



Job Description | Director of Communications | Exempt

Are you ready to provide leadership to one of the most effective community-based change organizations in the country? The Foundation for Tacoma Students is seeking a dynamic leader to fill the role of Director of Communications. This leader will support the organization to communicate effective messaging that demonstrates the impact place-based organizations are making in deep partnership and collaboration with the community in which it serves. This position will be a critical function to the organization, will be part of the executive leadership team, and will be charged with moving the organizations' messaging and brand to the next level.

About the Foundation for Tacoma Students

The Foundation for Tacoma Students (FFTS) plays a unique role in supporting the Graduate Tacoma community-wide movement. The Graduate Tacoma movement comprises more than 350 community partners that span the entire education ecosystem. We are parents and educators, early learning and higher education, business and labor, youth and community service, civic and philanthropy, local government and communities of faith. The Foundation for Tacoma Students and the Graduate Tacoma community movement believe in a Tacoma where every child succeeds in school, career, and life.

As the movement's 501(c)3 backbone organization, FFTS helps align organizations, institutions, and individuals around positive outcomes for students. We do this by connecting and convening partners and stakeholders, leveraging data transparency and analytics to inform decisions, supporting scalable professional development and continuous improvement processes, aligning funding and resources to deepen and scale what is working and to catalyze new and emerging practices, and by centering policy and advocacy in all we do to create a more equitable and sustainable system for all.

Position Description

The Director of Communications is a critical function to both the Foundation for Tacoma Students and the Graduate Tacoma movement. Working closest with the Executive Director and key executives of the organization, the Director of Communications will attend to the necessary communication balance required for the broader Graduate Tacoma community movement and the Foundation for Tacoma Students. The Director of Communications will support the Executive Director directly and provide strategic, thought-provoking guidance on how the organization communicates its impact and value as a place-based agency supporting the full education ecosystem.

This position is full-time with benefits and reports directly to the Executive Director.

The successful candidate must be willing to travel, work varied hours, and have an ability to network with stakeholders at every level. The Director of Communications will be expected to build on the existing communications plan, ensuring that all communications strategies, tactics, and collateral materials are compelling, effective, and representative of the organization's goal, or will strategically adjust the plan to meet the needs of the organization and the broader community movement. This is a unique position for someone with strong communications skills and capabilities to create compelling messaging and materials, pitch stories to the media, produce presentations and other materials suitable for diverse audiences, develop and execute social media efforts, manage the upkeep of our various websites, respond to public relations issues as they arise, and support the organization in compelling messaging that enables FFTS to write and win grant funding to sustain the organization.

Finally, the Foundation for Tacoma Students is guided by its values, commitment to equity, and the core belief that working together is key to realize a Tacoma where every child succeeds. The Director of Communications will play a leadership role in advancing the anti-racism messaging throughout the organization's operations, priorities, and programs. Additionally, the Director of Communications will ensure that FFTS is consistent in delivering clear and effective messaging with partners, students, parents, funders, grantees, local, regional, state, and federal government, and other audiences that support equitable outcomes and systems change.

This position will be responsible for two critical areas of the organization:

- I. **Foundation for Tacoma Students Brand & Storytelling:** As a key leader of the organization, guidance on how the Foundation for Tacoma Students elevates itself in the field of public education as a credible contributor and influencer will be a critical function to sustainability of the organization, both internally and externally.
- II. **Graduate Tacoma Strategy, Impact, & Momentum:** As a key representative of the organization, characterizing the successful strategies, meaningful impact, and messaging the power of the Graduate Tacoma community movement will be critical to the advancement and sustainability of the movement and in realizing the community's 2030 goal.

Detailed Duties and Responsibilities

The Director of Communications will directly support the Executive Director in the following areas:

- messaging the organization's mission & strategy
- consistent and reliable communications to broad and diverse stakeholders
- scaling the organization's brand awareness and credibility
- deepening the organization's relationship with paid media outlets
- writing projects, including concept papers, reports, grant applications, etc.
- coordination of the organization's large-scale signature events

Critical Areas for the Director of Communications

- Foundation for Tacoma Students Brand & Storytelling

- Provide overall direction and management of the value and impact of the organization through messaging and brand awareness
 - Build and strengthen internal communication processes, such that the organization's brand and messaging is consistent, reliable, and accessible
 - Support the Executive Director in elevating the voice of the organization, community movement, impact, and calls to action
 - Serve as a strategic communications advisor to the Executive Director and other executive leadership team members
 - Strengthen the organization's brand through compelling messaging in paid and earned media
 - Support the storytelling strategy by elevating data, success stories, challenge areas, policy implications, resource gaps, and more
- Graduate Tacoma Strategy, Impact, & Momentum
- Collaborate with Graduate Tacoma partners and other key stakeholders to collect and share stories of the movement
 - Engage with local and regional media outlets to elevate stories of the Graduate Tacoma movement
 - Support the movement in compelling its impact beyond the Tacoma community
 - Establish effective and digestible race and equity tools to community partners to advance a more equitable movement
 - Help build on the momentum of the movement to garner resources and facilitate policy changes
 - Represent the Foundation for Tacoma Students and the Graduate Tacoma movement in various settings

Experience and Competencies

- Minimum of 5 years experience with a proven track record of developing and executing highly effective communication strategies
- Demonstrated ability to develop and manage a website content management system, run online campaigns, and use social media effectively
- High comfort level working as part of a team of people from a variety of different racial, ethnic, socioeconomic, educational, religious, sexual, gender, and generational backgrounds
- Skilled manager to support direct and indirect reports in executing the on-brand communications
- Strong attention to detail, with persuasive writing and editing skills
- Facilitate project management, planning, and organizing for communications and events
- Solid understanding of APA Stylebook and media communications formats

Desired Skills and Achievements

- Integrate sophisticated and innovative communication strategies and enhance the capacity of the full organization to implement on brand messaging
- Strategic thinker with an ability to use communications as a lever to achieve the broader goals of the Foundation and of the Graduate Tacoma movement

- Experience interacting and communicating with diverse audiences (i.e., families, students, policymakers, educators, administrators, donors, and the community at large)
- Knowledge of public education issues and/or experience creating high-impact advocacy campaigns preferred
- Experience interpreting and analyzing data and crafting messages that relevantly and clearly communicate those findings for diverse audiences
- Commitment to anti-racism, social justice, and Graduate Tacoma's vision for a Tacoma where every child succeeds in school, career, and life
- Ability to uphold brand standards across platforms and to assist staff in applying branding consistency to their work
- Demonstrated ability to develop and manage a website content management system, run online campaigns, and use social media effectively
- Existing media relationships in the Puget Sound area are helpful
- Familiarity with design software (i.e., Adobe InDesign, Photoshop) a plus
- Familiarity with collective impact and systems change work

Compensation

The hiring range for this position is considered a Scale 4 and ranges from \$80,000 – \$100,000/annually. Salary for the job is commensurate with experience. This position offers a competitive benefits package.

How to Apply

Please email a Resume and Cover Letter to Human Resources at hr@graduatetacoma.org using subject line “Application for DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS – YOUR NAME.” **No phone calls, please.**

Our Vision: A Tacoma where every child succeeds in school, career, and life.

Our Mission: To build and strengthen Tacoma’s community-wide movement to help every child achieve success from cradle to college and career.