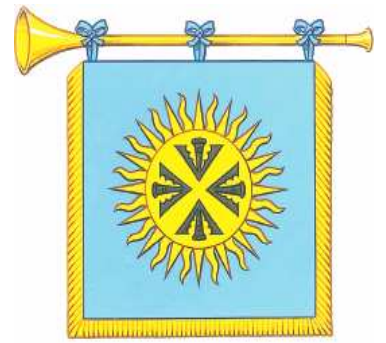


Guild of Public Relations Practitioners



INFLUENCE
INTEGRITY
T R U S T

Membership pack

Who we are

The City of London Guild of Public Relations Practitioners (PR Guild) was formed in 2000, as a first step towards the formation of a Livery Company to represent the PR industry. In total there are 108 livery companies representing different professions, trades and crafts, both past and present. They play an active role in nurturing their crafts and professions, and the charitable dimension of their work now amounts to some tens of millions each year.

The Guild has a current membership of approximately 100 Freemen (members who have been formally admitted to the Guild at a 'Freedom Ceremony').

How we are managed

The Guild is managed by a Court of 17 Freemen, which is chaired by a Master. A Deputy Master and three Wardens support the Master, all of whom are appointed annually. A part-time Clerk manages the day-to-day activities of the Guild.

What we do

The purpose of a City of London Livery Company, as defined by the Court of Aldermen, is to 'foster its profession, trade or craft'. This purpose is achieved through charitable works, education, fellowship, and trade and commerce.

The Guild of Public Relations Practitioners therefore works to promote the PR industry, but is also involved in charitable and educational activities. We are not, however, either the industry professional institution or trade association, although we do have affiliations or other forms of relationship with such bodies.

The Guild was formed in accordance with the long-established tradition of the City of London Guilds and Livery Companies. Charitable giving is one of the main purposes of the City of London Livery, and the accumulation of sufficient charitable funds is one of the criteria that Guilds and Companies must fulfil when petitioning the Court of Aldermen for the grant of Company or Livery status. At present, a Guild must achieve a minimum fund of £150,000 to be considered for Company status, which rises to £300,000 for Companies seeking to join the Livery.

The Guild has four key objectives which are:

- to promote charitable endeavour and raise money for charitable organisations
- to support training and education in public relations and related activities
- to promote, support and encourage standards of excellence, integrity and honourable practice in the field of public relations
- to promote fellowship and communication between our Freemen, as well as with the PR industry at large.

Promoting best practice is an objective the Guild shares with the Chartered Institute of Public Relations, which helps individuals to acquire skills and knowledge that will enhance their value

to employers, and with the Public Relations Consultants Association, which aims to do the same for member consultancies and thus enhance their value to clients.

The Guild is an additional forum, open to those in public relations who share our commitment to enhancing and promoting the value of our profession, and for putting something back into the community, particularly through charitable giving and fundraising.

More specifically our purposes are:

Our charitable purpose

To build sufficient charitable funds, under the stewardship of the Public Relations Practitioners Charitable Trust (registered charity no. 1082142), to enable us to support charitable organisations and, in particular, to support charitable causes that are relevant to communication. The Trustees therefore favour charities that support people whose ability to communicate or enjoy the benefit of communication is severely impaired.

The Trustees (who are appointed by the Court of the Guild) are committed to the building up of a capital fund in order that the Guild may eventually progress to Livery status. It is our belief that the attainment of Livery status, with the appropriate level of charitable funds, will greatly increase the scope and effectiveness of the Charity's ability to fulfil its objectives in the future and to make a real and lasting difference to the lives of people whose ability to communicate or enjoy the benefits of communication is impaired. During the process of building up this capital fund, the Trustees will continue to make a number of small donations each year to charities within the Trust's criteria. Grants have recently been made to: Kaimes Special School Association, Deafax, Hi Kent, the Be Your Best Foundation, Deafblind UK and SignHealth.

To establish a scheme that will enable members to make available their expertise on a voluntary basis to bona fide charities.

Our educational purpose

To develop an apprenticeship scheme, in conjunction with the Chartered Institute of Public Relations.

To establish scholarships designed to assist with fees for full-time study of public relations.

To offer a coaching and mentoring scheme for mid-level professionals.

Our professional purpose

To be a clear and visible presence in the PR industry, promoting integrity and the service of others.

To create a clear and visible presence within the City of London.

Our fellowship purpose

To promote fellowship and communication among our Freeman, as well as with the PR industry at large, by providing a full and varied programme of both formal and informal events and opportunities for networking.

We achieve these purposes by members working together in groups or committees around areas of mutual interest. There are a number of individual groups covering our charitable and educational activities as well as our social events. We encourage all members to become actively involved in one of the following:

- Communication
- Membership
- Charitable development
- Education
- Liaison with our affiliated TA unit, the Media Operations Group (Volunteers)

Membership is open to those who are engaged at a senior level in the practice of public relations, or who have a strong alliance with and interest in the industry.

Many PR practitioners are motivated to contribute to charitable or educational causes, or wish to do something to support the PR profession. By joining our Guild, they can ensure that their contribution will have the maximum impact through the leverage of time, talent and resources available across our membership. It also offers the chance to make lifelong friendships with like-minded people from all sectors of the PR industry.

What is expected of a member?

Joining the Guild of Public Relations Practitioners is a lifelong commitment. It is not like joining a club, which can be dispensed with as and when one feels like it; one does not 'retire' from the Guild.

There are certain City traditional ceremonials to which we, as a Guild aspiring to become a Livery Company, adhere. It is important that anyone seeking membership should be aware of and feel comfortable with these before requesting to become a member.

A new member is expected to have:

- a real desire to 'give back' to society and to the profession
- a motivation to give, within their capability, of talent, time and money
- a disposition which allows them to work easily with others in the context of the Guild
- an understanding of and sympathy for City tradition.

It is expected of members that they will be actively involved in the work of the Guild over the period of their membership, obviously to a varying degree over time dependent on their career, family and economic circumstances.

The Guild has groups and committees in support of its charitable and other purposes, and they require both financial and physical support in the programmes they undertake. It is the

expectation that a member will get involved in a group or committee and/or will contribute financially to the Guild's charitable activities.

The Guild also puts on special events and has regular luncheons and dinners which all members and their partners are encouraged to attend as frequently as they can – see benefits below. It is appreciated that, for those not near to London, this can be difficult. Members are encouraged, however, to attend at least one such event every year. This is an important aspect of a membership association, and is very much the lifeblood of a Guild or Livery Company.

In summary the ideal candidate for membership is a person with integrity, courtesy and enthusiasm in working for the objectives of the Guild, and who respects the traditions of the City within which the Guild operates. S/he should positively enjoy social interaction and taking part in formal and informal events.

There are opportunities for Freemen to become more involved in the workings of the Guild by being elected to the Court. It is from members of the Court (known as Court Assistants) that the offices of Treasurer, Wardens and Master are filled.

What are the benefits of being a Member?

The main benefits of being a member are:

- opportunities to support and assist in the varied charitable activities of the Guild
- opportunities to attend luncheons and dinners arranged by the Guild
- opportunities to attend luncheons and dinners with other Guilds and Livery Companies and with the Lord Mayor at Mansion House
- regular association with peers and colleagues from a mix of providers, users, entrepreneurs, investors and professionals from across the PR industry and within allied support industries and organisations.

In addition there are:

- regular informal events such as Quiz Nights and 'At Homes' or breakfasts with the Master
- events organised by both the Guild and other City Institutions
- regular e-mail updates from the Clerk
- a newsletter, **imPRessions**
- two religious services where we welcome people of any ethnic or religious background: one for the installation of a new Master and the other a Christmas Carol service.

Partners, and in most cases guests, are welcome to virtually all the social events of the Guild.

How to become a member

Application criteria

Applicants should be clearly and closely involved with public relations, either as PR practitioners, suppliers to the industry, or professional communicators. Applicants may be proprietors, managers or experienced practitioners.

Applicants should preferably be known to a number of their sponsors' colleagues and have the time, talent and/or resources to help the Guild achieve its aims. They should be prepared to engage fully in the Guild's activities.

The Guild cannot accept membership applications from anyone convicted of a criminal offence (applicants need not disclose convictions that are spent under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974) or from undischarged bankrupts.

Application

An applicant for membership of the Guild must have two sponsors, one acting as proposer, the other as seconder; both must be Freemen of the Guild. (A list of current members is available on request from the Clerk.)

Both sponsors must sign the applicant's form which, together with a brief CV and either a cheque for £195 or a completed direct debit form, should be sent to the Clerk.

Induction process

Following the receipt of the application by the Clerk, the applicant will be contacted by a representative of the Guild's Membership Group who will explain more about membership and answer any questions the applicant may have. The Membership Group will make a recommendation concerning the application, which will then go before the Court at its next formal meeting. (NB. The applicant's cheque or direct debit instruction will not be processed before the Court approves the application.)

Applicants will be informed of the Court's decision by the Clerk, who will also arrange for successful applicants to attend a Freedom Ceremony at which they will make a short declaration and be formally admitted as Freemen of the Guild.

The costs of being a member

The costs of being a member are as follows:

- An annual subscription (known as Quarterage), currently set at £195 per annum (with a reduction of £20 for payment by direct debit). This is payable on 1st October for the year ensuing. Part-years on joining are charged at the full amount, but there is no additional joining fee.
- All Freemen of the Guild are also requested to make an annual donation to the Public Relations Practitioners Charitable Trust. The requested minimum is currently £130 (Gift Aided) for individuals, or £165 if paid by a company.

The typical costs for events are:

- Quiz Nights, 'At Homes' etc. - £30 per head
- Luncheons - £75 per head
- Dinners - £95 per head
- Mansion House Dinners - £105 per head

We encourage members to participate as much as they can in our social activities, since it is these that help to forge friendships and create fellowship.

Where partners or guests accompany a member, the cost will be the same for each person attending.

It is important that members feel that they can afford these kinds of costs, bearing in mind that we expect as much participation as possible in our events and activities.

In summary

We would very much welcome your joining our Guild and hope that the information we have provided above will help you to make that decision. This is a commitment for life and brings with it responsibilities to help us with our charitable work, in terms of both time and money. It is important, therefore, that you fully appreciate this before making an application. Being a Freeman also brings great comradeship with like-minded people from within our industry, and access to many interesting ceremonial and social events, for both members and their guests. Ultimately, the Guild is what its members make it; there is plenty of scope for individual creativity, ideas and action.

We look forward to receiving your application in due course.

Our Contact Details

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