



## **JOB DESCRIPTION**

**Title:** Director of Communications

**Reports to:** Associate Director

**Supervises:** Communications Coordinator, Science to Policy Manager, an occasional intern

**Terms:** Full-time / Salaried / Eligible for benefits

**Location:** VCE office at 20 Palmer Court in White River Junction, VT

## **Organizational Profile**

The [Vermont Center for Ecostudies](#) (VCE) advances biodiversity conservation in the northeastern US and internationally through scientific research and community engagement. Our work involves researching and monitoring biodiversity in a variety of ecosystems and delivering results to inform management and policy decisions. We engage thousands of volunteers in a wide range of projects through data collection and monitoring.

At VCE, we believe that kindness and collaboration are integral to effective conservation science. Our staff is committed to creating a workplace culture that respects and celebrates diversity and values the wellbeing of all employees. We accomplish this by fostering inclusivity and offering flexibility within the workday to encourage a healthy work-life balance.

## **Position Summary**

The Director of Communications (DoC) leads development and implementation of VCE's communications strategy, a critical role that serves every arm of the organization in advancing our mission and achieving conservation outcomes. This translates to two main categories of activity: communicating our science and conservation work to lay audiences (the general public, users of social media, and specific sectors such as policymakers) and communicating specifically with VCE's donors through annual reports and appeals for support. The Director of Communications possesses a working knowledge of best practices in both science communications and fundraising. The DoC approaches the communications program from a strategic perspective, advancing VCE's mission with cost-effective projects that expand our reach and increase our conservation impact.

The Director of Communications shares responsibility for setting and meeting organizational goals and objectives. An outstanding writer, they bring both breadth and depth to their work—from innovative ideas and ability to follow through, to entrepreneurial energy for independent work and a strong commitment to collaborative decision-making. They are adept at creating strategy, writing original content, and copyediting the work of others. They are comfortable leading and working in the background. They also exhibit keen attention to detail, commitment to excellence and creativity, and a collegial manner.

## **Primary Responsibilities**

- Supervise the communications team, including staff, Americorps members, and interns. Coordinate development of their work plans, evaluate their performance, and provide feedback and mentorship to help them build skills and achieve goals.

- Work with other VCE leaders to set and meet organizational goals and objectives, particularly in the areas of outreach, fundraising, and external collaborations.
- Create and implement an annual communications strategy to advance organizational goals, in collaboration with other VCE departments. Define objectives, craft messages, establish and monitor measures of success, and be accountable for the outcomes of all communications efforts and communications personnel.
- Envision, create, and deliver outstanding outreach materials and messages, including targeted communications to donors, in collaboration with other VCE staff. Represent VCE's work both verbally and in writing with engaging prose, captivating photos, effective video, sophisticated design, and energetic presentations. In all communications and development activities, support the strategic objectives of the organization and other staff in presenting VCE's work with a clear, compelling, and consistent message and brand. Maintain exacting standards in structural and copyediting.
- Direct and manage VCE's printed and digital communications efforts, from vision to production and distribution. Measure the return on investment of each major product and adjust strategy accordingly. Utilize the services of volunteers as needed.
- Interface with and manage contracted professionals, including VCE's web designer, graphic designer, and printing company to schedule projects, review drafts, and meet deadlines.
- Broker positive media and public relations for VCE. Work with other VCE leaders to establish and maintain positive community relations. Train, or facilitate training of, public-facing members of the staff in media relations. Coordinate timely and effective responses to inquiries from media outlets, including on topics that may bear on public perception of the organization.

**Approximate distribution of responsibilities:**

40% Communications in support of science and conservation outcomes

40% Communications in support of fundraising

20% Special projects/other

**Qualifications**

- Bachelor's degree or higher in a related field
- At least five years of experience in communications or marketing
- Experience developing communications, program, and/or organizational strategy
- Strong commitment to collaborative decision-making
- Creative and entrepreneurial energy
- Proven ability to write with flair and clarity in a voice compatible with VCE's style
- Experience devising and implementing metrics for effectiveness of communications strategy
- Proven ability as a convener or facilitator
- Proven ability and to engage donors through written communication
- Strong editing skills and exceptional attention to factual, visual, and grammatical detail
- Ability to set priorities, organize, and multitask
- Responsive to unexpected demands and able to efficiently create high-quality products
- Sufficient experience with science and technology to allow for quick study of VCE subjects
- Experience supervising staff and working effectively with contractors
- Able to work productively and positively, both independently and as part of a team
- Passionate or curious about VCE's work and nature in general
- Desire to be part of a cohesive, genial work environment that values collegiality and humor