

# Senior Communications Officer

## Position Summary

The McKnight Foundation seeks an experienced senior communications officer to help us leverage the power of strategic communications to advance the mission of the Foundation and our program goals. This person will be joining at a critical moment in this world to contribute to an exciting strategic direction, grounded in the values and approaches outlined in our [Strategic Framework](#). As a sophisticated navigator of the digital ecosystem, an astute and caring steward of trusting relationships, and a perpetual solutions-finder, this person will have a close working relationship with the communications director and colleagues across departments to consider how to leverage every assignment for maximum social impact. The nimble communications team contributes to the Foundation's commitments to transparency, knowledge sharing, thought leadership, and good governance, and offers strategic counsel across departments.

The senior communications officer will join a highly regarded private family foundation with a culture that is mission-oriented and highly collaborative. McKnight staff take on meaningful, challenging work and receive excellent benefits, including opportunities for professional development and ongoing learning. This person will work in a four-person team as well as manage outside firms and freelancers.

**Please note that your application must include three writing samples and responses to three specific questions in addition to your CV and cover letter.** For more details, see the submission requirements in the gray box near the end of this job posting.

## Reporting Relationships

The Senior Communications Officer is an individual contributor role. The position reports to the Communications Director.

## Key Responsibilities

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- Support the various communications needs of the entire organization, including communicating to a wide spectrum of internal and external audiences.
- Supervise the editorial operations of our digital platforms, including our website, email, social media accounts, as well as third-party sites where we have a brand presence.
- Manage media relations, issues monitoring, and brand stewardship.
- Respond promptly to external requests from grantees, reporters, and other stakeholders.
- Offer strategic counsel and execute narrative strategies that build public will and support our programs.
- Support the board and senior leadership on various institutional initiatives, including internal projects and board governance presentations and materials.
- Advise the communications director on developing communications plans, policies, guidelines, process improvements, and staff resources.

## Core Competencies

All leaders at McKnight are expected to display the following attributes:

- Strategic mindset
- Communicates effectively
- Instills trust
- Drives results
- Manages complexity
- Builds networks
- Collaborates effectively
- Models resiliency

## Key Requirements

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- Bachelor's degree and a minimum of seven years in communications, public relations, marketing, public affairs, or another related field at a managerial level, or a combination of equivalent education, experience, and training.
- Excellent writing and editing skills to prepare or oversee a wide variety of communications content, including public announcements, reports, internal memos, speeches, policy memos, infographics, videos, and social media content.
- Experienced and wise discernment handling dynamic, sensitive, high-stakes assignments with multiple stakeholders and diverse viewpoints.
- An advanced understanding of how to best navigate and leverage a rapidly evolving digital ecosystem, including proficiency in visual storytelling, user data analytics, and emerging media technology trends.
- A conscientious, detail-oriented project manager who can move initiatives forward in a collaborative and effective manner.
- Strong analytical skills to develop thoughtful, impact-oriented communications plans with a firm grasp of audiences and messaging needs.
- A sophisticated understanding of social, economic, and political systems and the role of communications in influencing cultural understandings, market conditions, and public policy outcomes.
- Willingness to take on new opportunities and challenges with a sense of urgency and positive energy.
- High cultural competence to effectively work in partnership with diverse communities, including an appreciation for historical context, discernment of relationship nuances and power dynamics, and a keen understanding of social, racial, and ethnic differences.
- A skilled media relations specialist who feels comfortable pitching stories, cultivating relationships with reporters, and handling press inquiries in a prompt and thoughtful manner.

## Compensation and Benefits

The McKnight Foundation provides a competitive compensation package. Benefits include health, dental, life, and disability insurance; generous paid time off; contribution to a retirement plan; matching charitable gifts program; and a flexible work environment. These are full-time, exempt positions based in Minneapolis. The salary range is approximately \$119,000-\$125,000.

The above statements are intended to provide a general framework of what this position requires. There may be other functions and qualifications that emerge in time, and the chosen candidate may be asked to perform other duties that are not listed here.

*The McKnight Foundation is an equal opportunity employer and proudly values diversity. We encourage candidates of all backgrounds to apply.*

## Application Submission Requirements

In addition to submitting your CV and cover letter, please 1) submit three writing samples and 2) answer the three questions below.

The writing samples can be of any length. They can be published articles, internal memos, communications plans, speeches, statements, etc. They can also be web links, video scripts, or a social media account you manage.

As for responses to the questions, we recommend responses be no longer than 300 words for each question. There are, however, no strict word count limits.

- How do you think private foundations can best use their public voice to support their goals?
- What is an example of a project you executed that required consensus from multiple stakeholders with divergent views? How did you successfully handle conflicting interests and expectations?
- Give an example of a time when you had to unexpectedly handle a rapid response or crisis communications situation and share how you approached the challenge.

To Apply

[Click here](#) to apply.

The position closes on Tuesday, May 17, at 5 p.m. central daylight time. **Please read the submission requirements and then apply.**

Closes: May 17, 2021



Please note that your application must include three writing samples and responses to three specific questions in addition to your CV and cover letter.

**The position closes at 5:00 pm Central Time.**

## Stay Updated



**Email Address**

**First Name**

**Last Name**



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