



**NICWA**  
National Indian Child Welfare Association  
Protecting Our Children • Preserving Our Culture

## **Position Announcement: Communications Director**

The National Indian Child Welfare Association (NICWA) protects the safety, health, and cultural identity of Native children and families—today and for future generations. We strengthen tribal capacity to prevent child abuse and neglect, advance policies that uphold tribal sovereignty, and promote Native-led, culturally grounded approaches to child welfare. Through advocacy, coalition-building, workforce training, and technical assistance to improve service systems, NICWA works at the tribal, local, state, and national levels to ensure that Native children can thrive within their families and communities.

NICWA is a national, Native-led nonprofit membership organization founded in 1983 and based in Portland, Oregon. Our members include tribal nations, individuals—both Native and non-Native—and private organizations from across the United States and Canada concerned with Native and First Nations child and family issues. Together, our board, staff, and partners work to protect Native children and keep them connected to their family, community, and culture.

Our next communications director will bring extensive experience working with Native organizations and communities, enhance NICWA’s public image and visibility through diverse communication channels, and advance our mission. This role oversees four core areas: strategic communications, brand management, earned media, and communications administration.

### **The Opportunity**

This is an exciting moment to lead NICWA’s communications work. Following increased visibility surrounding the successful Protect ICWA Campaign (PIC) and U.S. Supreme Court victory in *Haaland v. Brackeen* in 2023, we refreshed our brand, updated our messaging, and launched a new website. In November 2024, the PIC’s [ICWA 2050](#) plan launched, positioning NICWA to lead a coalition of tribal leaders and child welfare partners to protect the Indian Child Welfare Act and strengthen tribal child welfare.

We are committed to increasing our investment in communications to support organizational visibility and advocacy impact. With a strong communications foundation in place, we are looking for a director who can elevate and sustain our presence as we engage in the long-term, generational work of supporting Native children and their families. Our communications should embody the spirit we bring to our work every day: gentle authority, cultural and spiritual groundedness, generosity, and collaboration with purpose.

The communications director will have the opportunity to impact tribal communities on a national level and to communicate to a wide variety of audiences: NICWA members, families, communities, frontline child welfare and social service workers, tribal leaders and other policymakers, and non-Native allies. The ideal candidate is an experienced Indian Country communicator and trusted organizational representative, with strong project management skills and the ability to collaborate across teams. This position will work in collaboration with the executive director and lead a team of communications and fundraising professionals.

### **About the Role**

We are a culturally based organization that leads our work with Indigenous values. The communications director will:

- Develop and implement an annual strategic communication plan including key goals and core tactics to achieve them that is aligned with NICWA's mission, values, and organizational priorities.
- Provide communication guidance to leadership and support internal cross-departmental communications efforts.
- Oversee brand management and ensure consistent application of NICWA's brand elements across all materials, maintaining professional and cohesive messaging and alignment with organizational goals.
- Lead media relations and support advocacy communications that position NICWA and our priorities positively in tribal, local, state, and national media.
- Manage communications budgets, staff, communication contracts, and communication processes, fostering a collaborative, high-performing team environment.

This position will be an excellent fit for strong performers with proven strategic planning and project management experience and a passion for program and advocacy communications.

We are a well-regarded national organization with strong leadership, deep roots locally in the Pacific Northwest, and deep relationships with tribal and urban Native communities

nationwide. We have a strong track record of culturally responsive resources and trainings and an engaged board of directors who help shape our work. We have a highly collaborative workplace. The way we do our work is just as important to us as the quality and outcomes of our work, and we invest in our employees and our organizational culture. This hybrid position will work from home on Mondays, Thursdays, and Fridays, and from our Portland, Oregon office on Tuesdays and Wednesdays.

### **Key Skills, Attributes, and Areas of Expertise**

- **Leadership and Vision:** Experience leading mission-driven organizational communications in partnership with executive and program leads, centering values and culture
- **Knowledge:** Deep knowledge of Native cultures, communities, and social service systems and established relationships with tribal nations, partner organizations, professional colleagues, and community members
- **Proactive positioning and responsiveness:** Ability to manage multiple projects, proactively assess communications outcomes, and respond quickly to mission-critical needs

### **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
- Ten 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 of media relations, social media strategy, and digital communications (including SEO)
- 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

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. If you are interested in the position, but do not meet all qualifications, please feel free to apply, and identify support you would need in your cover letter.

To learn more about this position, organizational culture, and benefits of working for NICWA, please join our webinar entitled “Job Opportunities at NICWA” on Thursday, May 8, 2025, at 10:00 a.m. PST. Please register here:

[https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_n5zW9DfWS\\_yT62GS-gDD1A](https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_n5zW9DfWS_yT62GS-gDD1A)

### **To Apply**

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