

ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS

Job Overview

The Associate Director of Communications manages the day-to-day operations of the communications unit and leads events, project management, internal communications, database creation and management, as well as implements communications and marketing programs and activities, and assists with media relations.

Buffett Early Childhood Institute Profile

Envisioned as a new model for how public higher education is engaged in the first years of life, the Buffett Early Childhood Institute (<https://buffettinstitute.nebraska.edu/>) is a four campus, university-wide, multidisciplinary research, education, outreach, and policy institute of the University of Nebraska committed to helping transform early childhood development and education in Nebraska and across the nation. The long-term goal of the Institute is to be a leading center where scholars, practitioners, community members, and policy makers collaborate to advance a unified approach that can improve the lives of young children and families and the systems that support them.

Applicants should note that the goals of the Institute are university-, state-, and nation-wide, but the location of the Institute administration is in Omaha. This position will work primarily out of the Omaha office.

Job Responsibilities

This job description is not to be considered an exhaustive or exclusive statement of duties, responsibilities, or requirements. Employees may be required to perform other job-related instructions as requested.

This list describes major responsibilities to support the Buffett Institute by aligning marketing and communication strategies to the Institute goals:

Manage day-to-day operations (65% and considered essential functions)

- Manage the operations of the communications department.
- Lead communications project management: follow print and digital projects from start to finish, including project request intake, event briefs, project prioritization, creation of project timelines, routing projects for review and approvals, research, copy editing, coordination with vendors for printing/purchasing, and other collaborative project needs as they arise.
- Implement integrated marketing communications plans and strategies to achieve the Institute's two programmatic and public outreach and education goals.
- Oversee maintenance of Institute's CRM and database using best practices.
- Direct implementation of content strategy and management of the Institute's channels in alignment with the editorial plan.
- Contribute writing and editing to Institute publications and press materials, working closely with program staff and leadership.
- Hire vendors, support vendor management, and approve final work products.

- Assist Director with media relations.
- Supervise and oversee staff performance to provide guidance and support for designated members of communications team.
- Assume other responsibilities as assigned.

Events (20% and considered essential functions)

- Lead planning and program development for conferences and special events of the Institute, working closely with Institute leadership and Events Manager to ensure events meet Institute goals and objectives.
- Supervise communications projects, conferences, events, and staff and consultants involved in implementation.
- Supervise or oversee production of publications, materials, collateral items, development of conference and communications materials, working with designers, writers, social media managers, and vendors to produce and distribute materials.
- Direct or oversee all conference and meeting arrangements with the Events Manager and the Institute's administrative staff, including logistical arrangements, catering, technology and presentation requirements, travel and accommodations for speakers and participants, etc.
- Develop outreach and message plans for conferences and events; conduct outreach with university, partner, and stakeholder organizations to promote conferences and meetings and deepen Institute relationships.
- Conduct site visits to review and secure conference and meeting sites and negotiate agreements with venues as necessary. Develop and cultivate relationships with both university staff and outside vendors to help organize events.

Internal Communications (15%)

- Under the advice of leadership, implement internal communication strategy and related programs for the Institute to ensure staff are informed about Institute-wide activities and able to convey accurate, consistent information about the Institute to external audiences.

Required Qualifications

- Bachelor's degree
- Six years of experience implementing communications strategies and programs for an organization
- Demonstrated supervisory experience
- Exceptional writing, editing, and copy editing skills with attention to detail
- Demonstrated success in developing and implementing internal communications programs to staff

Preferred Qualifications

- Educational coursework in journalism, public relations, marketing, and other related areas
- Master's degree
- Experience in higher education or public sector
- Customer Relationship Management (CRM) tool experience
- Content Management System (CMS) tool experience

The ideal candidate will demonstrate excellent leadership, independent judgment and decision-making skills; an aptitude for advocacy in strategic communication and outreach strategies supporting policy aims; intellectual achievement; the ability to facilitate collaboration and teamwork across the organization; creative and analytical problem solving; the ability to work independently as well as part of a team;

a keen ability to summarize and explain organizational initiatives to foster relationships with the university's stakeholders; a track record of timely completion of projects with strict deadlines; the ability to responsibly manage competing priorities; a commitment to the ideals of an early childhood education and programs.

How to Apply

Applications will be processed through the online job posting at <https://careers.nebraska.edu>. Follow instructions to complete the standard application. Along with the application, attach a cover letter, resume, and contact information for three professional references.

Direct questions about the position to: humanresources@nebraska.edu. Direct questions about the online application process to: (402) 472-3701.

The University of Nebraska is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer and participates in E-Verify. All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, disability, gender identity, sexual orientation or protected veteran status.

ADDENDUM FOR ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS

Competencies

- Nature/Complexity of Work
This position requires an individual who has excellent verbal and written communication skills and works with considerable independence, energy, initiative, strong work ethic, and sound judgment in a complex day-to-day environment. Ability to lead unit operations. Strong attention to detail, accuracy, professional discretion, and sensitivity to confidential information, a record of effective teamwork with others, and time management skills are required. Knowledge of the University of Nebraska's organizational structure and interrelationships among the campuses and internal and external constituencies is helpful in this position.
- Problem-Solving/Decision-Making
Problem-solving and appropriate decision-making are required in every element of this position. Key duties involve independent judgment regarding analysis of issues and actions required to support day-to-day business transactions. Actions are governed by broad objectives, professional ethics, university procedures and/or business acumen.
- Strategic Input
This individual is required to be proficient and conscientious when representing the Buffett Institute and the university. Administrative review is often necessary before information is released by this position, but the responsibility for error-free detail supporting analytical information rests with the employee. A strong sense of the requirements of a stable organization and its long-term needs with the ability to exercise significant initiative and creativity in developing new value-added relationships with the Institute's stakeholders. Someone who is mission-driven, is deeply committed to the values of the Institute, and seeks to advance the Institute and its goals.

- Know-How

This position demands the ability to be agile, entrepreneurial, operate independently, thrive in a fast-paced, multitasking environment and exercise judgment to seek supervision and/or input from others when necessary. The candidate should demonstrate exceptional interpersonal skills with a strong orientation toward diplomacy, tact, collaboration, and teamwork; possess exceptional verbal, writing, editing, and proofreading skills; must be detail-oriented and accurate; must have the ability to prioritize effectively and quickly respond to shifting priorities and the ability to collect, compile, and analyze facts, draw conclusions, and recommend solutions; possess a strong work ethic and willingness to work beyond regular hours, if necessary; and demonstrate a high level of professional discretion and confidentiality. Ability to interpret and prepare information for analysis activities and communicate findings to management is essential. Knowledge, enthusiasm, and passion for the field of early childhood and ability to establish credibility in the education/human service and university communities. Must follow Board of Regents bylaws and policies and state and federal law and other rules and regulations.

- Technical Skills

This position demands technology proficiency, with a willingness to learn and utilize new technologies relating to (but not limited to) document management, project and portfolio management, and budget tracking. Proficiency in using Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and Outlook is also required.

- Interactions

This position will be expected to manage and collaborate with individuals and their projects. Ability to assume authority, advocate new ideas, identify and address obstacles, and the judgment to seek supervision and/or input from others when necessary is expected. This position will help build and strengthen relationships with the University of Nebraska campuses and must have the ability to work as a member of a team, as well as independently, in a complex environment, and with respect for confidential and sensitive information. This position also interacts with many external constituencies. The candidate should be an optimistic, positive, resilient, insightful, and performance-driven decision maker, problem solver, and consensus builder.

- Supervision

This position reports to the Director of Communications. The Creative and Brand Manager, Events Manager, Marketing CRM System Manager, and Preschool Development Grant Communications Specialist report to the Associate Director of Communications.

Physical Requirements and Work Conditions

The physical requirements and work conditions described here are representative of what an employee encounters while performing the essential functions of this job. Reasonable accommodation may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

Attendance at the workplace is critical. While performing the duties of this job, the employee is routinely required to have vision for up close and far away, talk, hear, sit, and use hands to touch, feel, handle, and operate routine office equipment. The employee is occasionally required to stand, walk, climb stairs, bend, reach, twist, and lift, carry, or move up to 15 pounds. The employee is required to occasionally travel to and participate in meetings and conferences that may require the ability to drive a

motor vehicle or stay overnight.

The noise level in the work environment is usually moderate, and there are frequent interruptions as the Institute staff conduct business in cubicles, walled office space, and conference rooms.