

Samia Dumbuya

Campaigns Assistant

**Royal
Geographical
Society**

with IBG

Advancing geography
and geographical learning



Job title: Campaigns Assistant

Organisation: Change.org

Location: London, UK

How did you get to where you are now?

I studied Geography, English Literature, and French for A-Levels. I studied BSc Geography because I wanted to understand the relationship between humans and natural sciences, and also explore environmental solutions because I am interested in climate justice. Before and during university, I always volunteered and did extra-curricular activities like volunteering for environmental causes and projects. One of my favourite experiences was volunteering with the International Citizen Service (ICS). I took part in their water and sanitation project in Nicaragua when I was 19 doing community work and understanding the challenges of improving water and sanitation in the country.

During my time at university, I took part in Uprising's Environmental Leadership programme, which is a nine-month programme to develop the skills of young environmental activists. After I graduated from university, I secured an internship with the Royal Borough of Greenwich council to develop my community engagement skills and get a better understanding of local politics. Consequently, I transferred those skills to get a role with the Climate Justice and Energy team at Friends of the Earth Europe, where I had the opportunity to observe and interact with campaigns concerning energy and climate justice across Europe and other continents. I currently work at Change.org as a Campaigns Assistant for the UK team, where I assist campaigners to win their campaigns. I want to note that in-between these jobs and during university, I worked part-time in restaurants and bars to sustain myself and also improve my work

skills.

Was there anything particularly useful that helped you get into this role?

I think taking part in campaigns and developing my skills in campaigning voluntarily played a huge role because it showed that I have a passion for community work and also taking part in campaigns training with Campaign Bootcamp, Young Friends of the Earth Europe and Uprising. Uprising, in particular, is a charity that empowers young people to take leadership and create change in their communities. They run youth programmes that run up to nine months, upskilling young people to be skilled leaders.

What are you responsible for?

I am a Junior Campaigner at Change.org, a company with the mission "to empower people everywhere to create the change they want to see. We're an open platform because we believe more change happens when people with different backgrounds and perspectives can participate in the conversation". I work with petition starters who need assistance with reaching their campaign goals. We work with a lot of people who care about multiple causes and who want to seek justice in the world. My job is about empowering people to create change and providing them with the tools and resources to do so. It is a fun organisation to be with because everyone is passionate about using digital tools to get justice.

What skills and characteristics do you need for this role, apart from geographical knowledge?

For this role, it is important to be flexible and adaptable. What does that mean? It means that I have to adapt to changing circumstances and approach tasks with an open mind. What's also important is being transparent, honest and being a good communicator. When working with teams, it is vital to have communication skills or else projects and tasks won't have a great outcome. In addition, being aware of what's happening in the news and in the world helps a lot with decision-making in the workplace. My main message to graduates and students is to be open to new experiences and try new things.

How does geography feature in your work?

Geography features in my work through all the transferable skills I received from the degree, like report writing, collecting data, conducting surveys etc.

W: www.rgs.org/iamageographer

