

Director of Communications

Position Announcement

The University of Nebraska Buffett Early Childhood Institute is seeking applications from qualified individuals for the position of Director of Communications to design, oversee, and implement a strategic and comprehensive communications program.

The director will work closely with the Founding Executive Director and Associate Executive Director in creating and executing communications strategies that will successfully advance the goals of the organization. The director will manage and help implement communications efforts including brand and message development, public relations and media outreach, website development and maintenance, and the creation of collateral materials – all to enhance and build understanding of and support for the Buffett Institute and its work. The director will also serve as a primary source of information for a diverse audience of stakeholders. Since the Buffett Institute is a university-wide organization, the director must build and maintain close collaborative relationships with administrators, communications staff, and staff and faculty on all four campuses of the University. The communications director is also responsible for managing communications staff.

Buffett Early Childhood Institute Profile:

Envisioned as a new model for how public higher education is engaged in the first years of life, the newly established Buffett Early Childhood Institute 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- and state-wide, but the location of the Institute administration is at the University of Nebraska Omaha (UNO). This position will work primarily out of the UNO office.

Job Responsibilities:

In addition to periodic unique tasks, the following list describes major responsibilities:

- Design and implement a strategic and comprehensive communications plan that will create awareness and build momentum around the Institute's work. The plan should cut across multiple communications platforms including branding, messaging, public relations, media relations, web and social media, collateral materials, and events and conferences.
- Develop and execute statewide public education campaigns to inform target audiences about the importance of early childhood development and engage their support. Aspects of the campaign could include advertising, social marketing, public relations, media outreach, and events and conferences.
- Oversee integrated message development to ensure that all external and internal communications are strategic and consistent. Manage the creation, distribution, and maintenance of all print and electronic collaterals including brochures, newsletters, and listserve messaging.

Director of Communications

- Design and implement an effective public relations and media outreach strategy to promote the work of the Institute. Build and cultivate positive media relationships at local, state, and national levels that can be leveraged to support the Institute's work. Lead the production of key communications pieces including reports, press releases, fact sheets, and other materials.
- Oversee and maintain the Institute's website and social media outreach with innovative and dynamic content to help make the Institute the go-to place for new and important information about early childhood development and the work of the Institute.
- Understand communications and market research, including public opinion surveys, to help inform communications strategy, audience segmentations, and message and material development.
- Advise on the development of marketing metrics and other assessment tools to measure the success of communications efforts and use findings to improve and further inform communications work.
- Manage and collaborate with public relations agencies and consultants that may assist with the Institute's communications efforts.
- Oversee day-to-day communications activities including budgeting, planning, and staff development.

Required and Preferred Qualifications:

Minimum Requirements:

- Bachelor's degree in communications, journalism, marketing, or other related field. A Master's degree in a related field is desired, but not required.
- A minimum 10 years of demonstrated success in the communications field, including progressive advancement and supervisory responsibilities within an organization. Related work experience in higher education, nonprofit, or public relations agency helpful.
- Ability to design, direct, implement, and evaluate strategic communications plans and programs. Demonstrated ability to effectively manage a budget helpful.
- Comprehensive knowledge of media operations and expertise in public relations and the release of information for publication. Existing relationships with Nebraska reporters and editors helpful.
- Knowledge of the latest advances in the use of social media for effective communication, including online communities, search engine optimization, and other digital marketing tools.
- Ability and experience to oversee special event planning, including conferences, forums, and meetings.
- Excellent organizational skills with the ability to effectively manage multiple projects and tasks simultaneously.
- Superb strategic planning, creative thinking, and written and verbal communication skills.
- Commitment to work collaboratively with all individuals and constituent groups.
- Proficient in Microsoft Office including Word, Excel, and PowerPoint.

Director of Communications

Successful candidates will exhibit the following personality traits:

- The ideal candidate is agile, entrepreneurial, and a team player who seeks to advance the Institute and its goals.
- Knowledge, enthusiasm, and passion for the field of early childhood and ability to establish credibility in the education/human service and university communities.
- Must be a fast self-starter comfortable with attention to detail and ability to work independently, along with the judgment to seek supervision and/or input from others when necessary.
- 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.
- Should be an optimistic, positive, resilient, insightful, and performance-driven decision maker, problem solver, and consensus builder.

How to Apply:

Application review begins immediately and continues until position is filled.

Applications processed through the on-line job posting at <https://careers.nebraska.edu>.

Follow instructions to complete the Applicant Profile. Along with your 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 on-line application process to: (402) 472-2111.

The University of Nebraska is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer and participates in E-Verify.