Director of Communications
Extension

WE TRANSFORM LIVES
Everything we do is designed to improve the quality of life of the people in the state of Illinois, across the nation, and around the world. We discover, develop, translate, and disseminate knowledge to address societal concerns and train the next generation of experts and leaders in a way that empowers them to expand the boundaries of science to higher levels of understanding and influence.

Be a part of our story. Through learning partnerships that extend knowledge and change lives, University of Illinois Extension provides educational programs aimed at making life better, healthier, safer, and more profitable for individuals and their communities. Illinois Extension has operated continuously for more than 100 years connecting the citizens of Illinois to their land-grant university by providing educational programming around the state. University of Illinois Extension is based in the College of ACES and works with all colleges and units of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

Position Overview
The Director of Communications serves as a regular, full time, 12 month academic professional with primary responsibility for ethically and responsibly leading, managing, assisting, and supporting Extension Administration and Communications staff across the statewide extension network to advance Extension’s research to application mission and administrative goals. The selected candidate will be responsible for the vision, mission, and oversight of Extension Communications, including creative services, publicity and promotions services, and public relations services.

The successful candidate will provide efficient and effective coordination and management of all communications strategic direction and policy for Extension state and field outreach communications to advance Extension’s research to application mission and administrative goals, including Communications resource and budget planning for Extension. The individual will lead, supervise, manage, and set workflow priorities for Extension Communications initiatives, guiding projects from conceptualization to launch to evaluation by leading and supervising Extension Communications managers, specialists, and staff. The Director will coordinate efforts across Extension Communications and College of ACES Communications by meeting at least monthly to harmonize workflow, including communications, marketing, publicity, and promotions, among other Communications activities. The individual works closely with Extension Associate Directors, College of ACES Human Resources, Extension Program Leaders, and Extension Regional Directors to optimize Extension Communications services.

One full-time position is available.
Location: Urbana-Champaign Campus

Organizational Leadership and Development
• Provide leadership, direction, and overall administration of Illinois Extension’s communications strategy and programs.
• Lead staff in developing, coordinating, and implementing an Extension Communications strategic plan, including vision and mission, that is consistent with the college and campus strategic plans.

Application Due
September 14, 2021

Proposed Start Date
As soon as possible after the closing date

Salary
Commensurate with experience and qualifications

To Apply
Go To: http://go.illinois.edu/150872
Log in to your account and upload a cover letter and resume, as well as the names and contact information of three professional references

More Information
The position is a full-time, benefits eligible, non-tenure academic professional position appointed on a 12-month service basis. Generous vacation and sick leave. State Universities Retirement System. Group health, dental, vision and life insurance.

This is a security-sensitive position. Comprehensive background checks, including but not limited to a criminal conviction information check, and a review of the Registered Sex Offender list, will be conducted.
• Lead strategic planning processes, develop action plans, create frameworks for accountability and performance reporting systems for Illinois Extension communications.

• Anticipate impact of strategic or operational decisions for Illinois Extension communications.

• Compile information for the Associate Dean and Director of Extension and Outreach with key facts relevant to Extension programming, outreach, and evaluation. Develop written and oral communications as needed for use by the Associate Dean and Director of Extension and Outreach.

• Serve as the primary professional communications resource for Extension, providing writing, editorial, and related leadership for Communication initiatives.

• Represent Extension on campus-wide standing and ad-hoc committees related to communications. Act on behalf of the Associate Dean and Director of Extension for strategic communications.

• Develop, manage, and exercise financial authority for the Extension Communications budget and provide reports for administrative review.

• Serve as a member of the Illinois Extension Leadership Team

**Personnel and Project Management**

• Provide strategic leadership in the promotion of Extension’s knowledge, research, and program impacts addressing major problems impacting Illinois residents.

• Provide direction in all aspects of program communications by working with Extension Program Leaders, Director of IT, and Director of Program Planning and Assessment, among others.

• Meet at least monthly with the College of ACES Marketing and Communication Services (MarComm) Team, as coordinated with the director of MarComm, to ensure cohesive execution of communications efforts between Extension and College of ACES.

• Lead operational integration with the Office of Public Engagement as directed by the Associate Dean and Director of Extension and Outreach to extend understanding and promotion of outreach programming in Illinois and minimize duplication of effort.

• Initiate Extension reporting to various University units to enhance educational opportunities and outreach initiatives.

• Develop, coordinate, and implement programs and Communication strategies to achieve strategic outcomes with key audiences, the public, and staff.

**Staff Development**

• Directly supervise the Extension Communication coordinators, managers, and specialists, as well as other professional staff.

• Coordinate staff professional development opportunities.

• Provide direction to Extension Communication staff to appropriate market and brand Extension.

• Foster a culture of inclusivity, innovation, and achievement at both the individual and organizational level.

**Professional Development**

• Stay informed of and make use of communication industry techniques and methods to advance Extension’s research to application mission and administrative goals.

• Engage in professional development activities to maintain leadership roles for Illinois Extension communications.

**Other Information**

• Comply with all Affirmative Action/Equal Employment Opportunity policies and guidelines in all aspects of Extension work; assist Unit staff with data collection for Affirmative Action, Gender, and Targeted reports as needed.

• Personal transportation required; occasional state-wide travel will be required.

• To perform the functions of this position, the employee will be required to perform work both within an office and outside in the communities that are served, and must have the capability to travel from one location to the other in a timely fashion. Employee is responsible for securing personal transportation. A valid driver’s license is preferred. Some work will be required during evenings and/or weekends. When working, the employee may be exposed to a variety of environmental factors to include, but not limited to, hot or cold weather, exposure to noise and allergens, and uneven ground. In performing the functions of this position, the employee may be subjected to various mental and physical demands as well to include, but not limited to, independently traveling to and performing work at different locations, lifting and moving items that may occasionally weigh up to forty (40) pounds and frequently weigh up to twenty (20) pounds, and twisting, pushing and pulling movements. More detailed information regarding the functions of this position (including the physical, mental and environmental requirements of the position) may be obtained from Human Resources for the College of
Administrative Relationship: The Director of Communications is administratively responsible to the Associate Dean and Director, Extension and Outreach.

Qualifications

Required:

- Master’s degree in communications, marketing, or other relevant field from an accredited institution of higher education. Candidates with a Master’s degree in progress may be considered for interviews, but degree must be completed by hire date.
- Minimum of 5 years of professional experience in communications and/or marketing; experience in developing and evaluating the effectiveness of print and digital materials; demonstrated success in the promotion/reporting of educational programs; experience with crisis communications.

Preferred:

- Public sector communications and marketing; supervision and evaluation of personnel working in creative services, publicity and promotions, public affairs, and/or government relations.

Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities:

- Evidence of the ability to promote creativity, vision, and successful communications efforts and demonstrated excellent written/oral communication, interpersonal, and teamwork skills are required. Knowledge of issues/best practices for science communications; knowledge of social media best practices, analytics and SEO strategies; demonstrated ability to work with public and private organizations; Mission of University of Illinois Extension, the land-grant system, and University of Illinois policies and procedures are preferred.

Application Procedure:

To apply, go to https://go.illinois.edu/150872. Log in to your account and upload a cover letter and resume, as well as the names and contact information of three professional references. Resume dates must be in month/year format and employment history, at a minimum, should include all work dating back to the completion of your undergraduate degree. Positions that were less than full-time/100% must be noted as being part-time. Transcripts may be requested at a later date. To receive full consideration, all requested application materials must be submitted via the online system by the close date of September 14, 2021.

For further information about the position please contact search chair Harry Clore at hclore@illinois.edu. For technical assistance with the online application process, please email jobs@illinois.edu.