



Director, Communications Career Opportunity



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tfff.org/careers

Contact

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Organizational Background

A national leader in rural philanthropy, The Ford Family Foundation is a private foundation benefiting communities in rural Oregon and Siskiyou County, California. In 1957, Kenneth W. Ford & Hallie E. Ford established a then-modest foundation to give back to the timber communities of southwest Oregon. It grew in size, scope and geography to become The Ford Family Foundation in 1996, with its main office in Roseburg, Oregon and its scholarship office in Eugene, Oregon. One of the three largest grantmaking foundations in Oregon, The Ford Family Foundation has assets in excess of \$1 billion, an annual budget of approximately \$55 million, a seven-member Board of Directors and 57 employees located in two office locations and in rural communities throughout Oregon and Siskiyou.

Purpose and the Opportunity

The Ford Family Foundation is seeking a dynamic and experienced Director of Communications to lead all internal and external communications efforts. Reporting to the Chief Policy and Public Affairs Officer, the Director of Communications will play a pivotal role in advancing the Foundation's mission to relentlessly pursue happy, healthy lives for rural kids.


The Director of Communications will be responsible for developing and implementing a robust and multi-faceted strategic communications program. This program will effectively position the Foundation as a leading rural voice, enhancing its digital presence and engaging stakeholders through various channels. The Director will oversee the creation of compelling content that resonates with diverse audiences, including rural residents, policymakers and community partners. The Director will work with partner organizations to advance the Foundation's mission.

Key responsibilities include co-developing a powerful vision for the Foundation's communications function, managing an integrated organization-wide communications strategy and evolving the Foundation's brand and voice. The Director will also provide strategic counsel and support to program and leadership teams, ensuring that all communications activities align with the Foundation's mission and values.

This is an exciting opportunity to join The Ford Family Foundation at a transformative moment, contributing to its mission of improving the future for rural kids.

This is an exempt position, and the annual wage is \$140,000 - \$150,000, depending on experience. Our excellent benefit package includes paid time off and holidays, health and dental insurance, health savings account, generous retirement plan, matching gifts program, access to an employee assistance program, professional development opportunities, rejuvenation leave and more. Performance and compensation are reviewed at least annually.

This position must be in office for a combined three days a week with at least two days in the main Roseburg office and one day in the Eugene office. There will be additional travel within Oregon and Siskiyou County, California. Occasional national travel to attend conferences and meetings is anticipated. Residency within 40 miles of either the Roseburg or Eugene locations is required. Relocation assistance is available.



To apply, please email your letter of interest, writing sample and resume to Michelle Allen, Senior Human Resources Specialist at mallen@tfff.org. Deadline to submit materials is Friday, April 18 at 5:00 PM PST.

Please note that the application deadline is subject to change. The position may close sooner than the listed deadline based on the volume of applicants.

Essential Duties and Responsibilities

Lead Communications Vision and Strategy

- ❑ Serve as key partner with the Chief Policy and Public Affairs Officer to develop a powerful and shared vision for the Foundation's communications function as a strategic asset.
- ❑ Provide communications support to key internal partners, including the executive office and Board of Directors.
- ❑ Design and actively manage an integrated, organization-wide communications strategy including messaging that complements and supports each program area and directed at segmented audiences, including rural residents, policy makers, local communities, and peer funders.
- ❑ Develop and refine systems to deliver information in a variety of digital and analog forms (websites, social media, published reports, internal communications, conference presentations, community gatherings and other emerging channels) in a regular cadence and opportunistically.
- ❑ Partner with Learning and Impact team, which is the current organizational home for communications, to support program staff with their communication needs.
- ❑ Advance Foundation strategies to use communications as a tool to promote policy change that affects rural communities through data, research, advocacy and policy analysis and design the communications strategy that should accompany the work.
- ❑ Assist grantee and community partner communications to develop informative stories that enhance their ability to address rural issues.
- ❑ Evolve the Foundation's unique brand, positioning and voice to persuade key audiences of the importance of ensuring healthy rural communities in Oregon and beyond.

Manage the Foundation's Voice and Brand

- ❑ Co-create organizational practices to ensure the Foundation's brand, identity and values are consistently reflected in all external and internal communications and evolve as needed.
- ❑ Build out the effective voice of the executive leadership and program teams through strategic counsel, support and training through activities such as social media, speaking engagements and interviews with media.
- ❑ Manage internal communications activities that facilitate the Foundation's ongoing engagement of employees.

Media and External Relations

- ❑ Build and manage relationships with influential media outlets and reporters; pitch stories and respond to media inquiries.
- ❑ Manage crisis communications and oversee the Foundation's crisis communications policy and procedures.
- ❑ Manage and oversee external vendor relations for public relations, videography, infographics and graphic design.
- ❑ Represent the Foundation externally with media, policy makers, in rural communities, at conferences and other venues.

Required Competencies and Skills

- ❑ 10+ years of experience in communications with progressive leadership and management responsibilities.
- ❑ Current understanding of rural contexts, issues and challenges is essential.
- ❑ Proven ability to work effectively in dynamic and growing organizations.
- ❑ Demonstrated excellence in both verbal and written communication, essential for effectively conveying messages and engaging with diverse audiences.
- ❑ Experience working in highly collaborative organizations, both with staff and Board.
- ❑ Advanced proficiency with state-of-the-art communications technologies and practices, including website management and social media.
- ❑ Interpersonal skills: Collaborative and positive approach, sense of possibility, ability to work with and in support of all kinds of people, high degree of personal integrity and motivation.
- ❑ Bachelor's degree is required; an advanced degree or equivalent experience preferred.
- ❑ Must have, or be able to attain before starting the job, a valid Oregon driver's license.
- ❑ Experience managing philanthropic or non-profit communications is preferred.
- ❑ Experience with strategic issue-based and advocacy-oriented communications is preferred.

Employee Profile

The successful candidate for the Director, Communications role will be a proven communications leader responsible for guiding the central communications function in a dynamic and evolving organization. They will have a track record developing and implementing integrated strategic communications programs along with experience building an organization-wide communications function that supports broad, cross-cutting work and knits together the needs of multiple program areas focused on complex social policy issues. A passion for the Foundation's mission is essential. If that passion is reflected in a demonstrated commitment to rural issues and community-based efforts and/or a track record of direct experience working in rural communities in Oregon or elsewhere in the U.S., that would be a distinct advantage.

The successful candidate will possess a deep understanding of issue-based communications and a demonstrated track record for designing and implementing communications programs that achieve measurable impact. The confidence, professionalism and sophistication that is required to be a Foundation spokesperson and media relations counsel to Foundation leadership should be balanced by humility and a commitment to the Foundation's team. The ability to actively collaborate with colleagues to leverage the collective expertise of team members is essential to this role's success.

Anticipating that the Director, Communications will join the Foundation during a shift in overall strategy and associated work, candidates should be creative, adaptable and comfortable with ambiguity.

Outstanding interpersonal skills are key. Humility, respect for the rural communities being served and the ability to connect with diverse stakeholders in a culturally sensitive and empathic manner are vital. Candidates should demonstrate good judgment and discretion and be at ease in an external facing role. The successful candidate will need to thrive in a collegial and team-oriented environment where a willingness to “roll up your sleeves” to get the job done is central to the culture and close collaboration is essential.

Physical Demands of Job Duties and Work Environment

The physical demands described here are representative of those that must be met to successfully perform the essential functions of this job. While performing the duties of this job, the employee is regularly required to see, talk and hear. This position is fairly active and requires long periods of standing, sitting, keyboarding and occasional driving. The employee would rarely lift or move items over 10 pounds. Specific vision abilities required by this job include close vision, distance vision, color vision, peripheral vision, depth perception and ability to adjust focus. While performing duties of this job, the employee is exposed to a normal office type environment with some exposure to the outside environment. This position is rarely exposed to dust, odors, water, fumes and noise. Work is always performed in a safety-conscious manner. Reasonable accommodation may be provided to enable individuals to perform essential functions. It is the policy of The Ford Family Foundation to treat applicants and employees without regard to race, religion, creed, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, marital or veteran status, or any other basis prohibited by local, state, or federal law.