

# ADVERTISING ASSOCIATION

## Public Affairs Director



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Millbank Tower, London SW1P 4QP

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The communications, policy and advocacy headhunter

# Headlines

- Title:** Public Affairs Director
- Salary:** Competitive six figure salary plus benefits (4 days a week an alternative option)
- Location:** London
- Benefits:** Contributory pension (AA matching employee contributions to a maximum of 8.75%), 25 days holiday pa, BUPA health, insurance, life insurance, season ticket loan, cycle to work scheme and Permanent Health Insurance / Group income protection.
- Website:** [www.adassoc.org.uk](http://www.adassoc.org.uk)  
[2022 Annual Review](#)



# About the Advertising Association

The Advertising Association (AA) is the trade body that brings together all parts of the advertising industry - the advertisers, the ad agencies, commercial media owners, advertising production and market research sectors - to represent the common interests of the overall industry. The AA's mission is:

'To promote the role and rights of responsible advertising, that is trusted, inclusive and sustainable, and its impact on people, society, businesses and the economy'.

Advertising plays a vital role in the economy, promoting competition and innovation across markets, which drives down prices and improves efficiency, for both consumer and B2B. It also provides essential communications channels for Government and the public sector, as witnessed by the NHS being the largest spender on advertising during the pandemic. It is a large sector, with spend approaching £32bn in 2022, marking a strong post-pandemic recovery.

The UK has a leading global position, with higher per capita exports than any other country and £11bn of advertising services exported in 2020. Like in many other UK creative industries and business services, advertising enjoys a high international reputation for creative and strategic excellence; and many international advertisers choose the UK as a global or regional hub for their business.



# About the Advertising Association

The AA's membership comprises other advertising trade bodies representing the main constituencies in the industry, for instance, ISBA (Incorporated Society of British Advertisers) and the IPA (Institute of Practitioners in Advertising). The advertisers, agencies and media owners set up the AA in 1926, to promote the collective interests that the AA still represents to this day. We also have all the major commercial media owners as members, including ITV, Channel 4, Sky, Google, Meta, the publishers through their trade body, the NMA (News Media Association), and various others.

The AA runs a programme called Front Foot, which leading ad agencies, advertisers and commercial media owners also support.

The AA's think tank, Credos, produces and publishes research on various subjects of interest to the industry, such as public trust in advertising and advertising's contribution to the wider economy.



# About the Advertising Association

Much of this work breaks new ground and is unique to the UK industry.

Other programmes include:

- *Ad Net Zero*, the programme to lead the UK and international industry to net zero emissions in advertising operations and to ensure advertising plays a leading role in driving the behaviour changes to make a sustainable economy.
- *All In* programme to drive greater inclusion of people of all backgrounds and characteristics in advertising.
- *UK Advertising Exports Group*, promoting export and inward investment.
- *AdGreen* programme to measure and reduce the emissions associated with advertising production.
- *Media Smart*, which provides educational resources for schools and parents to improve media literacy and commercial awareness.
- *Credos*, advertising's 'think tank', providing research, analysis, econometrics and other forms of insight to support the AA's work on behalf of the industry.



# The AA Organisation

The AA has 31 staff, mostly London-based and is led by CEO, Stephen Woodford, who joined the AA in late 2016 after a long career in ad agencies, with nearly 25 years in leadership roles.

The AA has four senior directors:

- Public Affairs Director
- Commercial Director
- Communications Director
- Finance Director

Other Directors include:

- Director of Policy Research (who currently manages the Credos team as well as playing a key role in the PA team's policy and regulation work).
- Project Director, AdGreen
- Events Director
- International Trade Director UKAEG



# Prime Responsibility

The Public Affairs Director will manage the reputation and standing of the industry on behalf of AA members with key policy makers, regulators and other opinion leaders, delivering policy and regulatory outcomes that reflect the interests of the industry, demonstrating AA's leadership of the industry agenda and value to its members.

Public Affairs is central to the AA's work. We have an active outreach programme to engage with politicians, policy makers and Whitehall officials, connecting our members to Government. This activity is not limited to Westminster, with increasing engagement in Holyrood, as well as in Brussels, where we maintain relations with our colleagues from other European countries.

The policy issues managed by the AA are becoming ever more complex. The number of regulatory interventions by Government is increasing, and the UK is not only a global advertising market but often sets the policy agenda for the rest of the world to follow.

This role is supported by the 5-person public affairs, policy and regulation team. Key to the success of the AA is cross-disciplinary collaboration internally and with its members. The Public Affairs Director will be an effective and willing collaborator with colleagues at all levels of the organisation and within the AA membership, especially with members' public affairs teams.



# Key Responsibilities

## Key responsibilities

- Develop policy proposals and a strategy to further the AA members' objectives in the policy arena and ensure effective delivery of that strategy.
- Work to achieve 'less and better' regulation in Westminster and Holyrood and where it impacts the UK (for instance on data, audiovisual and advertising policy) at the EU.
- Horizon-scanning for regulatory/policy opportunities and threats and providing intelligence that will help inform members.
- Use this intelligence to inform the AA's research programme and evidence base from the policy perspective, along with the overall communications strategy where appropriate to support desired policy outcomes.
- Protect and promote effective self- and co-regulation, including effective representation of the AA's interests on the Committees of Advertising Practice and position the AA as industry leader in the regulation of advertising in all its forms.
- Make full use of Credos research to impact on the policy-making process – by ensuring that this is evidence-based
- Ensure that relationships are developed and maintained with key policy-makers and regulators, including a high-level contact programme for the AA CEO with stakeholders in Government and regulators.
- Build strong working relationships with the public affairs and policy community across the industry to find consensus, optimise efforts and maximise impact, under the leadership and using the convening power of the AA.
- Deliver recognised value in policy leadership to members and industry, to support and enhance the industry's reputation and success, to ensure value for members is maximised, thereby supporting membership stability and revenue growth.
- Contribute to the achievement of the AA's overall strategy and objectives.



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# Requirements

This is a fast-moving role, with a workload determined by a high degree of regulatory challenge for the advertising industry. The ability to work fast, collaboratively, and be an effective team leader is essential to success.

Calm, clear thinking and analysis, often under pressure from tight deadlines or complex and non-aligned inputs from members, is essential.

Proven experience in complex policy and regulatory issues is essential, along with experience of negotiating pragmatic and balanced outcomes in legislative processes.

Policy issues often need a high degree of technical understanding or are highly nuanced in terms of evidence and arguments. Intellectual rigour and analysis are essential and the ability to convey complex issues simply and clearly to other policy specialists or to non-expert audiences are key skills.

The interests of AA members are often highly aligned (for instance on sustainability and inclusion) but in other areas there may be divergences. Managing these is a key part of the role, so a balance of diplomacy and determination is necessary. Solutions can always be found, but often need careful negotiation and creative thinking.

The advertising industry is fast-paced and pervasive in our everyday lives. Its interests and the AA's work interact with business, media, technology, creativity, economics, politics and wider societal issues, so the work is highly varied and stimulating.

This role will suit an individual with broad interests in politics, society, and the media, who wants a fast-paced and varied role, with a pivotal position in a trade body representing a dynamic industry and one where the UK has a world-leading position.



# Next Steps

**Ellwood Atfield recruits for organisations that are seeking to influence their external environments.**

To apply for this role, please send your CV and supporting statement to Gavin Ellwood.

Following interviews with Ellwood Atfield successful candidates will be invited for interview with the Advertising Association.

We are committed to, and value all forms of diversity, including but not limited to age, disability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, race, religion and sexual orientation.

Please contact Gavin Ellwood or Geraldine Hetherington for an initial discussion.



Gavin Ellwood is the founder of Ellwood Atfield and has twenty-five years' headhunting experience. He advises the Boards of a diverse range of organisations and global brands on the appointment of communications and advocacy experts. Gavin is a Past Master of the City of London Company of Communicators.

07768 927 209 [gavin@ellwoodatfield.com](mailto:gavin@ellwoodatfield.com)



Geraldine Hetherington is a Board Director of Ellwood Atfield and qualified solicitor. With sixteen years' headhunting experience she specialises in senior appointments. Prior to this Geraldine was the Chief Operating Officer of Hudson Global, Inc. in the UK and the former HR Director of Monster and TMP.

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