

Housing Action Illinois
Communications Manager
Job Description

Organizational Description: Housing Action Illinois is a statewide coalition formed to protect and expand the availability of quality affordable housing throughout Illinois by advocating for increased public and private resources dedicated to affordable housing and by building the capacity of nonprofit agencies working to create and preserve such housing. With over 150 member organizations statewide, Housing Action believes that housing is a human right and in a society that promotes basic human needs, such as decent and safe housing, for all. Incorporated in 1987 as the Statewide Housing Action Coalition, Housing Action has three program areas: Public Policy Advocacy; Public Education and Organizing; and Training and Technical Assistance. Whether through advocating for policy changes, or providing hands-on assistance to emerging or established housing counselors, developers, and homeless service providers, we aim to preserve and expand the amount of fair and affordable housing in Illinois.

Responsible to: Executive Director

Job Summary: The Communications Manager is a new position designed specifically to help Housing Action Illinois increase its profile and the critical work it and its members do to ensure quality affordable housing throughout Illinois. This is a senior level position that will have lead responsibility for creating and implementing a multi-faceted communications strategy, which includes some membership outreach, event planning and resource development activities. The Communications Manager will work with the Executive Director, other members of the staff and the Board to develop, implement and evaluate our communications work. S/he would also have a leadership role in guiding and implementing our communications strategy with our members.

Specific Tasks:

- Promote Housing Action's mission and increase its name recognition with key stakeholders, including funders, policy makers, media, etc.
- In collaboration with senior leadership team, develop an implementable comprehensive communications strategy.
- Help staff incorporate public relations and marketing efforts into their program activities, including drafting press releases and pitching stories to media.
- Ensure consistent branding across program areas.
- Manage the agency's website, social media and most e-communications functions, including creating an e-newsletter and annual report.
- Create outreach materials for Housing Action, including written documents and videos.
- Work with staff on Housing Action's Annual Conference, taking a lead on its marketing, sponsor and program materials, and registration.
- Update and ensure the quality of Housing Action's contact relationship management system.
- Systematically promote our mission to potential members, allies and supporters, including individuals and corporate, foundation and government funders.

- In collaboration with senior leadership team, develop and implement a fee-based communications service that Housing Action could offer to its member organizations.
- In collaboration with senior leadership team, assist in resource development efforts, including working on grant proposals and reports.
- Perform other duties as assigned by the Executive Director.

Qualifications and Requirements

- Understanding of and commitment to Housing Action's mission required, as is the ability to work collaboratively with Housing Action's staff, Board, members, allies and others.
- Entrepreneurial and optimistic professional with significant (5+ years) communications, marketing, public relations and/or journalism experience.
- Experience working within the nonprofit environment preferred. Knowledge of the community development field, including community organizing, affordable housing development, and homelessness prevention is preferred.
- Must be very detail oriented and organized with strong analytical and problem solving skills.
- Excellent written and spoken communication skills, including the ability to articulate complex ideas and issues with clarity and forcefulness.
- Strong computer skills required, including databases, contact management systems, and website/internet, and demonstrated ability to learn new programs. Housing Action uses Apple computers, so familiarity with Apple operating system and programs a plus.
- Experience creating graphic design and interactive technology or in working with graphic designers and similar vendors, including creating scope of work, negotiating contracts, and ensuring accurate, quality completion of projects.
- Experience working in a fast-paced environment with competing deadlines and complex collaborative projects involving multiple partners.
- Good interpersonal skills and flexibility within a small office essential, along with confidentiality and thoroughness.
- Good judgment, with the ability to make timely and sound decisions, required.
- Ability to work flexible hours, including evenings and weekends as needed. Willingness to travel around the state; must have valid driver's license.

Salary: Competitive, DOE. Benefits: A competitive package of benefits including health insurance and 403(b) retirement plan; generous vacation and health leave policy plus ten paid holidays.

Deadline to Apply: **Feb. 27, 2016** (we will be reviewing and responding to resumes on a rolling basis).

Please send cover letter, resume, and two examples of communications work you personally created via email to: employment@housingactionil.org with "Communications Manager" in the subject line, or via U.S. Mail to Communications Manager Search, Housing Action Illinois, 11 East Adams, Suite 1601, Chicago, IL 60603.

Candidates invited for interviews will also be asked to perform a short writing assignment, provide three professional references, and indicate their desired salary range and available start date.

Housing Action Illinois is an equal opportunity employer.