JOB DESCRIPTION

TITLE: Communications Director
REPORTS TO: Executive Director
DATE: February 3, 2020

SUMMARY OF POSITION
Friends of the Chicago River seeks an experienced media, marketing, and public relations professional to serve as the Communications Director for our award-winning environmental organization.

As a key member of the senior leadership team, the Communications Director will serve as the chief strategist for Friends’ communications efforts and develop and implement a creative and integrated communications plan in support of all Friends’ programs and strategic initiatives. Using Friends’ strategic plan as a guide, the Communications Director will increase awareness of Friends and our public policy and planning, education and outreach, and on-the-ground efforts; build further support for our mission; and help strengthen Friends’ financially. Well rounded and with experience in a comparably sized organization, the Communications Director will be expected to drive efforts through the implementation of an annual communications plan while responding simultaneously to emerging issues and opportunities on a daily basis.

As the only organization exclusively dedicated to improving the Chicago River system, Friends seeks an individual who is committed to and knowledgeable about the environment; already views the Chicago River system as an essential part of the history, culture, and future of the Chicago region; and shows real enthusiasm for the work and the river.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES
- Develop an active media relations program which includes relationship cultivation with traditional and nontraditional media, pitching stories, managing press conferences, and coordinating responses to media requests
- Develop external communications strategies that drive policy change, maintain and increase Friends’ presence in the community, and build support for our efforts
- Develop and implement an annual communications plan that utilizes Friends’ existing platforms and capitalizes upon them, including social media tools such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram
- Define messages that inspire and motivate members, funders, volunteers, partners and other stakeholders and tell stories that convey the distinctive contributions and value of Friends of the Chicago River
- Produce, edit, and oversee high-quality written and visual content for social media, newsletters, annual reports, speeches, special events, public comments, articles and messaging for and with Friends’ executive director and other senior staff
- Maintain Friends’ web page with current information on all program areas
- Promote Friends’ programs and specials events
- Develop an understanding of river-related issues and stay well versed in Friends’ efforts
• Track and report on campaign metrics
• Create and implement organizational protocols for Friends’ photo files and archives
• Participate in Friends’ annual all-staff events
• Develop crisis communication plans and provides counsel to senior leaders
• Special projects as necessary

QUALIFICATIONS
The right candidate will be highly motivated, expected to recognize and seize opportunities, and possess:
• A bachelor's degree with a minimum eight years of experience in strategic communications including at least three years in a leadership position, preferably environmentally related
• Evidence of success in media relations and knowledge of the Chicago media market
• Experience in marketing and public relations
• Superior writer with excellent interpersonal, verbal, and presentation skills
• Be highly organized with experience managing multiple tasks in a small organization
• The ability to develop and execute communications strategy and annual plans to serve multiple audiences
• Demonstrable skill with traditional and social media
• Ability to work efficiently and prioritize tasks to meet program and organizational goals
• A highly collaborative work style with a track record of working effectively across multiple departments and with a diverse group of people
• A commitment to results and solid quantitative skills to perform post-program analysis
• Ability and willingness to work occasional evenings and weekends for events and special projects as required
• An interest in and commitment to improving and protecting environmental health, natural resources, and the Chicago River system
• Willingness to serve with alacrity and adhere to Friends’ stated values from our strategic plan

BENEFITS
Friends offer excellent benefits including generous paid leave, medical and dental insurance, and a retirement match after two years of employment. Salary commensurate with experience. Friends of the Chicago River is an equal opportunity employer.

TO APPLY
Please send your resume and cover letter as PDFs files describing: 1) your interest in this position, 2) the ways in which you satisfy the qualifications specified above, 3) salary requirements, and 4) two writing/media/marketing samples to the attention of Margaret Frisbie, Executive Director via email to jobs@chicagoriver.org, subject line: Media and Communications Director or mail to Friends of the Chicago River, 411 S. Wells, #800, Chicago, IL 60607.

No applications will be considered without a personalized cover letter detailing the applicant's specific interest in this position. NO CALLS, PLEASE.