I am Elizabeth (Beth) O'Connor. Born in Australia, I have lived and worked in the UK, Australia and across Africa for the past 20 years. Trained as a journalist, I am a communications expert with a global perspective, working on parallel projects in the Global South and North. I am a data-driven, digital native with a proven record of cultivating engaged social communities and managing integrated campaigns that include communications, public affairs and events for the public and third sectors.

**RECENT EMPLOYMENT HISTORY**

**Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade |** [**dfat.gov.au**](https://www.dfat.gov.au/)

**Senior Cultural Diplomacy Officer | Nairobi | Feb 2023 – current**

I manage the public diplomacy program for the Australian High Commission in Kenya. I implement my program across East Africa in our countries of accreditation including Somalia, Burundi, Tanzania, Uganda and Rwanda. In my short time in Post, I have introduced a proactive media strategy and now oversee the social media strategy and Public Diplomacy Officer.

**Achievements**

* In my first week at Post, I developed the media strategy for the Minister Watts’ Kenya visit, which attracted national media coverage. Key to the success of this, was the development of a joint media release with Kenya’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which helped bilateral relations as well as securing greater media coverage.

**Communications and Marketing Manager | London | Jan – Nov 2022**

I developed the strategy and implemented the public communications campaign for the UK/Australia Season 2021-22, a landmark cultural exchange between the UK and Australia. Sitting in the Australian High Commission in the UK’s Public Diplomacy team, I managed the £120,000 campaign budget covering outdoor, print and digital advertising as well as overseeing the pr and media buying agencies helping us to deliver the strategy. I managed relationships with more than one hundred stakeholders in the UK and Australia to ensure Season and DFAT messages reached the public through our partner channels. Finally, I worked closely with DFAT Public Diplomacy colleagues in the UK and Canberra to plan and manage events; develop social content for Post and global social channels; and write briefs, talking points and Cable copy for the High Commissioner and Post.

**Achievements**

* Oversaw the Australia High Commission in the UK’s first media buying campaign that has reached more than thirty million people through an outdoor, print and digital campaign.
* Oversaw a pr strategy and agency that has secured coverage for the Season with the Guardian, BBC, The Times, Daily Telegraph and more – reaching more than five hundred million.
* Pushed boundaries with the Mission’s digital strategy securing and hosting public diplomacy opportunities through Facebook Live events, Instagram Lives and Takeovers and live Twitter Q&As.
* Jointly delivered a function at the BBC Proms hosted by the High Commissioner with 150 VIP guests including former UK Prime Ministers, the Head of FCDO and MI6, among others.

**Communications Manager | Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (Nairobi & London) | Feb 19 – Oct 20 |** [**gov.uk**](file:///E:\Beth\gov.uk)

I worked in the FCDO’s Communications branch at the British High Commission in Nairobi. Following a six-month assignment managing internal communications, I led the Communications for the global Conflict, Stability and Security Fund’s (CSSF) Eastern and Southern Africa program. CSSF is a cross government fund that supports activity tackling instability to prevent conflicts that threaten UK interests. I generated and secured public diplomacy opportunities for UK ministers and High Commissioners/Ambassadors across the region. I developed content for High Commission/Embassy and High Commissioner/Ambassador’s as well as the FCDO and MOD social channels. I worked with political, trade, security, development and visits colleagues to coordinate events and public engagement opportunities for Ministerial and High Commissioner visits across the region.

**Achievements**

* I planned and delivered a COVID Misinformation in East Africa Virtual Seminar, in partnership with BBC Africa, watched by FDCO colleagues, stakeholders and the public across the world.
* Jointly planned and delivered the 2019 Queen’s Birthday Party Reception at the British High Commissioner’s residence attended by over 2,000 people including overseeing the high-profile entertainer, the official invitation and media presence at the event.

**Marketing and Communications Consultant | The Royal African Society (London & Nairobi) |  
Feb 17 – Nov 21 |** [**royalafricansociety.org**](file:///E:\Beth\royalafricansociety.org)Marketing and pr consultancy for their two major London festivals – Film Africa and Africa Writes. I developed the marketing and PR strategies, oversaw staff, managed relationships with partners and venues as well as implementing the marketing from e-marketing and social media through to media partnerships.

**Marketing Manager | The Design Museum (London) | Aug 15 – Jan 17 |** [**designmuseum.org**](http://designmuseum.org/)I was the marketing manager for the world’s leading design museum. A key priority for the role was managing the international marketing campaign for the museum’s re-opening in London in November 2016. I oversaw the £200,000 opening marketing campaign which attracted 150,000 people to the museum in the opening six weeks with hour-long queues during the opening weekend.

**Head of Digital Campaigns | Digify Africa (South Africa) | Mar 13 – May 15 |** [**digifyafrica.com**](https://www.digifyafrica.com/)  
Digify Africa was the first international expansion of the award-winning youth agency Livity UK. I joined the agency in its infancy and played a critical role in transitioning it into a digital-first agency. In the year of the 2014 South African national election, I oversaw a digital and PR campaign which encouraged youth engagement in democracy. Leading a team of three, we achieved our digital reach and engagement targets six months into a twelve-month campaign. Our national live youth debates trended twice on Twitter in South Africa. I led the marketing and media strategy for several British Council South Africa Season programs including live music gigs and a creative networking event series.

**Head of International Media (freelance) | Lake of Stars Festival Project (London, Malawi) | July 10 to Dec 19 | lakeofstars.org**I managed the international media for the Lake of Stars project, an annual international music festival in Malawi, for 10 years. Between 2014 and 2016, international media coverage reached more than five hundred million people each year including CNN, BBC World, the Guardian, Metro, Wall Street Journal, BuzzFeed, Time Out, Mail and Guardian South Africa and many more.

**Marketing and Media Manager | Rich Mix (London) | Dec 10 – Jan 13 |** [**richmix.org.uk**](https://richmix.org.uk/)I was the head of marketing and media for an independent three-screen cinema and arts centre based in one of the most diverse areas of London. I was also part of the senior team responsible for achieving Rich Mix’s outstanding performance in the 2012 budget year, increasing annual footfall by 25% to 150,000.

**Senior Adviser, Communications | Victorian Government (Melbourne) | Aug 08 – Jul 10 |** [**development.vic.gov.au**](https://www.development.vic.gov.au/)  
I provided communications, media and issue management advice to ministers, ministerial staff and senior civil servants for high profile, large-scale government projects including the $128m Melbourne Recital Centre/Melbourne Theatre Company Theatre, $268m AAMI Park Stadium and the Biosciences Research Centre. Reached an average monthly audience of 25 million through positive media stories about our projects. Secured and oversaw the making of an episode about AAMI Park on US Discovery Channel’s ‘Build it Bigger’ series seen by more than 20 million people in over 200 countries.

**EARLIER PERMANENT ROLES**

* Marketing and Communications Manager, The Tech Partnership (formerly e-skills UK), Nov 05 – Apr 08
* Marketing Officer, Local Government Association of Queensland, Feb 04 - Feb 05
* Community Relations Officer, Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority, Oct 02 - Feb 04

**FORMAL EDUCATION**

* Doctor of Philosophy (Cultural Policy and Management) with research focused on youth-led artist collectives in Nairobi, Kenya (Currently underway, University of Witwatersrand).
* Master of Arts (Cultural Policy and Management with research project focused on youth and audience development) with Distinction. (University of Witwatersrand, South Africa, 2013 to 2015).
* Bachelor of Journalism. Bachelor of Business Management (Marketing) (University of Queensland, Australia, 1998 to 2002). (University of Queensland, Australia, 1998 to 2002).