



Name:
Rachael Smith

Job title:
Senior Media Officer and Social Media Lead

What do I do:
I am responsible for promoting the Wellcome Sanger Institute through external channels, to raise the profile of the Institute and tell the stories of all the incredible work happening here. This includes media relations, press materials, social media, and filming/journalist visits. I also lead on social media strategy and line manage another communications role in the team.

My career highlights



What parts of my job are challenging?

There is always a lot to do when working in communications, so prioritising workload and managing internal and external pressures can be a challenge. The digital world is very fast-paced which is both a challenge and a reward, it allows for plenty of opportunities for growth and innovation.

What do I enjoy most about my job?

The flexibility and variety of my role are the most enjoyable aspects, which allows for work-life balance and options like taking sabbaticals. The role's versatility means that each day brings something new; whether it's creating new content, searching for stories, responding to journalist questions, or strategising ways to keep audiences interested - there's never a dull moment.

Skills I use in my job :



Creativity

Finding stories within research papers and exploring new ways to explain old concepts.



Problem Solving

Reprioritising when something changes, working to quick and tight deadlines with the press.



Communication

My job requires lots of written and verbal communication to a variety of audiences.



Listening

The best stories come from conversations, finding the right questions to draw out ideas.

My top tips for students wanting a career in genomics:

- Consume lots of science communication to work out what you like and don't like.
- Don't feel 'married' to one area of science communication or science, as it's so vast and varied, you can combine many areas.
- Stay curious. Try to find a job that aligns with your interests and strengths, and never stop learning.
- Embrace change, science is a fast-moving field. The job you might have in 5 years may not currently exist, so follow the opportunities as they arise.

What's next in my career?

I've recently moved into a management position and I'd like to continue developing my skills in this area. In general, I'm excited to see what new creative projects appear on the horizon!

