



Job Announcement: Strategic Communications Manager

Posted: 12/17/2024

[Invest Appalachia](#) (IA) is seeking a dynamic and experienced Strategic Communications Manager to manage both internal and external communications, supporting our mission to help finance Appalachia's transition to a more resilient, equitable, and sustainable economic future.

The ideal candidate will be creative, strategic, detail-oriented, and an excellent written and verbal communicator. They will share IA's commitment to building an equitable investment ecosystem in the Central Appalachian region and uplifting the work and visibility of partners and communities.

Who We Are

Invest Appalachia is a nonprofit, community-driven impact investment platform dedicated to creating pathways for investment and collaboration in Appalachian communities. We work alongside local leaders, entrepreneurs, and residents to drive sustainable development and build community wealth. Our work focuses on revitalizing locally-rooted economic sectors in Central Appalachia, an area marked by economic transition, by cultivating strategic partnerships and accessible capital and elevating diverse voices.

Invest Appalachia serves the Appalachian counties of Kentucky, North Carolina, Ohio, Tennessee, Virginia, and West Virginia, and is governed by a regionally-representative board of directors. We work remotely and are based in Central Appalachia. To learn more, visit www.investappalachia.org.

Position Overview

As the Strategic Communications Manager at Invest Appalachia, you will strategically position the organization's work and impact with key audiences, improve visibility and understanding of our mission among partners and the general public, and communicate about our impact to broad external audiences. You will also ensure our network of strategic partners, including board and committees, programming partners, and Invest Appalachia staff members communicate effectively. This position encompasses two key areas of focus:

External Communications: In this role, you will be responsible for creating and executing communication strategies that amplify Invest Appalachia's mission and initiatives to the public. You will develop compelling narratives that showcase our work and the work of our

partners in the community, highlight success stories, and promote our vision for equitable investment and development in Appalachia. Your efforts will include managing our social media presence, writing press releases, creating marketing materials, developing informational materials such as “explainers” and infographics, collecting client stories and impact metrics, developing our Annual Impact Report, and engaging with media outlets to increase visibility and opportunities for thought leadership to new audiences.

Internal Communications: You will also serve as a vital link for our remote staff, committees, board of directors, contractors, and consultants, ensuring they are informed, engaged, and connected to the organization’s goals and activities. This involves developing internal communication strategies that facilitate the flow of information, creating opportunities for collaboration, and promoting a strong organizational culture. You will create and manage digital updates and other resources to keep our team informed about ongoing projects, initiatives, and organizational news. You will support internal materials for fundraising and grant reporting, such as narrative templates for talking about various aspects of IA’s work. Your role will also include coordinating planning and logistics for virtual and in-person meetings and events to strengthen connections among staff and leadership.

Through these dual responsibilities, you will help position Invest Appalachia as an ally for Central Appalachian communities and a national leader in creative community finance and impact investing, while encouraging a culture of transparency and engagement within Invest Appalachia.

What You’ll Do

The Strategic Communications Manager will work closely with the CEO, Director of Community Impact, and Director of Operations and will report directly to the Director of Community Impact for external work and the Director of Operations for internal work.

Internal Communications:

- With the Director of Operations, develop and implement communication strategies that enhance employee engagement and promote a strong organizational culture.
- With the Director of Operations, create and manage internal systems and resources to keep staff, committees, the board of directors, and contractors and consultants appropriately informed and connected.
- With IA staff, develop and implement templates and tools to streamline grant writing and communications with current and potential funders and investors.

External Communications:

- Content Development and Strategy
 - Create content for a variety of platforms, including but not limited to social media (LinkedIn and X), website (Wordpress using Elementor), email (Mailchimp), and press materials. Narrate IA’s journey, celebrate milestones, and share insights into impact investing through the lens of rural communities.

- Produce content that is rooted in IA's values and centered on activities that are designed to build community-driven wealth.
- Build IA's community through digital platforms including social media and email as well as recommend new digital platforms to adopt.
- Manage and follow communications calendar to ensure regular and timely content.
- Client Engagement
 - Develop clear, concise materials that assist clients in understanding and navigating IA's investment process including website information, standard templates for client communications, and supporting materials for grant agreements and contracts.
 - Coordinate with partners (e.g. lending partners, borrowers) to ensure consistent communications about shared projects and co-investments.
 - Collect client stories for use in multimedia success stories. Collect assets and materials that will be shared with clients for use in their own marketing.
- Funder Engagement
 - Develop clear, consistent materials that enable potential funders and investors to understand IA's model and strategy
 - Support the development of grant and investment applications
 - Support reporting to funders
- Impact Data Collection and Communications
 - Lead the creation of an annual impact report
 - Lead the collection of client impact metrics, ensuring compliance with internal organizational data collection and storage requirements
 - Craft impact metrics and client stories into external-facing materials
- Media and Public Relations
 - Sustain and build relationships with media professionals and outlets to secure coverage that highlights our initiatives, achievements, and thought leadership
 - Represent IA at public events - e.g. ribbon-cuttings for client projects, select conferences, press conferences, etc.
- Manage Communications-related Vendors
 - Oversee contracted agencies and consultants to ensure IA produces high-caliber communications
 - Recruit agencies and consultants, as needed
- Visual Branding
 - Maintain and update IA's branding and visual components of IA communications, including branded templates.
- Web Presence
 - Manage IA's website, make updates as needed, and periodically audit IA's web presence (website, social media, SEO) to ensure brand consistency

Brand Management & Evaluation

- Ensure consistent branding and messaging across all platforms and materials, reflecting the values and mission of Invest Appalachia. Enforce the use of the brand by both staff and external partners.
- Assess threats to reputation and develop strategies to address, as needed
- Monitor and analyze communications efforts to measure effectiveness, report findings to IA teams, and refine strategies based on feedback

Who You Are

The ideal candidate is detail-oriented, proactive, and an exceptional communicator across multiple platforms. You share our vision for a thriving Appalachia and are passionate about community-driven development. You possess a diverse skill set that allows you to effectively manage both internal and external communications.

This position will receive onboarding and strategic support from our ongoing communications consultant.

This position would ideally start in early to mid February.

Required Skill Sets:

- Communication Skills: You excel in writing and speaking, effectively engaging diverse audiences.
- Content Creation: You have experience and are highly skilled in crafting compelling, relevant, and engaging content across various platforms, including social media, websites, newsletters, and press materials.
- Multimedia Production: You have basic proficiency in creating visual content such as graphics, infographics, and videos that resonate with and are accessible to diverse audiences.
- Vendor Management: You have high proficiency in managing communications vendors such as videographers, graphic designers, photographers, and creative agencies.
- Digital Marketing & Social Media Management: You demonstrate experience and expertise in managing digital platforms and social media channels, engaging with audiences, and analyzing metrics to refine strategies.
- Digital Community Engagement: You are skilled in building and fostering relationships with community members and stakeholders online, encouraging dialogue, participation, and feedback.
- Brand Management: You are capable of maintaining the organization's brand identity across all communications, ensuring consistency and clarity.
- Program Promotion: You have experience in designing and executing promotional strategies for programs and services, maximizing participation and engagement from targeted communities.
- Attention to Detail: You ensure accuracy in all communications and presentations.
- Organization: You have strong organizational skills and can manage multiple projects simultaneously.

- Project Management: You are a self-starter who is comfortable finding a balance between independently progressing your work and asking for feedback from the team. You thrive in a remote work environment, managing timelines and deliverables without the need for intensive structure.
- Diversity & Inclusion: You are committed to fostering an inclusive workplace and understand the importance of representing diverse perspectives.
- Remote Capabilities: You are comfortable working remotely, learning and embracing the use of remote work technology and tools such as Google Drive, Slack, Zoom, Slab, and others.

Preferred Skill Sets:

- Media Relations: You have established relationships with media outlets and the ability to pitch stories effectively, securing coverage that highlights the organization's impact.
- Analytical Skills: You can monitor, analyze, and report on the performance of communication efforts, making data-driven decisions to optimize impact.
- Understanding Investment: You have prior experience with and/or knowledge of terms, processes, and networks related to investment.

What We Offer

Invest Appalachia offers a competitive salary range of \$70,000 – \$80,000, based on qualifications and experience. We provide generous benefits, including high-quality health insurance including vision and dental, four weeks of PTO plus holidays, and a commitment to professional development.

Work Environment

This is a full-time remote position. The ideal candidate will be based in Central Appalachia. Occasional overnight travel and evening or weekend events will be required.

Commitment to Diversity

We strongly encourage candidates with diverse backgrounds and experiences to apply. Invest Appalachia is dedicated to creating a workplace that reflects the communities we serve and fosters inclusivity and equity.

IA is an equal opportunity employer. It is the policy of IA to create a favorable work environment in which all employees, regardless of race, color, ethnicity, sex, sexual orientation, gender expression, age, ability, or religious affiliation, can enjoy equal opportunities in their employment relationship with the organization.

How to Apply

Applications are due by midnight on **January 17, 2025**. Please submit your application via email to mae@investappalachia.org with the subject line "Strategic Communications Manager" and attach:

- A cover letter (pdf) detailing your interest in the position and relevant experience
- Your resume (pdf)
- Samples of your communications materials – e.g. press releases, social media posts, videos, etc.

For any questions about the role, please contact **Mae Humiston** at mae@investappalachia.org or **(540) 339-6697**

All applicants will be notified via email regarding their interview status within two weeks of the deadline.