our core values and ways of working, which are:

- a concern for equity and social justice
- an explicit recognition of power relations
- the independence to challenge orthodoxy
- transparency and accountability to our stakeholders
- engaging a plurality of partners and perspectives
- continuous learning across all our work.

IDS - a unique combination of research, teaching and communications

In all of our work, IDS aims to challenge convention and to generate fresh ideas that foster new approaches to development policy and practice. Such problem-focused thinking requires a commitment to multidisciplinary, not just across social sciences, but across research, teaching and communications.

Research

The research programmes at IDS are organised in five closely linked multidisciplinary teams. We also host a growing number of international, multi-partner research projects at the Institute. Through collaborative ways of working we aim to establish creative and equal partnerships in which research agendas can be driven by Southern perspectives.

- **Globalisation:** focusing on the dynamics of the global environment in which the private sector investment and growth necessary for poverty reduction are situated.
- **Governance:** focusing on the politics of state engagement and public action in developing countries.
- **Knowledge, Technology and Society:** exploring how science and technology can improve the livelihoods and well-being of poor people, and promote greater social justice
- **Participation, Power and Social Change:** looking at how and where participation by citizens can make a difference to questions of social justice and development
- **Vulnerability and Poverty Reduction:** improving the understanding of vulnerability, and designing effective means of addressing it, as a central component of poverty reduction.

Teaching and learning

From its earliest years, IDS has had a tradition of teaching and training with distinctive emphasis on plurality and multidisciplinary study. Our postgraduate degrees, accredited by the University of Sussex, comprise a DPhil by research, a two-year MPhil in Development Studies, plus a portfolio of MA programmes. These include an MA in Development Studies and further MAs across a range of specialisations: Gender, Governance, Participation, Poverty, and Science and Society. The IDS learning and teaching programme is known for its academic excellence. It is strongly research-led, drawing the ongoing work of researchers both within and beyond IDS into the classroom, and is significantly enhanced by the wealth of experience that each graduate student brings to the Institute.

Mobilising knowledge for development

IDS is a pioneer in development communications. We host a range of innovative and highly regarded knowledge services – including Eldis, id21, BRIDGE, Livelihoods Connect and the British Library for Development Studies. These services seek to mobilise knowledge to support more informed decision-making by those in a position to influence change. This is based on our belief that decision-making is strengthened when it is underpinned by timely and relevant information that reflects a diversity of viewpoints. The IDS Knowledge Services identify and bridge knowledge gaps and use innovative information-sharing approaches to provide better access to the global pool of knowledge on development.

SPRU (Science and Technology Policy Research, www.sussex.ac.uk/spru)

SPRU at the University of Sussex is one of the world leaders in policy research on science, technology and innovation (STI) and its wider economic, social and environmental implications. Its objectives are:

- to advance understanding of the relationship between STI developments and society through pioneering multidisciplinary research
- to generate new empirical data, methods, concepts and theories which explain the role of STI in the economies of the world
- to deliver postgraduate training which provides the analytical and practical skills needed to understand and respond to the STI challenges of the future
- to advise those concerned with the development and implementation of science and technology policy and those seeking to manage science and technology in society
- to work with policymakers, firms and civil society to develop the tools and techniques needed to manage STI for purposes of competitiveness, sustainable development and social well-being

SPRU has a team of 40 researchers from a variety of disciplinary backgrounds in the social and natural sciences and engineering and incorporates a Graduate Research Centre of the University, with some 70 research students and 70 MSc students, approximately half of whom are from overseas.

The STEPS Centre (Social, Technological and Environmental Pathways to Sustainability)
www.steps-centre.org

The STEPS (Social, Technological and Environmental Pathways to Sustainability) Centre, funded by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC), brings together 14 academic staff from the Knowledge, Technology and Society team at IDS and the Environment and Energy Group at SPRU. The Centre is hosted administratively at IDS where the director, Professor Melissa Leach, is based, but its research, training and networking activities are joint between the two institutions, making use of state-of-the-art office and workshop facilities in both buildings. The Centre's budget is £4.6 million over five years (from October 2006). Much of its work will be carried out through partnerships with institutions in at least nine developing countries.

The STEPS Centre starts from the recognition that environments, technologies and societies are changing rapidly, whether through climate change, diseases like BSE, HIV/AIDS and avian 'flu, novel chemical and biotechnologies, and rapid population and information flows and growth of market relationships. What new concepts, methods and policy arrangements are needed to respond to such 21st century challenges? How in the contemporary world can environmental sustainability and advances in science and technology be linked with assuring better livelihoods, health and social justice for poorer people in developing countries? STEPS aims to address these challenges by developing an innovative new 'pathways approach' to identify the pathways through which technologies, ecologies and social systems interact in development, and how these can be governed to lead to processes and outcomes that are more resilient, sustainable, socially just and favourable for the poor. The Centre is developing, testing and applying this approach through interdisciplinary research projects in three domains: food and agriculture; health and disease; water and sanitation.

These three domains link with thematic work around the dynamics of pathways, their governance, and the design of new tools and methods. Through cross-cutting analysis linking findings across projects, domains and themes; through a targeted set of communications and policy-engagement activities, and through training and capacity building efforts, STEPS seeks to connect the development of new theory with practical approaches that create opportunities for poorer and marginalised people.

Job Description - Overall purpose of the role:

Job Title: Communications Assistant, STEPS Centre (Ref 325)

Responsible to: Communications Manager, STEPS Centre

Main Duties and Responsibilities:

Applications are invited to assist with communications, networking and dissemination activities for the STEPS Centre for a one year fixed term contract from 1 September 2009. The postholder will be based in the Knowledge, Technology and Society (KNOTS) team at IDS and will report to STEPS Centre Communications Manager. The STEPS Centre highly values communications as an integral part of its work, and as such, the postholder will be central to the success of our research projects.

This position requires a communications professional with a high degree of initiative and the ability to interact effectively with a wide range of internal and external people in the UK and beyond. The Communications Assistant needs to combine strong interpersonal, organisational, writing, web and multimedia skills with imagination and flair for cutting-edge communications. The postholder must demonstrate a passion for communications both in development research and a wider context.

The Communications Assistant will contribute to the implementation of the Centre's overall communications strategy. Approximately half of the postholder's time will be spent working on the Centre's flagship project for 2009-2010 - Innovation, Sustainability, Development: A New Manifesto (www.steps-centre.org/manifesto).

The postholder will contribute to the broader KNOTS team which hosts a dynamic team of four communications specialists (STEPS Communications Manager, two Communications Officers for the Health and Social Change programme and one for Future Agricultures Consortium). They will also liaise with IDS Central Communications and the IDS Information Department, taking advantage of potential synergies. S/he will be able to draw on the advice and support of communications staff in the KNOTS team and other parts of IDS.

We are looking for someone who combines the relevant communications skills, with interest and experience in the specific issues that STEPS is addressing, enthusiasm for communications and the skills necessary to help translate research findings into messages for policy, practitioner, media and lay audiences. Specialist skills and experience in Web 2.0 and multimedia (video, audio) applications and development are required.

The Communications Assistant will work with the support and guidance of the Communications Manager and to undertake the following responsibilities:

1. To work with the STEPS Centre's Communications Manager to implement the Centre's communications strategy.
2. To assist with the development and implementation of a publications strategy, collating relevant stakeholder databases to help target publications (and other communications) effectively.
3. To maintain and update the Centre's multimedia platforms - website, blog, RSS and Twitter feeds, Flickr site, YouTube and Blip.tv channels and Slideshare) - including writing and editing of materials (including video and audio) to keep the platforms lively and up-to-date.
4. To write, edit and produce appropriate tools and outputs for communicating the Centre's research and policy-engagement activities in print, electronic and face-to-face formats,

including briefings, comment and opinion pieces and interactive online media, as well as journal articles and edited books.

5. To co-ordinate publicity and PR events, including helping with media work.
6. To organise communications activities for workshops, symposia and seminars in the UK and internationally.
7. To produce the quarterly STEPS e-newsletter.
8. Assist with the monitoring, evaluation and learning from the STEPS Centre's communications work.
9. To provide support for the communications activities of staff and partners as appropriate.
10. To liaise with the KNOTS team communications staff and IDS Central Communications to ensure STEPS work contributes to the implementation of the IDS Communications Strategy and is positively represented in the communications outputs of the Institute.
11. To liaise with colleagues in the IDS Information Department, to ensure good coverage of STEPS-related research in IDS knowledge services, and to explore ways of linking up in other ways to share ideas, expertise, contacts and partnership opportunities.
12. To take part in other Centre, KNOTS team and Institute-wide discussions and activities as required, including active participation in the IDS communications peer group.

Person specification

Requirement	Essential	Desirable	Method of Assessment
Educational qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First or second degree (or equivalent) in a relevant subject 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Qualification in relevant communications field (such as journalism, PR, design or multimedia communications) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Application and interview
Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broad-based knowledge of international development issues • Good understanding of current thinking and practice in research communications • Good understanding of multimedia communications in a digital age 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good understanding of the importance of partnerships in research initiatives • Good knowledge of organisations, networks, and information sources around STEPS issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Application, interview and exercise
Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong all-round communication skills, especially writing, editing and web-based • Web-authoring skills using software such as Dreamweaver and CMS such as Drupal • Web 2.0 application skills, such as blogging and social media (WordPress, Blogger, Flickr, Twitter, Facebook, YouTube) • Video and audio editing skills using software such as Windows Movie Maker and Audacity • Ability to abstract, analyse and communicate academic material and key messages in plain language • Ability to put together and use databases using spread-sheeting skills (using Excel for example) • Ability to work as part of a team in a complex environment • Strong interpersonal skills, including the ability to liaise and communicate with staff and partners at all levels of seniority 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design skills, using software such as InDesign 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Application and interview and exercise
Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience of planning and implementing a programme of communications activities • Experience of summarising complex information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating communications strategies • Experience of 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Application and interview

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience of writing and editing • Undertaking communications monitoring and evaluation work • Print buying and print production experience 	<p>working with the media</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience of communicating to policy audiences • Experience of living or working in a developing country context 	
Attributes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good judgement in dealing with sensitive communication issues • A team player with energy, enthusiasm and a commitment to communicating about development • Ability to work autonomously on work set by manager with a high degree of motivation and initiative • Good work organisation and time management skills, working to strict deadlines • An interest in developing accessible web and paper-based resources • Demonstrable enthusiasm for research communications and communications in a wider context 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A good networker, with the ability to make links between issues and organisations and build relationships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Application and interview
Health/Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some short UK or international travel may be required 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interview, Pre Employment Health Questionnaire

Communications Assistant (Ref: 325)

Information to Candidates

Closing date: ??? 2009 (12 midday UK time)

Interview date: ??? 2009

The following information is intended as a useful guide to applicants considering joining the Institute. Full details are supplied with an offer of appointment.

MEDICAL

As part of the Institute's selection procedure for employment, we ask all prospective employees to complete a pre-employment medical questionnaire. The purpose is to ensure we fulfil our responsibilities under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and ensure that the proposed employment does not present any risks from a medical point of view.

Further details about this will be sent to you following the initial interview.

REFERENCES

An offer of employment will be subject to the receipt of satisfactory references. We require two references, one of which must be from your present or most recent employer. The Institute reserves the right to contact your previous employer before an offer is made. Unless your permission is granted, your present employer will not be approached until after an offer of employment has been made.

PROBATIONARY PERIOD

The first 6 months of your employment with the Institute will be counted as a probationary period. During this time the Institute will make an assessment of your suitability for acceptance to a permanent position.

SALARY

Candidates will normally be offered a starting salary appropriate to their qualifications and experience within the range indicated in the advertisement (IDS Grade 5, £23,228 – 28,220 per annum, dependant on experience).

Salaries are paid on the last working day of the month by credit transfer to a bank or building society account.

Any cost of living increases are normally awarded on 1st August.

Subject to satisfactory performance automatic incremental progression occurs on the 1st October, except if appointed between 1st April - 30th September inclusive, then the first increment will occur

on 1st October the following calendar year, until the top of the grade is reached. Further details will be available on appointment and are contained in the Incremental Progression Policy.

PENSION

The post holder is eligible to join the Institute's USS pension scheme.

HOURS OF WORK

The normal working hours are 35 hours per week, (normal office hours are 9am – 5pm, with one hour for lunch).

HOLIDAYS

The annual leave entitlement is 24 days, (2 days for each complete month worked). The Institute's holiday year runs from 1st October to 30th September. In addition to the normal public holidays and 24 normal working days as annual leave (pro rata for part-time), the post-holder is eligible for up to 6 non-negotiable closure days.

NOTICE

During your probationary service the period of notice to terminate your employment is 1 month. Following successful completion of your probationary period, the notice period you are required to give the Institute becomes 3 months.

ANNUAL REVIEW

The Institute operates an annual appraisal system, further details available on appointment.

OTHER BENEFITS

Upon satisfactory completion of your probationary period, a number of benefits are available to the post holder including loans for a variety of purposes, including travel loans and bicycle loans, and support in the attainment of a relevant professional qualification in line with the Professional Development Policy, further details available on appointment.

The Institute offers a Child Care Voucher Scheme and a Childcare Fund.

Staff of the Institute are eligible to use the University of Sussex gym and sporting facilities at staff rates.

LOCATION

The appointment is located at the Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex, Brighton; employees are required to reside within 20 miles of the Institute's premises in the University of Sussex.

- **About Brighton and Hove**

IDS is located on the University of Sussex campus, on the edge of the beautiful Sussex Downs and just 10 minutes from the lively south-coast city of Brighton and Hove. Just 50 miles south of London, Brighton and Hove is a popular destination for visitors seeking respite from the capital on its long promenade, its famous Pier and its pebbly beach. The intellectual life of the university is enhanced by Brighton and Hove's reputation as a city of culture—for example as host to one of Europe's largest annual arts festivals each May--and heritage.

APPLICATIONS ON OFFICIAL FORM ONLY TO (CVs are not accepted):

Human Resources
Institute of Development Studies
University of Sussex
Brighton BN1 9RE

Alternatively please email your application to hr@ids.ac.uk. We would recommend that electronic applications are sent 24 hours in advance of the deadline, to ensure there are no technical difficulties.

Please ensure that you quote the correct reference number

Owing to the large number of enquiries received and consequential processing/postage costs, regrettably, it is not possible to enter into further correspondence with all applicants. Therefore, if you do not receive any communication by the interview date, please assume that, on this occasion, your application has not been successful.

IDS values diversity and is committed to equal opportunities; applications are welcome from all suitably qualified candidates who meet the stated criteria.

Thank you for your interest in working with the Institute of Development Studies