



Illinois Public Health Institute

Position Description: Communications Director

The Illinois Public Health Institute (IPHI) seeks to hire an experienced, resourceful, and team-oriented Communications Director to lead IPHI's communication function in alignment with the organization's values and strategic priorities. Public health and health equity are at the forefront of the minds of people throughout the communities served by IPHI. The Covid-19 pandemic, persistent racial injustices, climate threats, and economic uncertainty are among several factors that continue to destabilize the health and well-being of all Americans, especially BIPOC. IPHI team members and partners work to understand, communicate, and take action to address these factors, with a specific focus on health inequity, to engage strategic partners and build power to improve health outcomes. The director will collaborate with internal and external partners to advance the narrative of the organization's impact on the health of communities throughout Illinois and the nation. The position is full time, 37.5 hours per week. The Communications Director reports to the Chief Executive Officer and will work closely with the Director of the Center for Health Information Technology in relationship to the Data Across Sectors for Health (DASH) initiative.

About the Illinois Public Health Institute

IPHI mobilizes stakeholders, catalyzes partnerships, and leads action to promote prevention and improve public health systems to maximize health, health equity and quality of life for the people of Illinois. IPHI leads initiatives through the Center for Community Capacity Development (CCCD), the Center for Health Information Technology (CHIT), and the Center for Policy and Partnership Initiatives (CPPI). Current projects in the Centers include: a national initiative to build capacity for data sharing across sectors; a local collaborative of hospitals and organizations that work together on community and health transformation initiatives; and a statewide alliance that drives policy, advocacy, and systems change initiatives that address obesity, nutrition, physical activity and chronic disease. IPHI has an annual budget of approximately \$8 million, 30+ staff members, and works with numerous partners, contractors, consultants, government agencies and foundations both programmatically and financially. IPHI has a collegial culture where a sense of humor and a passion for work are highly valued. Visit www.iphionline.org for more information about IPHI.

Responsibilities

The director will bring communications leadership and project management to guide and continuously improve IPHI's communications efforts. In collaboration with IPHI leadership and staff, the director will perform key roles that include leading and supporting a communications team, facilitating communications support across IPHI programs and activities, and implementing an integrated messaging and communications strategy for the organization at-large.

The director will lead the communications team's significant contributions to the DASH initiative. DASH identifies barriers, opportunities, promising practices, and indicators of progress for multi-sector collaborations to connect information systems and share data for community health improvement. The initiative is funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and co-led by IPHI and the Michigan Public Health Institute. More information on DASH, and its collaborative work through All In: Data for Community Health can be found at www.DASHConnect.org and www.AllInData.org.

Strategy & Planning

- Collaborate with leadership and staff to develop, execute, and evaluate an integrated communication and outreach strategy that identifies priority focus areas and measurable strategic goals.
- Integrate communication strategies related to equity, policy and systems improvements, and community-driven change in alignment with IPHI's mission, vision, and values into IPHI's messaging, marketing, communications tactics.
- Engage IPHI staff and key stakeholders to execute on communications plans that advance the organization's work in priority issue areas. Support IPHI staff to implement program-specific communications deliverables.
- Lead the effective and strategic dissemination of messaging, program announcements, event promotion, program results, and evaluation/research findings via social media, relevant publications, media outlets, and storytelling.
- Plan and manage (as needed) crisis communications and rapid response communications – including internal and external messaging.

Project Management

- Set and direct communications projects and priorities. Develop project timelines and milestones. Monitor project execution by staff, consultants, and partners.
- Work closely with the CEO, Center Directors, and program leaders across IPHI to ensure the strategic alignment and cadence of IPHI's communications strategies and activities.
- Develop, manage, and monitor multiple project budgets with regards to communications activities.
- Gather and use data to drive decision-making about IPHI's communications tactics.
- Develop and oversee contracts with communications vendors and consultants (e.g. marketing/branding firms, content writers and editors, graphic designers, event planners, web developers, photographers, etc.) to ensure effective engagement, efficient contributions, and aligned support of IPHI's communication goals.

Relationship Management

- Act as a connector across project teams to support integrated communications and messaging that communicate the breadth of IPHI's activities.
- Engage multiple audiences to increase organizational and program visibility, credibility, thought leadership, and brand awareness.
- Work with staff, partners, grantees, and funders to influence policy and systems change at the local and state levels through communications strategies and techniques.
- Represent IPHI at local, state, and national events.
- When appropriate, cultivate and leverage relationships with relevant journalists, publications, and media outlets across print, television, radio, and digital channels.

Supervision and Continuous Improvement

- Develop systems to support continuous improvement by IPHI staff in relationship to IPHI's strategic communications.
- Hire and develop IPHI's communications team, including communications manager, communications associate, and interns.

- Create and nurture an environment that supports collaboration, team engagement and facilitates dispute resolution.
- Other duties as assigned.

Qualifications

- IPHI values multiple pathways to attaining professional experience, education, and skills. The ideal candidate will have a combination of education and experience equivalent to at least seven years in communications management and leadership roles. Experience in health, healthcare, public policy, or non-profit settings are a plus.
- Excellent written, oral communications and interpersonal skills; ability to listen and assess the interests of various audiences and communicate complex or new ideas in person or in writing in a clear, articulate, and accessible manner to compel individuals to action.
- Proven track record as a strategic communications leader who delivers concise and persuasive messages across a variety of channels for a variety of audiences.
- Demonstrated experience producing and/or spearheading written and visual content that tells a story and/or conveys information in a compelling and accessible way.
- Strong commitment to equity, diversity, inclusion, and addressing root causes of health inequities and health disparities.
- Excellent communication, relationship building, and project management skills with an ability to prioritize multiple projects, negotiate positive outcomes, and achieve high quality work with a variety of internal and external stakeholders.
- Preferred candidates will have experience engaging diverse stakeholders in strategic communications and/or leading communications for systems change initiatives.
- Knowledge and proficiency in various communications software packages: analytics (e.g., Jetpack and Google Analytics); news monitoring (e.g., Meltwater, Vocus, Google Alerts); other relevant software packages (Constant Contact, Mail Chimp, WordPress, Canva, InDesign, Adobe Creative Suite).
- Bilingual abilities a plus.
- A multitasker with the ability to wear many hats in a fast-paced environment.
- Personal qualities of integrity, credibility, and customer service are important.

Job requirements:

- Must be able to sit at and operate a computer and other office equipment for a significant portion of the workday
- The position requires frequent communication with internal and external customers about program activities. Must be able to exchange accurate information in these situations.
- The position requires occasional work on evenings or weekends. The communications director must be able to travel for one or more nights from time to time.

Compensation: \$75,000 - \$85,000 depending on years of relevant experience and qualifications. IPHI offers competitive benefits including health, dental and disability insurance, sick and vacation time, and a retirement plan with employer matching contributions.

Location: The position is located at the IPHI office in the West Loop. **IPHI Leadership continues to assess COVID rates and telecommuting policies to prepare for a return to work when deemed safe. IPHI staff are currently working remotely.*

Starting Date: Immediate.

Application Instructions: Please submit a resume and cover letter to jobsearch@iphionline.org with “**Communications Director**” in the subject line. The cover letter should compare your qualifications and experiences to the expectations outlined in the position description. **Applications will be considered on a rolling basis in the order that they are received until the best candidate is identified for the role.** No phone calls, please.

The Illinois Public Health Institute is dedicated to the principles of equal opportunity. All qualified applicants will be considered without regard to race, color, religion, sex, pregnancy, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, national origin, age, disability, genetic information or any other personal characteristic not relevant to the posted position. IPHI is committed to diversity, equity and inclusion and strongly encourages women, people of color, individuals with disabilities, LGBTQ+ individuals, and veterans to apply.