

# NATIONAL INDIAN CHILD WELFARE ASSOCIATION

## Communications Director Job Description

**Position Title:** Communications Director  
**Supervisor:** Executive Director  
**Department:** Executive

**FLSA Status:** Exempt, Salaried  
**Classification:** Regular, Full-time  
**Location:** Portland, Oregon  
**Salary:** \$88,000–\$99,064

### **Position Summary:**

The communications director for the National Indian Child Welfare Association (NICWA) is responsible for enhancing NICWA's public image and visibility through diverse communication channels, advancing our organizational mission of promoting the well-being of Native children and families. Some of our communications work is done in coalitions, and this position will play an active role in facilitation and support of NICWA partnerships. This role oversees four core areas: strategic communications, brand management, earned media, and communications administration.

### **Primary Responsibilities:**

- Develops and implements an annual strategic communication plan aligned with NICWA's mission, values, and organizational priorities; provides communication guidance to leadership and supports cross-departmental efforts
- Oversees brand management and ensures consistent application of NICWA's brand elements across all materials, maintaining professional and cohesive messaging and alignment with organizational goals
- Oversees media relations and advocacy by positioning NICWA and its priorities positively in tribal, local, state and national media; manages media outreach, press releases and public relations efforts
- Manages communications budgets, staff, communication contracts, and communication processes and fosters a collaborative, high-performing team environment

### **Essential Functions:**

- Implements and monitors communication strategies; oversees social media, digital and print materials; collaborates on national initiatives with key stakeholders; oversees the creation of culturally appropriate content
- Leads Constituent Engagement Team, co-leads Executive Team, and participates in Annual Conference Team
- Manages NICWA's branding across all publications, events, and campaigns; ensures adherence to style and brand; leads efforts to produce high-quality, visually appealing materials that reflect NICWA's identity and goals
- Stewards organizational and coalition messaging and supports development of new messaging in an evolving landscape
- Builds and maintains relationships with media outlets; coordinates earned media coverage, press events, and interviews; prepares leadership for public relations efforts including presentations, speeches, and media statements; and acts as organizational spokesperson as appropriate
- Effectively manages department budgets, vendor contracts, and communications policies and procedures; leads proofreading including proofing high visibility testimony and reports, writing standards, training proofers, and constituent engagement efforts
- Oversees department staff management, including recruitment, onboarding, setting clear performance expectations, providing ongoing feedback, conducting performance evaluations, and addressing disciplinary matters as needed

### **Additional Responsibilities:**

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- Performs other duties and assignments as directed
- Participates in NICWA activities, internal teams, and other tasks as required
- Contributes to organization-wide initiatives and special projects as needed
- Leads Constituent Engagement Team, co-leads Executive Team, and participates in Supervisor Team and Annual Conference Team

### **Supervision:**

- This position reports directly to the executive director
- This position supervises the communications manager and the development communications manager

### **Core Competencies:**

- Models ethics, integrity, and accountability
- Exercises sound judgement and decision-making
- Upholds high standards of accuracy and quality of work standards
- Actively contributes to NICWA's learning community
- Effectively manages workload and prioritization of tasks
- Navigates adversity with resilience and adaptability
- Develops strategic perspectives to enhance organizational success
- Demonstrates professional effectiveness in all aspects of the role
- Champions and promotes NICWA's mission, vision, philosophy, and goals
- Builds and shares organizational knowledge
- Maintains a strong constituent focus, building and deepening constituent knowledge
- Champions and supports organizational change
- Builds and nurtures relationships across teams and stakeholders
- Communicates with clarity, influence, and impact
- Encourages collaboration and fosters teamwork
- Inspires and motivates others to achieve high levels of performance
- Adheres to NICWA's policies, procedures, and organizational framework
- Builds effective teams, utilizes talent, and empowers team members to succeed
- Cultivates a culture of continuous improvement by recognizing and rewarding excellence

### **Qualifications:**

- Bachelor's degree in communications, journalism, media relations, business management, marketing, social services, or related field required; advanced certification or master's degree preferred
- 10 or more years of experience in organizational communications, including publication planning, public relations, or marketing, with at least three years in a managerial role
- Advanced knowledge and experience in building relationships with media and managing digital communications, including social media and SEO

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- Strong knowledge of Native culture and social service systems with demonstrated working experience with tribal organizations, tribal service systems, and tribal government structures preferred
- Strong project management skills with the ability to balance multiple deadlines and internal/external demands
- Excellent communication and public speaking skills across varied settings and audiences
- Strategic leadership and organizational planning; resilience and adaptability to lead through change
- Strong analytical and decision-making abilities
- Skilled in Microsoft Office, social media platforms, and preferably Adobe Creative Suite

#### **Travel Requirements:**

This role requires the ability to travel up to 5% of the year.

#### **Work Environment:**

This role operates in a hybrid work setting, with specified in-office and remote workdays. In-office collaboration at NICWA's Portland office location is required on Tuesdays and Wednesdays. Remote work requirements include the ability to work in a virtually professional, quiet, and distraction-free environment while maintaining availability and responsiveness during work hours. Reliability and readiness of technology is also required.

Regular use of standard office equipment, including computers, phones, photocopiers and filing cabinets is required.

#### **Physical Demands:**

Frequently involves prolonged periods of sitting or standing. May require occasional bending, stooping, and lifting of up to 15 pounds.

Physical requirements are representative of those that must be met to successfully perform the essential functions of this position with or without reasonable accommodation.

#### **Disclaimer:**

This job description provides a general overview of the responsibilities associated with the role. Duties, responsibilities, and activities are not intended to be construed as exhaustive and may change with or without notice.

NICWA is proud to be an equal opportunity employer. Qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, sex, disability, veteran, or any protected status.

#### **To Apply:**

Complete application materials include a cover letter, resume, and NICWA's employment application, found at <https://www.nicwa.org/employment>. Please submit completed applications materials to Operations Director Lindsay Early at [lindsay@nicwa.org](mailto:lindsay@nicwa.org) by May 12, 2025.