

Director, External Affairs and Communications

King County Regional Homelessness Authority

Role Title: Director, External Affairs and Communications

Salary Range: \$90,000 - \$130,000

Organizational Overview

The King County Regional Homelessness Authority (the Authority) oversees all homelessness related programming and prevention initiatives in the Seattle/King County region. Created via an interlocal agreement between the City of Seattle and King County in 2019 the Authority is charged with building and implementing a regional approach to ending homelessness in King County. To accomplish this, the Authority is specifically tasked with:

1. Engaging and centering people with lived experience;
2. Focusing on justice-based approaches in order to actively address disproportionalities in the population experiencing homelessness; and
3. Integrating the perspectives of a wide range of stakeholders across King County through a sub-regional planning process that recognizes the unique attributes of communities within the county.

The Authority is currently in its founding era and is looking for dynamic and skilled leaders at all levels.

Team Overview

The Executive Team within the Authority is responsible for strategy development, implementation, and overall oversight of the agency. Housed directly within this team are core workstreams, including: innovation, equity and administrative support. The team has direct lines of interaction with all offices across the agency.

Role Description

The **Director, External Affairs & Communications (EAC)** is a part of the Executive Office and supports cross-agency operations in support of its mission to provide high-quality, customer-centered services to King County community members through a series of initiatives and programs that support the Authority mission of ending homelessness in the region with a focus on communications and external affairs. This includes oversight of strategy design and implementation for communications and external affairs for the agency, including, but not limited to: Internal communications, external communications with key stakeholders (i.e., media and press, government leaders, county, state and federal agency officials, community partners and customers). This role will be tasked with designing new media strategies that go beyond traditional press interactions in order to ensure that the Authority is communicating clearly and routinely with its key constituencies, including people experiencing homelessness as well as housed residents of King County.

The Director, EAC will partner closely with the Chief of Staff, CEO, Department Chiefs, the Implementation and Governing Committee of the Authority, as well as elected officials and community members across the county to inform strategy.

Reporting directly to the Deputy CEO/Chief of Staff, this role is a part of the Authority leadership team. This role has up to 1-2+ direct reports and holds 4+ strong dotted line relationships across offices. This role will be ultimately accountable to the CEO and people experiencing homelessness and will be held to the processes that customers of the Regional Authority's services, community groups, and frontline staff establish to ensure that accountability.

Accountabilities:

Communication and External Affairs Team Leadership and Operations Oversight (20%)

- Lead the development of high-level communications strategy for the agency, in alignment with the agency strategic plan with significant support for the Deputy CEO/Chief of Staff
- Consistently explore new media approaches to communications strategies including, blogging, townhalls, podcasts, and other ways of engaging core constituencies of the Authority in accessible ways
- Support the Deputy CEO/Chief of Staff in the design and solidification/implementation of core communication practices to support the alignment of goals across the organization and drive cross-team collaboration; Create continuous feedback loops with internal stakeholder groups to inform community engagement, partnership/resourcing needs and intergovernmental affairs into communications strategy in partnership with other Chiefs
- Lead the on-going growth and development of systems and structures to organize and manage the day-to-day operations of the Communications Team with a focus on streamlining communications and external affairs related operations
- Lead the on-going improvement process of the communications strategy in support of the shifting needs of the agency, focused on providing service to agency customers
- Grow and/or develop a diverse, highly skilled team to execute programming and initiatives and drive continuous improvement oversight; Directly supervise 1-2+ direct reports
- Model a customer-centric work style through leadership and personal accountability towards inclusive practices
- Serve as a direct owner and/or project manager for a portfolio of high-priority special communications and external relations specific projects, as needed, including: Preparing and/or providing relevant updates for key partners (i.e. town halls, governance meetings with Authority boards, council sessions, media, etc.)
- Serve as a core external ambassador of the Regional Authority, in support of the CEO and/or in their absence

Internal Organizational Communications Strategy and Implementation (20%)

- Lead the co-design communications strategy for the internal authority stakeholders, including: staff, supervisors, governance bodies/internal working groups and other

internal stakeholder groups, as required in collaboration with the Deputy CEO/Chief of Staff and Director, HR/Other HR Leaders, as required

- Maintain strong dotted line relationships with Deputy CEO/ Chief of Staff and HR Leaders to inform the ongoing refinement/continuous improvement of communications strategy for aligned stakeholder groups
- Ensure relevant methods of communication are leveraged to maximize engagement for internal stakeholders based upon the needs of the group, differentiating outreach methods, as required

Media Relations & Intergovernmental Communications Strategy and Implementation (30%)

- Serve as the direct point of contact for all Media, speaking in alignment with the agency strategic plan and leverage best practices in media training to ensure accuracy in the information provided and mitigating agency risk, in service of agency stakeholders
- Lead in the development/draft of communications for release in collaboration with the Communications team and other internal stakeholders, as relevant; project manage communications for release through the approval processes, ensuring expediency for immediate communication needs
- Connect and build partnerships with relevant partners in media to ensure the agency is considered for features/to support the agency securing relevant placements
- Directly pitch to raise the visibility of the agency in media (print and digital), when needed
- Support the project management of/ refinement of pieces for placement, as secured; Ensure that all pieces are aligned with/accurately reflect our mission/values and approach
- Conduct other relationship management and related logistics with media partners, as needed
- Lead the co-design communications strategy for media and government specific external stakeholders, including: media representatives, external working groups, external agency leaders/offices and their staffs, and other stakeholders, as required in collaboration with the Deputy CEO/Chief of Staff and other agency staff who serve as primary relationship holders with those external government officials and/or agencies
- Maintain strong dotted line relationships with the Deputy CEO/Chief of Staff, primary relationship holders and other relevant staff members to inform the ongoing refinement/continuous improvement of of communications strategy for aligned stakeholder groups
- Ensure relevant methods of communication are leverage to maximize engagement for government stakeholders based upon the needs of the group, differentiating outreach methods, as required

Community Engagement Communications Strategy and Implementation (30%)

- Lead the co-design communications strategy for non-government, community based external stakeholders, including: external working groups, community based organizational leaders/offices and their staffs, and other stakeholders, as required in collaboration with the the Deputy CEO/Chief of Staff, Director, Community Impact and

other agency staff who serve as primary relationship holders with those external government officials and/or agencies

- Maintain strong dotted line relationships with the Deputy CEO/Chief of Staff, Chief Community Impact Officer, primary relationship holders and other relevant staff members to inform the ongoing refinement/continuous improvement of communications strategy for aligned stakeholder groups
- Ensure relevant methods of communication are leveraged to maximize engagement for government stakeholders based upon the needs of the group, differentiating outreach methods, as required

Minimum Requirements

- 10+ years of related work experience in communications, external relations, or a related field
- 10+ of the government, non-profit, or related field, preferred
- Demonstrated ability to drive multiplatform strategy, including: twitter, in-person events, blogging, podcasting, mailing lists, and other forms of engagement
- A demonstrated ability to consistently center practices of equity, justice, and inclusivity within any communications strategy
- Experience in the housing and homelessness sector, preferred
- Budget management experience
- Proficiency/comfort using technology and data
- Demonstrated ability to analyze data sets and create policy recommendations in line with available data
- Demonstrated ability working across a large region and navigating diverse stakeholder groups
- Demonstrated ability to work across systems in pursuit of the goal ending homelessness

Additional Requirements

- Ability to undertake routine travel around the region in order to meet with key stakeholders.
- Experience working across government agencies (preference for both local and federal experience) and related structures/governing bodies
- A track record of success in operations, partnership and/or board management
- Experience designing and operating programs and conducting data-driven continuous improvement processes
- Superior oral and written communication skills

- Experience managing large teams; a commitment to differentiating management to support success, growth and development of a diverse workforce
- Exceptional planning, organizing, and prioritizing skills in order to manage a diverse workload, multiple demands, and deadline sensitive projects
- A high level of customer service orientation and attention to detail
- Ability to provide and accept feedback
- Ability to work in and across several communication platforms, including social networks and cloud-based systems
- Strong attention to detail, accuracy, timeliness

EEO STATEMENT

The King County Regional Homelessness Authority is committed to a policy of Equal Employment Opportunity and will not discriminate against an applicant or employee based on the basis of race, creed, religion, color, national origin, age, alienage or citizenship status, ancestry, nationality, national origin, marital or domestic partnership or civil union status, familial status, sex, pregnancy, gender identity, or any other characteristic protected by federal, state or local law. The Authority will provide reasonable accommodations for qualified individuals with disabilities.