

Freelancer Brief

PR & Marketing support - Scotland

Background

Eden Project Communities' vision is to create happier and healthier communities where people know one another and neighbourhoods thrive. We do this by bringing people together to actively engage with each other, helping to build more resilient and better connected communities. We inspire people to take small steps that make a big difference. We bring people together.

Each year on the first weekend in June, millions of people take part in **The Big Lunch**, the UK's annual get together for neighbours. The Big Lunch is an idea from the Eden Project made possible by the National Lottery that sees people sharing food and having fun as they get to know each other. Big Lunches happen in gardens, parks and in the streets – in 2020, we even held Big Lunches online! **This year, The Big Lunch date is 5th and 6th June.**

This shared moment, held annually on the first weekend in June, creates vital space in our busy modern lives to come together in a nationwide act of community friendship. The Big Lunch is fully inclusive and brings people of all ages, faiths, ethnicities, and backgrounds together.

The Big Lunch has a lasting impact on communities and individuals. Our research shows:

Of people who attended the Big Lunch in 2020:

- 3.5 million people **felt less lonely** during the pandemic because of The Big Lunch, and agreed that it helped create a stronger sense of community.
- 3.3 million people said they've **made new friends** as a result of The Big Lunch
- 3.7 million people agreed The Big Lunch was **just the kind of event people needed** during the pandemic

In communities that regularly hold big lunches:

- Three quarters of people who organised a big lunch **felt supported by others in their community** during the pandemic
- Two thirds of people who organised a big lunch say their neighbourhood feels like a **friendlier place to live** – two thirds say
- Nearly half say that **new community groups or initiatives** have been set up in their community

The Big Lunch is for anyone and everyone – it's a fun way to get started in your community, and we offer further support for ongoing community activities through our peer led Network.

Inspiration, support, sharing and reciprocity are at the heart of our work, summarised in **three programme goals** to:

1. **Grow The Big Lunch** into a recognised event in the national calendar with millions of people from all walks of life taking part and benefiting annually.
2. **Support people, organisations and groups** to build new relationships and work together to help create a stronger sense of community.
3. **Encourage people to actively engage in their community** and support the development of skills and confidence to enable them to take community action.

Why does this matter?

The COVID-19 pandemic showed how just how much we rely on our communities and the people around us. Social contact with friends and neighbours keeps us happy and healthy, support from our neighbours and community makes us more resilient when times are tough. Research proves that vibrant local support networks with good levels of

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intergenerational connection are the foundation for happy, thriving communities making us better placed to face life's every day challenges and those that lay ahead.

What next?

Most critical now is how we scale The Big Lunch up, to build and mobilise social capital so that the benefits of better neighbourhood connections can ripple out.

How will we do it?

To achieve our ambitious targets we must deliver three key actions - they are:

1. To make The Big Lunch **Easy**
2. To make The Big Lunch **Famous**
3. To make The Big Lunch **Matter**

We are looking for freelance support in Scotland to help make The Big Lunch Weekend **famous**. We want the initiative to become a household name, and a recognised event in the national calendar with millions of people from all walks of life taking part and benefiting annually. We want to build a narrative that speaks to people in Scotland, that recognises what it's like to live in Scotland and the amazing things going on in our communities.

To 'make The Big Lunch **famous**' we need to increase awareness of The Big Lunch Weekend, and convert this awareness into participation. Given the current lockdown, we feel that the best way to do this is through digital marketing, using paid advertising and effective digital content to reach people in their homes. Secondly, we also feel that Scottish media, particularly local media, are effective ways to reach people engaged in community life. We're also exploring working with Scottish ambassadors, and other forms of paid advertising. However, your knowledge and expertise will help us develop this strategy.

Audiences

In 2020, over 4 million people held Big Lunches, connecting with their community online or in small numbers during lockdown. Our aim for 2021 is to focus on growing the number of small events – not only because there is likely to be more appetite for smaller gatherings as we leave lockdown, but because we know more meaningful connections happen at smaller Big Lunch events. We also know that for many people, connecting online feels more manageable, and we're expecting that online Big Lunches will continue this year.

Most Big Lunch organisers are female 35-64, and so will always be a key audience for us. However our research tells us that young people, and people living in cities are feeling most disconnected from their communities, and are more likely to suffer from loneliness. We therefore see this audience as one that will benefit from The Big Lunch and so we will be targeting these groups in 2021. We excel at supporting deprived and hard to reach communities to get together, and this will need to continue.

Considerations

After a year of COVID, there is an appetite for social connection. People throughout the UK have got more involved in their community, including through mutual aid and volunteering, and many people are feeling inspired to do the same. However, others will feel anxious about this return to social activity, or may not be able to due to health conditions. For them, and for those directly affected by COVID over the last year this will feel bittersweet. Our messaging will reflect this, and we will create opportunities for the Big Lunch to happen online as well as face to face.

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Our society remains **politically polarised**, particularly in the context of Brexit and discussions around Scottish independence. Our aim is to create a space at the table for everyone, where our common humanity is greater than our political differences, and where we can

The Big Lunch isn't new. We've been bringing people together for more than a decade, so have built up an engaged group of spokespeople and case studies. Our storytelling needs to inspire, but not be daunting, striking a balance between impact and fun.

Freelancer Requirements:

We now need the support of a creative and experienced communications and marketing professional to use their digital marketing skills, media relationships and industry knowledge to help us make The Big Lunch into a household name in Scotland.

You will have a wide variety of knowledge and skills across communications and digital marketing. No day will be the same, and likely activities will include:

- Using existing media relationships in local and national media to promote The Big Lunch campaign
- Producing and editing press releases for a Scottish audience, using content and research from UK team
- Work with the Scotland country manager to identify ways to promote the campaign to a Scottish audience more effectively.
- Identifying and writing up case studies for use in media and online
- Identify opportunities for thought and opinion pieces in Scottish media
- Generate creative content for digital & social output, as well as using centrally produced campaign assets such as video to engage Scottish audiences in The Big Lunch campaign
- Building a digital marketing strategy to amplify our campaign through paid content
- Develop an Instagram presence for Eden Project Communities in Scotland, and build relationships with influencers in-nation
- Record and report activities, coverage and reach

You will work closely with the Scotland team, which consists of Sophie Bridger, the Country Manager for Scotland, and our two part time Community Network Developers. Although based in the Edinburgh area, the Scotland team is entirely home-based. As such, you'll also be working from home, and will need to work well independently and be comfortable using remote technologies such as Zoom. You will be linked up as required with other members of the UK communications and content teams, as well as with existing consultants.

Budget

We are publicly funded and operate within a budget that limits our capacity. We need to be effective and strategic and put our resources to best use. We can offer:

- 28 – 32 days between end March and mid-June, roughly 2 days a week
- Day rate (inc VAT) to be discussed.
- A limited budget for advertising is also available

If interested, please send a short (max 500 words) covering letter explaining why you would suit this contract, your CV and a few examples of your work to Sophie Bridger at sbridger@edenproject.com. If you'd like to discuss this role, please call Sophie on 07703 189049.

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