

JOB DESCRIPTION: SENIOR WRITER

Role	Senior Writer/ Senior Editorial Manager		
Reports to	Managing Director	Direct reports	Editorial Manager
Budgetary responsibility	N/A	Resource responsibility	N/A
Safeguarding	Adhere to ISD's Safeguarding Policy	Key relationships	Communications & Editorial team, Research team
Contract	Full-time	Location	UK, US or Germany/ Hybrid
Salary	£45,000 - £60,000 / €60,000 - €90,000 / \$85,000 - \$110,000 (depending on experience)	Level	6 (Senior Manager)

About ISD

ISD is a think and do tank that works globally to safeguard public safety, national security, human rights and democracy in the digital age. Combining research and analysis with government advisory work and the design and delivery of international training, education and communications programs, ISD works to implement real-world, evidence-based responses to these challenges. ISD has teams in London, Amman, Berlin, Paris and Washington DC.

The Communications and Editorial Team is central to ISD's mission, bringing to life our research and analysis and ensuring that our insight reaches the right people. The Communications and Editorial Team works hand-in-glove with programming, analysis and action teams across timezones and continents, helping to foster collaboration and bring our work to the wider world.

Role Purpose

The quality of ISD's work speaks for itself, and we are proud of our reputation as a leading global think and do tank. ISD produces over 100 research and/or policy outputs a year, as well as hosting or participating in high-level events and engaging with governments, policy makers and institutions across the globe.

ISD is seeking a highly skilled and detail-oriented Senior Writer to lead the editorial development of our research and communications output. This role will ensure ISD's public-facing materials are consistently high quality, impactful and accessible. Working with the Communications, Research and Executive Leadership Teams, the Senior Writer will play a central role in ensuring editorial excellence across all ISD products and platforms.

The ideal candidate will join the team with significant experience as a journalist, editor, researcher in a senior role in a media, political, public sector, research or non-profit organisation. We seek someone with a proven track-record in a policy or communications and engagement role focused on issues such as conflict resolution, hate, extremism, polarisation, disinformation and/or terrorism. They will be comfortable in quickly understanding and being guided by the expertise of the research, policy and programming teams at ISD, and able to fluently communicate ISD's work across the breadth of ISD's stakeholders.

The successful candidate will have a good understanding of the issues we work on and will be motivated by a desire to ensure that all our communications – whether to donors, policy makers, a lay reader or a changemaker of any kind – enlighten and enable positive change. Helping colleagues communicate clearly and compellingly with a focus on quality and rigour will be at the heart of this role. This is about translating research, analysis, vision and insight into a range of outputs and real-world communication products that drive the mission forward.

Core Responsibilities

The Senior Writer will produce multi-channel content for diverse stakeholders as both a content creator and strategic communications lead. They will have the following key responsibilities:

Content Development and Editorial Oversight – 40%

- Serve as a lead editor for ISD’s research and policy outputs, ensuring intellectual rigour, clarity, consistency, and quality across written materials
- Craft compelling, evidence-based content across formats (policy briefs, reports, short form pieces, social media)
- Implement robust editorial processes with appropriate sign-off mechanisms
- Safeguard organisational reputation through rigorous quality standards
- Maintain consistent organisational voice while adapting tone for different platforms and audiences
- Facilitate knowledge exchange between research, policy, business development and communications functions
- Translate complex research into accessible, actionable narratives for targeted stakeholders

Strategic Communication and Stakeholder Engagement – 40%

- Align ISD’s communications with the organisation’s strategy and theory of change
- Identify opportunities to influence discourse and stakeholder perspectives
- Develop and maintain media relationships to extend reach across channels
- Create messaging frameworks for major campaigns and policy initiatives
- Prepare topline and position statements to navigate sensitive media interest
- Conduct horizon scanning to anticipate emerging communication needs
- Manage crisis communication protocols and response frameworks
- Tailor communications for specific audience segments with distinct needs
- Cultivate relationships with external experts and potential amplifiers
- Develop targeted dissemination strategies to maximise impact
- Evaluate communications impact and audience engagement

Staff Development, Team Management and Media Training – 20%

- Oversee the Senior Communications Manager and a team of regional writers/ copy editor analysts
- Design and deliver tailored writing workshops addressing organisational needs
- Provide constructive feedback on drafts from non-specialist colleagues, and mentor colleagues to elevate their writing capabilities
- Create resources and style guides to institutionalise quality standards
- Deliver media training to build confidence in public speaking across the organisation
- Coach subject matter experts on translating technical knowledge for non-specialist audiences

- Support colleagues in handling challenging questions and media scenarios

This role requires exceptional writing skills, strategic acumen, diplomatic interpersonal abilities, and sophisticated understanding of how to influence diverse stakeholders through carefully crafted content.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Expectations

We expect all staff, consultants and volunteers to:

- Commit to ISD's vision, mission and [Guiding Principles](#)
- Foster diversity, inclusivity and equality of opportunity at ISD
- Demonstrate respect for others and safeguard those who are vulnerable
- Carry out their duties in accordance with ISD's policies and procedures
- Adhere to risk management and security instructions at all times

Our commitment to Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

We endeavor to recruit a range of candidates into ISD, to strengthen our team and contribute to our inclusive organizational culture. We particularly welcome applications from candidates currently underrepresented across ISD – including those from diverse ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds, those with disabilities, and members of the LGBTQ+ community. We have tried to make this recruitment process as accessible as possible, but please let us know if you have any access requirements that you would like us to be aware of during this process.

Competencies

These reflect ISD's [Guiding Principles](#) which we expect all members of the team to embody, regardless of seniority and role. How these competencies are assessed is outlined in ISD's Performance Review Process.

Guiding Principles	Competencies
Integrity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal integrity • Focus on quality
Collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respect for others • Commitment to the team
Agility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Efficiency and effectiveness • Problem Solving
Courage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic thinking • Growth Mindset

Specific Requirements

These are a priority for this specific role, and form part of our assessment during recruitment, probation and ongoing performance management. They are also a framework for focusing continuing professional and personal development.

	Essential	Desirable
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Knowledge, training and qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Degree-level qualification or equivalent relevant experience • Excellent understanding of ISD's issue areas, including information operations, extremism and polarisation • A good understanding of the social media landscape 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Master's Degree Qualification or substantial relevant experience • Subject matter expertise in one or more of ISD's work areas of extremism, hate, information operations or digital policy
Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Substantial professional experience as a writer, editor, journalist or researcher • Experience communicating with policy makers and institutions • Significant experience engaging with senior stakeholders • Experience in copywriting and editing for a range of audiences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Background in media, think tanks or public sector organisations • Experience working in an international environment with teams with diverse backgrounds • Significant media experience and ability to identify and pitch stories • Experience in working and publishing on sensitive and difficult issues
Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exceptional written and spoken English • Clear, fluent and concise oral and written communication skills demonstrated in a range of outputs from longform reports to donor facing materials and social media copy • Outstanding attention to detail • Highly organised with the ability to be flexible, multi-task and respond proactively • Ability to work well both independently and in a team • Competent and confident in use of full MS Office suite 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong writing and communication skills, with a clear ability to reflect ISD's 'voice' and style guide in a range of formats. • Strong team management skills (remote, international teams)