

COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR JOB DESCRIPTION

Position Purpose: Serving as a member of the five-person senior leadership team and reporting directly to the president, the communication director leads the Foundation’s strategic and operational communications efforts. The communications director supports the Foundation’s goals, strategies, and points of view by framing and helping to convey them to relevant internal and external audiences. The communications director devises and implements communications strategies for McKnight, develops content, and acts as lead media contact. The communications director supervises a communications officer and communications administrator to strengthen internal and external understanding of the Foundation’s identity and impact, and to inform, engage, and influence key audiences.

Key Result Areas and Essential (E) and Secondary (S) Functions:

20%	Lead development of comprehensive communication strategy and content to promote transparency, knowledge sharing, and credible influence.
E	Plans annual and project-based team work schedule and implementation.
E	Budgets annually for department, and maintains budget throughout year.
E	Participates in institutional planning through senior leadership team participation.
E	Develops or oversees development of all official communications materials, including website, social media, and video content.

55%	Develop and guide strategic communications projects.
E	Develops content and strategy, and manages staff to produce all communications materials.
E	Creates or oversees production of news releases and media pitches.
E	Creates or assists in production of public comments upon request, primarily for president, board members, and vice president for program.
S	Supports production of internal communications materials and talking points.
S	Co-lead development, implementation of institutional knowledge management and sharing.

10%	Supervise communications team and evaluation and learning officer.
E	Supervises and provides work direction for communications officer to support the director, administer website and blog, develop content, and produce electronic and print pieces.
E	Supervises and provides work direction for communications administrator to provide administrative support to both the director and officer and lead distribution management of materials and social media implementation and tracking across multiple channels.
S	Oversees communications project work of foundation staff and colleagues, as needed.
S	Oversees communications project work of paid vendors and consultants, as needed.
E	Supervises and provides work direction for evaluation and learning officer.

10%	Foster effective media relationships, as first responder to media inquiries.
E	Performs standard outreach to media outlets in Minnesota and nationally, via quarterly, annual, and periodic special issue news releases.
E	Fosters relationships with editorial boards and individual reporters through direct contact and through op-ed suggestions or submissions.

S	Pitches stories to specific reporters and editors as warranted for special attention to select stories.
S	Builds useful relationships among traditional media outlets, bloggers, and social media leaders through personal contact and promotion of availability as a professional source.

5%	Participate in Foundation-wide meetings and events
E	Attend and actively participate in staff meetings, retreats, Manager's Roundtable meetings.
E	Participate in cross-functional work groups as appropriate.

Job Qualifications:

Minimum Education and Experience

- A degree in communications or a related field and a minimum of 10 years related full-time professional work experience in nonprofit, foundation, public relations or other for-profit business, with five or more years of managerial level experience, or a combination of equivalent education and experience.
- Experience working with a board of directors, preferably a family board.

Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities

- Demonstrated experience contributing on a strategic, managerial and operational level; as both a leader and a strong individual contributor.
- Stellar communication skills in writing; Ability to prepare clearly written articles, summaries and analysis. As well as edit and curate generated by others.
- Professional experience researching and writing about complex topics in a variety of lengths and formats, and for varied audiences.
- Quickly grasps complex issues; is able to distill key elements and convey those to multiple audiences.
- Experience with variety of social media vehicles, experience assessing fit to purpose.
- Strong time, budget, project management skills.
- Ability to quickly switch gears as urgent issues arise, display calm under pressure, and consistently meet deadlines.
- Ability to work effectively and collaboratively across organizational functions.
- Commitment to develop and guide adherence to defined technical, design, and language style standards.
- Ability to analyze, question and identify key issues and use data to support conclusions.
- Ability to view issues and challenges from multiple dimensions and apply intellectual energy and creativity.
- Ability to engage others and influence outcomes.
- Excellent verbal and listening skills. Ability to communicate effectively interpersonally and in group presentations.

Foundation-wide Competencies:

- Collaborates, Communicates Effectively, Manages Complexity, Builds Networks, Being Resilient, Drives Results, Strategic Mindset, Instills Trust

Position Specific Competencies:

Communicates Effectively, Strategic Mindset, Ensures Accountability, Decision Quality

Working Conditions and Physical Effort

- Work is normally performed in an office work environment but includes bending, stooping, kneeling, and crawling in order to access machinery.
- Regular operation of normal office machines (computer, copier, and fax) is required.
- There are occasional evenings and weekends required.

- Very limited travel may be required.

The above statements are not intended to encompass all functions and qualifications of the position, rather, they are intended to provide a general framework of the requirements of the position. Job incumbents may be required to perform other functions not specifically addressed in this description.