COMMUNICATIONS & GOVERNMENT RELATIONS

Description of the Field

The broad field of communications and government relations include publicity and lobbying activities that are designed to promote the interests of the firm, NGO, association or other body. Communication - or public relations - work may include examining the media for issues affecting the organization, writing, organizing and implementing communication plans, identifying and targeting important audiences, and representing the interests of the employers.

Lobbyists try to get legislators to support certain measures. Activities can include writing letters and meeting with politicians and government representatives in order to sway them to make decisions that favour the interests they represent, promoting views by talking to the press, and enlisting assistance of the community to influence politicians.

Most jobs in the field are fast-paced and involve a lot of interaction with other organizations, the public, and government. Most of the time is spent in the office, although there may be travel involved in order to meet with media and other relevant organizations.

Successful people in this field must be well-informed, persuasive and self-confident.

Selected Alumni Job Titles

- **Economics Editor** for the publication Asian Business, Hong Kong
- **TV Reporter**, CBC-French, Saskatchewan
- **Editor/reporter**, Canadian Press Broadcasting News
- **Corporate Policy Officer**, Government and International Relations, Export Development Corporation
- **Policy and Government Relations**, Export Development Corporation
- **Communications Advisor**, Fisheries and Oceans Canada
- **Manager**, Policy and Liaison, International Relations and Programs, Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada
- **Communication / Cooperation Delegate**, International Committee of the Red Cross
- **Communications Coordinator**, Canadian Council for International Co-operation
- **Group Communications Advisor**, Corporate Communications, Strategic Communications and Ministerial Affairs, Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat
- **Communications Advisor**, Environment Canada
- **Communications Strategist**, International Trade Canada
Sample Employment Advertisements

The advertisements shown below have been selected from the 'jobslist' notices available to NPSIA students and alumni. The positions were all advertised between 2003 and 2006 and thus represent a current view of an employment opportunity. The examples have been selected from a large number; and have been chosen as representative of a type of employer and/or a type of skill in demand.

Position Communication Officer, United Nations Association in Canada

The United Nations Association in Canada is hiring a Communication Officer to assist in developing and implementing a communication strategy for new and existing UNA-Canada projects. This position is open to Canadian citizens and landed immigrants in Canada. As an equal opportunity employer, we encourage applications for this position from all qualified candidates, including men, Aboriginals and visible minorities.

Duties

1. Work closely with Project Officers/Managers to plan, develop, and implement communications strategies;
2. Prepare communication briefs on UNA-Canada projects for UNA-Canada senior management as requested;
3. Develop a communication and dissemination plan for UNA-Canada regional branches, outlining clear channels of information sharing between branches and national office, and among branches;
4. Prepare and disseminate Media Advisory on various events related to the project and provide strategic communications and media advice to ensure promotion and publicity of project as widely as possible;
5. Engage media (TV, radio, print) in promoting UNA-Canada projects in participating communities;
6. Develop Q & A's for staffers and branches as needed;
7. Develop and maintain databases related to project contacts;
8. Be available and ready to respond to media questions and inquiries;
9. Perform other duties related to project operations and as requested by Project Officers/Managers;
10. Contribute to the growth of UNA-Canada, including assisting in the development of project ideas and proposal writing, fundraising, and project implementation.

Qualifications

1. Undergraduate degree with specialization in journalism, communications or related focus;
2. Knowledge and understanding of Canadian TV, radio, and print media;
3. Knowledge of public information principles, practices and techniques;
4. Developed networks with local, regional, and national journalists, news managers, and other news executives;
5. Knowledge of and skills in advocacy work;
6. Experience and demonstrated talent in design, layout and graphic service production;
7. Strong operating skills in the following programmes: web and desktop publishing software, Dreamweaver, Fireworks, Photoshop and new communication technologies;
8. Excellent written and oral communication, research, and writing skills;
9. Strong organizational and time management skills, with ability to pay attention to detail;
10. Demonstrated ability to problem solve, prioritize, multi-task and meet deadlines;
11. Ability to make “cold calls” and mobilize support for UNA-Canada projects/programmes;
12. Experience in dealing with senior management and high ranking officials in government, education, and private sectors and with multilateral organizations;
13. Knowledge and experience in programme/project management;
14. Commitment to the values and mission of UNA-Canada;
15. Photography skills an asset;
16. Bilingualism is essential. (French/English, Oral/Written).

This position is a full-time one-year position, at a starting salary level of $33,000 per annum plus a competitive benefits package.

Communications and Networking Coordinator, Canadian Council for Refugees

The Canadian Council for Refugees is seeking a person to fill a temporary vacancy created by a leave of absence. The contract is for 6 months, to start immediately. The person will work at the CCR office in Montreal.

Principal Responsibilities
- Coordinates and supports media work and public education
- Develops networks and alliances
- Promotes member participation in policy discussion and advocacy

Qualifications
- demonstrated commitment to human rights/social justice
- demonstrated experience in building effective networks and/or alliances
- excellent communications skills
- awareness of the issues affecting immigrants and refugees and familiarity with the refugee/immigrant serving sector
- experience working with the media and in public education and/or experience in engaging communities in advocacy
- demonstrated initiative and ability to work with minimal supervision
- English/French bilingualism
- computer skills

The CCR is an equal opportunity employer and encourages applications from refugees, immigrants, racialized persons, and persons discriminated against on the basis of their sexual orientation or gender identity.

COMMUNICATIONS COORDINATOR, Canadian Feminist Alliance for International Action

Terms of Reference:
Salary Range: $44,000 - 50,000 per year
Location: Ottawa, Ontario

The Steering Committee of the Canadian Feminist Alliance for International Action (FAFIA) is seeking a bi-lingual Communications Coordinator for its major project with multiple components focused on the advancement of women and gender equality.
Required Skills:
excellent organizational and outreach skills
ability to work within a feminist and social justice framework.
excellent verbal and written communication skills
ability to develop a communication strategy to include the media and women's NGOs
experience in working with e-mail and the Internet, including web-site maintenance
experience with women's equality-seeking groups and non-governmental organizations
fully bilingual (French/English)

Other skills:
experience working with government
familiarity with international gender equality work and/or UN mechanisms

Accountability:
The Communications Coordinator will be responsible to the project Steering Committee and Project Coordinator.

Tasks:
develop a comprehensive communications strategy for the project, with a view to ensure that information about the project, its objectives and accomplishments, reaches Canadian women, women's NGOs and the wider public.
develop mechanisms to ensure regular communication between women's NGOs and the project
coordinate press conferences and special media events to target both the regular and alternative media
develop a series of up-to-date media kits in both official languages
provide web-site maintenance, monitor related sites on the Internet, and e-mail communication with Canadian and international NGOs working with the team to develop public information tools, coordinate press releases, material for the web site and ensure information flow within the project.
develop and carry out a targeted media (mainstream and alternative) strategy which includes up-to-date media kits in both official languages, coordinated press conferences and special media events, the development of contacts with journalists, an media information dissemination system, a speakers list, etc.

INFORMATION OFFICER, UNESCO

Under the general direction of the Secretary-General, Canadian Commission for UNESCO, the incumbent provides professional information services for the Canadian Commission for UNESCO, concentrating on writing, editing, publishing, promotion, and public and media relations.

The Information Officer for the Canadian Commission for UNESCO will have a minimum of 10 years of progressively responsible experience in the field of communications, and preferably in one or more of the broad areas of education, natural sciences, social and human sciences, culture and/or communications. He/she will be a mature individual with an understanding and appreciation of the role of UNESCO in international relations, and of the Commission's unique position as an agency that ensures the liaison between UNESCO and both government and non-government organizations in Canada.

The ideal candidates will also have:
* A university degree;
* A good understanding of the Canadian Commission for UNESCO's mandate;
* Excellent organizational skills and the ability to work effectively as part of a team;
* An awareness of and sensitivity to international protocols and cultural diversity;
* Proven ability to meet critical deadlines;
* Strong communication and interpersonal skills; and
* A working knowledge of both official languages.
PROGRAM OFFICER, POLICY TEAM – GOVERNMENT RELATIONS & CAPACITY BUILDING, CCIC

Location: Ottawa  
Salary: $47,457

POSITION SUMMARY
Under the direction of the Policy Coordinator, the Program Officer will work with the Policy Team to set priorities and carry out CCIC's policy agenda. The Program Officer will provide leadership, support and expertise to the parliamentary and government relations work of CCIC and will also develop and support capacity building and learning activities for CCIC members in policy and advocacy work. The Program Officer will also participate in other areas of the Policy Team program. The Program Officer will have a general knowledge of the policy areas of CCIC's in common framework and strong experience in government relations and parliamentary liaison.

JOB DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES
1. Provide leadership and support to the government relations strategy of the Council and coordinate CCIC's government relations team:
   * Provide expertise in the development of the CCIC government relations strategy working closely with the CEO's office;
   * Provide proactive parliamentary outreach and networking;
   * Maintain contacts and relations with government, parliamentarians and other NGOs;
   * Provide strategic and logistical support for CCIC meetings and liaison initiatives with government, parliament, and other policy constituencies;
   * Monitor and analyze government environment in areas of priority for government relations work;
   * Facilitate and organize CCIC and/or CCIC member initiatives with parliamentarians in accordance with government relations strategy;
   * Prepare CCIC correspondence, policy statements, and briefs to support CCIC's policy agenda and government relations strategy.

2. Develop and support capacity building and learning programs for CCIC members in policy and advocacy work:
   * Develop in conjunction with the Organizational Development (OD) team and others a long-term policy capacity-building strategy for CCIC's membership;
   * Organize workshops, learning circles, participatory research, dialogues etc. as methodologies to promote collaborative and field-based learning in the sector;
   * Prepare proposals, reports and other documents as necessary;
   * Participate in the analysis and dissemination of the learning's and results of the process;
   * Maintain relations with relevant NGO's, networks, coalitions, academics and others with expertise in policy capacity development;
   * Represent CCIC at any relevant meetings and conferences.

3. Provide support for ongoing operation and administration of the Policy Team by:
   * Contributing to the development and carrying out of the work plan for the Policy Team in co-ordination with other teams in the Secretariat;
   * Managing projects related to the team's program including their financial management;
   * Preparing policies and proposals for CCIC's Board of Directors, Executive Committee and other committees and task forces;
   * Supervising the work of consultants and temporary employees;
   * Work with other teams as necessary to facilitate the International Co-operation Award process;
   * Support CCIC working group policy initiatives and capacities, through assisting in goal setting, strategy development and policy formulation in priority policy areas;
   * Participating in regular work planning, work review and evaluation with the Policy Team;
   * Performing other duties as requested to ensure smooth functioning of the team.

KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS
* University degree in relevant field, preferably a Masters or equivalent;
* A minimum of 4 years of relevant work experience including strong government relations experience (parliament and bureaucracy);
* Bilingualism in Canada's official languages (written and spoken) is essential;
* Familiarity with Canadian NGO policy agenda, with general knowledge of policy areas of CCIC's in common framework;
* Good knowledge of Canada's policy making process particularly as it relates to foreign policy;
* Experience or knowledge in training and participatory learning methodologies;
* Familiarity with Anglophone and Francophone Canadian NGO community including knowledge of international networks and NGO partnership relations;
* Strong initiative and organizational skills;
* Strong communication and interpersonal skills;
* Capacity to work in a self-directed manner and to collaborate with others in a team setting;
* Strong writing and research skills;
* Good computer skills including Internet and email skills;
* Knowledge of international development theory and practice;
* Work experience in a developing country or in community development is an asset.

**MANAGER OF GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS, CANADIAN APPAREL FEDERATION**

Functions and Responsibilities:
* Provide proactive leadership on government affairs issues affecting the apparel industry and develop and champion policy proposals;
* Communicate with association members and government in a concise, effective manner to further the interests of the association and its members;
* Provide regular advice and information to members on company-specific issues;
* Maintain and enhance the profile of the association among government audiences and provide competent liaison to the government, affiliated organizations, and other stakeholders;
* Ensure the effective completion of projects in the area of government relations in a cost-effective manner; and
* Develop and provide appropriate policy recommendations for consideration by the association's Board of Directors and ad-hoc committees.

Relevant Skills:
* Effective Communications skills are imperative;
* Experience in government, public policy or advocacy;
* Knowledge of trade issues (Finance, DFAIT, CITT);
* Candidate must be entrepreneurial in orientation, and creative in developing solutions;
* Bilingualism considered an asset.

**SPEECH COORDINATOR / WRITER, CIDA**

LOCATION: Hull, QC
SALARY: $53,611 to $57,787(IS-04)
LANGUAGE: Bilingual

EDUCATION:
Graduation from a recognized University with a degree relevant to communications or significant related experience.

EXPERIENCE:
Experience in writing and editing in both official languages.
Experience in speech writing on international, ecological, political and social issues.
Experience in information gathering applicable to speech writing. Experience in supervising staff and/or directing the work of outside professionals and free-lance writers.

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS/COMMENTS:
Proficiency in English and in French is essential

Revised: January 2007; November 2003