

Public Affairs Manager

Full time, permanent contract

Starting date: As soon as possible

Contract type: Full time contract

Salary: £45,000 to 55,000 / CHF 90,000-95,000

Location: Geneva or London

Application closing date: 5th April 2021



About BCI

The Better Cotton Initiative (BCI) — the largest cotton sustainability programme in the world — aims to train 5 million farmers worldwide on more sustainable agricultural practices and ensure that Better Cotton accounts for 30% of global production by 2020.

We are truly a joint effort, encompassing stakeholders all the way from farmers to fashion brands and civil society organisations, driving the cotton sector towards sustainability. BCI aims to transform cotton production worldwide by developing Better Cotton as a sustainable mainstream commodity.

About the Role

The Better Cotton Initiative envisions a world where all cotton farming is sustainable – socially, environmentally, and economically. Our approach recognises that a supportive policy environment is necessary to ensure that cotton farming communities get the knowledge and resources they need to farm more sustainably and to be more self-sufficient.

Sustainable production, sourcing, and trade of Better Cotton must be supported by voluntary and/or regulatory policies and frameworks that enable extension services, incentives, and enforcement that recognises, supports, and invests in Better Cotton from farming through to consumption.

As BCI enters its second decade and next strategic phase towards 2030, we aim to exert greater influence both within and beyond the cotton sector. This new public affairs role will focus on cross organisational advocacy on key issues related to sustainable cotton production and sourcing and will focus on building and maintaining a network of relationships with key public sector and civil actors working on related issues. Our public affairs activities will play a key role in maximising our impact by nurturing a policy and implementation environment where the adoption of Better Cotton, and more sustainable cotton generally, is seen as a solution to many pressing social and environmental sustainability issues such as climate change mitigation, biodiversity, child labour and smallholder economic resilience.

BCI has successfully engaged with partners to promote national embedding in six countries: Australia, Brazil, Mozambique, Pakistan, Turkey, and Israel. We will continue to pursue opportunities to empower other national actors to take ownership of the Standard and be responsible for its implementation. The Public Affairs Manager will play a key role in achieving this aim and asserting BCI's leadership globally, and in doing so, will require working closely with diverse functions throughout the organisation including Fundraising, Implementation and Monitoring, Learning & Evaluation.

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Key Responsibilities

- In collaboration with the Head of Communications & Public Affairs, develop a public affairs strategy including tactics and activities that promote sustainable procurement and trading policies.
- Promote and educate internal colleagues on the strategy to ensure a shared vision, coherence and compliance for the strategy across BCI.
- Work closely with diverse functions on key thematic issues such as climate change mitigation, pesticides/toxicity, smallholder livelihoods and women’s empowerment in order to communicate and engage with public sector and intergovernmental actors as well as civil society
- Engage and support local and national governments to integrate the Better Cotton Standard System into cotton policies, regulation, and extension services, working with BCI country teams where appropriate.
- Engage with national governments, the EU, international development banks and UN organisations through dedicated advisory and advocacy support on key thematic issues.
- Conduct global stakeholder mapping to support the public affairs strategy and identify key targets for strategic relationship development, partnerships, and potential funding opportunities.
- Support and help equip BCI Members, Implementing Partners, and civil society organisations to encourage governments and regulators to create the right incentives, levers, and penalties to accelerate sustainable production and consumption as well as change practices in public procurement.
- Initiate and organise meetings and participate in discussions with relevant stakeholders and governments to advance BCI’s public affairs agenda.
- Educate and engage with investors, banks and organisations that advocate responsible investment, promoting the inclusion of BCI in their investment criteria.
- Provide ongoing research, background information, and policy support as necessary, including help drafting briefs, white papers, and other policy reports.
- Advise, answer questions and support the Leadership Team on advocacy and public affairs issues as well as key opportunities and trends within the space.
- Represent BCI at influential policy networks, conferences, and meetings.

This challenging role offers excellent opportunities for personal and professional development, together with a competitive benefits package. The position reports to the Head of Communications and Public Affairs and who is a member of the Leadership Team. Some travel may be required.

The candidate will have the following Skills, Knowledge, and Experience:

Skills, Knowledge and Experience
Essential
At least 3 - 5 years of experience in planning, managing, and implementing advocacy and public affairs strategies.
Demonstrated track record managing cross-organisational/functional projects.
Demonstrated grasp of key sustainability issues in the textile and apparel sector including cotton agriculture.
Political and/or civil society network in Europe.
Strategic and analytical thinker.
Excellent communication skills in English: orally and written.
Strong presentation skills.
Strong relationship management skills.

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<i>Desirable</i>
Strong German and French language skills.
Knowledge of sustainability standards.
Passionate about sustainability and collaborating with diverse stakeholders to drive change.

Working Arrangements

The position is full-time (40 hours per week) and will be based in Geneva, Switzerland, or London, UK. BCI offers flexible working, with core hours being 10am – 4pm and the option to work from home one day per week.

Some travel may be required.

Applications

Interested applicants with the required attributes are asked to send a detailed CV (2 pages maximum) and a motivational letter (1 page maximum), in English, by email to: recruitment@bettercotton.org with the subject: “Application: Public Affairs Manager” by the 4th April at the latest.

We thank all applicants for their interest; however only shortlisted candidates will be contacted.

BCI is currently unable to provide sponsorship for work permits, and candidates need to have a pre-existing right to work in the location where they will be based.

BCI is an equal opportunities employer, and is committed to good practice and transparency in the management of natural, human and financial resources.