­ Category Manager

Job Description

Location: Leeds / Remote

Company: CDS UK, part of the Baird Group

Job type: Permanent

Reports to: Head of Strategic Sourcing

## About the Role

The Category Manager role forms part of the procurement function within CDS – Strategic Sourcing. The role involves category planning, supplier onboarding and supplier relationship management for assigned category area(s), as determined by the Head of Sourcing and the Operations directorate.

A Category Manager at CDS is a critical senior role that exists to help deliver measurable operational efficiency and financial performance in an environment of constant change and challenging economic climate.

For CDS this will typically consist of Outbound Communications, Transactional Print, Print Management and/or supporting Creative Services but may expand to include Digital over time along with other aspects of the developing CDS portfolio. The Category Manager is expected driving savings and business value through sourcing projects and initiatives and acting as a change ambassador within the organisation.

The Category Manager has significant commercial experience in a similar role and will therefore be able to appraise and improve the agency’s sourcing activities by analysing spend, supply chain partnerships and future planned growth in line with sourcing best practice. The Category Manager should also be able to demonstrate a proficient level of experience in working within/servicing the Communications sector and CDS core operating pillars.

### Key Accountabilities and Responsibilities:

* Proactive management and accountability for all activity of third-party suppliers within the allocated category(ies). This will include responsibility for securing the efficiencies and financial targets in allocated categories within agreed timeframes.
* Managing and executing Procurement Projects related to the relevant category(ies) of spend and being responsible for advising, making and influencing strategic / commercial decisions of significance to the benefit of CDS financial performance and customer experience aligned to our overall business strategy.
* Acting as a procurement expert and business advisor to CDS in respect to your allocated category(ies).
* Communication with and management of relationships with external suppliers and strategic partners at the relevant seniority levels (typically at Director or Senior Management level), during both onboarding and service delivery / BAU phases.
* Responsible for setting up and maintaining accurate and up to date supplier compliance detail with the OneTrust supplier, requesting further detail from suppliers as and when required for all categories within the scope of the role.
* Developing (with the Head of Strategic Sourcing) annual strategic targets related to relevant category(ies) to align with departmental goals.
* Forecasting, planning (including the preparation of any business cases) and reporting for complex procurement project support, including any information required from external partner or market sources.
* Providing guidance, direction and strategic advice relating to strategic bids relating to your allocated category(ies)
* Proactive engagement with the wider agency and/or service functions to plan and support procurement activity, supplier relationship, and contract management.

This job description is not intended to be an exhaustive list of activities, but rather an outline of the main areas of responsibility. All CDS employees are expected to be flexible in undertaking duties and responsibilities attached to their post and may be asked to perform other duties as determined by business needs.

This Category Manager role will be measured against the following key areas:

* Existence of up to date, signed off/approved and category strategy/plans (including sourcing strategies) for the category(ies) in scope.
* Meeting agreed objectives for relevant category(ies)
* Increased customer satisfaction with stakeholders outside Strategic Sourcing
* Acquiring, maintaining, and developing an intimate category expertise, knowledge base and information platform
* Compliance with CDS defined policies and procedures for risk management, regulatory and legal requirements as well as corporate governance.
* Championing innovation in both product and process, instilling a culture of continuous improvement within the categories and their suppliers.

### Communication and Working Relationships

* Head of Strategic Sourcing
* CDS Strategic Sourcing group – Category Managers
* CDS Suppliers and Strategic Partners
* Director of Print Services
* CDS Client Services
* CDS Delivery, Support & Operational teams

### Key Skills:

* Can demonstrate a proficient level of experience in working within/servicing the Communications sector - Digital, Print, Creative and/or Marketing Services.
* Proven experience as a Procurement / Category Manager an advantage – commercial experience in relevant industry vital
* Familiarity with sourcing, vendor management and relevant technologies, software and best practices.
* Understanding of market dynamics and sound business judgement
* Strong project management and leadership skills
* Comfortable with collating, analysing and interpreting data.
* Passionate for knowledge, as this is a fast paced, constantly evolving consumer driven / technology driven market.
* A strong, honest communicator who possesses excellent verbal, listening and written skills to maintain strong internal and external relationships.
* A strong organiser and effective with time management, skill sets and resources.
* Excellent with Microsoft - Word, Excel and PowerPoint
* Experienced in working with high profile clients.

Whilst we provide a comprehensive induction programme, 1-2-1 support, mentorship and access to education and sales development through our CDS Academy, the speed and direction of your progress will ultimately be in your hands.

Our Inclusive Culture

CDS UK positively encourages applications from suitably qualified and eligible candidates regardless of sex, race, disability, age, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, religion or belief, marital status, or pregnancy and maternity. We foster an inclusive culture that enables everyone to achieve their full potential and enjoy a fulfilling career with us.