



# GROUND SOLUTIONS NETWORK

strong communities  
from the ground up

<b>Title:</b> Director of Communications	<b>Reports to:</b> Chief Operating Officer
<b>Department:</b> Communications	<b>Status:</b> Full-time, Exempt

## About Us:

[Grounded Solutions Network](#) is a national nonprofit dedicated to shaping communities to be equitable, inclusive and filled with opportunity for all. Strong and inclusive communities provide the foundation that people and families need to thrive, both in the present and for future generations. As a national membership organization, we support nonprofit and government practitioners, community resident leaders, advocates, elected officials, and other housing professionals with the tools and knowledge they need for success. We promote the creation and preservation of quality housing that remains affordable for generations. Our work specifically targets creating and expanding housing with lasting affordability, using a racial equity lens.

Our organizational culture is evolving and strives to address critical thinking and consciousness about race and class as an integral part of advancing our affordable housing mission focus. We seek candidates who are dedicated to achieving measurable racial equity impact as both a process and outcome of our mission. We are continually working toward building a staff team that is as racially and culturally diverse as the communities that we serve. All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, gender, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, national origin, genetics, disability, age, or veteran status.

## About the Position:

We are seeking a dynamic individual to plan and execute communication strategies which drive support for our 10-year “Lasting Affordability in Housing Now” vision, elevate our position as a national community development leader, and support the expanded use of inclusive housing policies and innovative community-led nonprofit programs to rapidly advance equity, inclusion, and racial justice. This position is part of our senior leadership team and offers a tremendous opportunity to lead development and implementation of high quality external messaging and thought leadership content that elevates our brand, facilitates and achieves prominent national media coverage, and highlights our central role in various national strategic partnerships such as the [CEO Circle of Color](#). The position also leads professional media engagement and promotion of our high-profile national conference.

The Director works collaboratively with internal and external stakeholders to set and guide the strategy for all communications and public relations. This individual will also develop, manage, and oversee the annual communications department budget, provide leadership, guidance, and direction to a staff of

two communication professionals, and manage a team of consultants. The communications team supports staff located in Washington, D.C., California, and remote locations across the country.

### **Key Responsibilities:**

The primary goal for this position is to lead external-focused strategic communications activities including web-based content, press engagement, printed collateral, and industry publications.

#### **1. Strategy/Management (50%)**

- Provide strategic communications counsel to the CEO, senior leadership team, and occasionally to external partners;
- Identify priority target audiences and develop key messaging frameworks based on organizational prioritized themes;
- Develop and implement marketing plans to promote awareness of services, build membership, and promote adoption of tools and resources;
- In collaboration with appropriate staff, manage the production and dissemination of electronic and print materials such as e-newsletters, promotional materials for events, fundraising letters, membership campaigns, annual reports, and policy alerts;
- Develop and manage the communications budget and work plan in alignment with organization's strategic goals;
- Manage relationships with multiple external consultants, such as PR consultants, marketing consultants, copywriters, web developers, graphic designers, photographers, and videographers;
- Manage and mentor communications staff to help them achieve success in their roles and support their professional development;
- Support communication activities for our national conference and other key organizational events; and
- Oversee strategic development and management of Grounded Solutions Network's three existing websites.

#### **2. Branding/Messaging (30%)**

- Refine the organization's brand guidelines and craft standard language to message the connections between race, housing inequalities, and the critical need for resources to expand our lasting affordability focused solutions;
- Maintain and strengthen the organization's "voice" through message development, issue framing, and overseeing (with support of consultants as needed) exceptional, detail-oriented writing and/or editing of the organization's external communications with an eye toward style, substance, and political or other sensitivities;
- Develop comprehensive communications campaigns for new programs, major publications, and other major initiatives;
- Oversee and maintain the integrity of the organization's visual brand;
- Oversee all marketing, communications, and messaging for the national conference to ensure high attendance and high-quality content; and

- Participate, as appropriate, in conferences and other events by providing communication support and possibly developing and presenting panels or training.

### **3. Media Relations/Digital Communications (20%)**

- Manage media relations, including fielding press inquiries, building relationships with reporters, and identifying media hooks for proactive press outreach based on current housing program and policy developments, and growing the organization’s media contact list;
- Identify and cultivate relationships with key media and national partners and respond to media inquiries to advance brand and thought leadership;
- Generate and proactively engage senior program staff in creating ideas for press outreach and contributed press pieces (op-eds, blogs, articles);
- Oversee organization’s social media accounts (Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn), ensure social media presence, and set communication guidelines for social media activities; and
- Oversee digital communication campaigns and content across email, web, and social media platforms.

### **Qualifications for Entry into this Position:**

Grounded Solutions believes that our team should reflect, respect, and understand the diversity of backgrounds, identities, and experiences of the communities that we serve. We strongly encourage people of color, people of all gender identities, people with disabilities, and LGBTQ+ candidates to apply. Studies have shown that men apply for jobs when they meet only 60% of the qualifications, but women only apply if they meet 100% of them. If you are unsure that you qualify for the position but think you’d be great at the role, we encourage you to apply anyway. If you don’t have the minimum qualifications, you may be offered a different position and title, and we would partner with you to help you gain the skills necessary for the position as posted.

### **Knowledge, skills and abilities**

- At least eight years of experience, ideally in an “in-house” leadership role within a social mission-focused nonprofit organization, creating and managing strategic communications implementation, media relations and various outreach tactics;
- A strategic thinker who is able to connect communications strategies to programmatic objectives and identify synergies across technical program areas;
- Experience in successfully managing staff, budgets, and external consultants;
- Experience in using key performance indicators to evaluate communications campaigns and overall impact;
- Demonstrated commitment to public service and racial equity, with enthusiasm for Grounded Solutions’ mission;
- A highly effective project manager who enjoys creating and implementing new initiatives, with the ability to successfully oversee multiple simultaneous projects with competing deadlines and experience managing large, complex projects with multiple stakeholders;
- Demonstrated track record of transforming technical information into powerful messages;
- Highly collaborative work style, with experience developing and implementing communications strategies with associated timelines and deliverables clearly established;

- Proficiency with MS Office Suite and social media tools and experience with or willingness to learn the tools we rely on, such as Campaign Monitor, Muck Rack, Salesforce, Dropbox, Zoom, and Asana; and
- High energy, maturity, and leadership with the ability to serve as a unifying force and to position communications discussions at both the strategic and tactical levels.

#### **Additional Preferred Qualifications**

- Bachelor's Degree in Public Relations, Communications, Business, or a related field.

#### **Starting Salary Range**

\$90k-\$120k annually, commensurate with experience.

#### **Travel required**

Approximately 4 to 6 trips per year of domestic out-of-state, as needed to attend conferences and company meetings.

#### **COVID-19 Requirements**

Grounded Solutions Network's mandatory vaccine guidelines require all employees to be fully vaccinated by their start date. At this time, Grounded Solutions defines "fully vaccinated" to mean that two weeks have passed since a second dose of the 2-dose series for the Pfizer or Moderna vaccines, or a single dose of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine. A current employee or applicant (i) who has a disability or qualifying medical condition that contraindicates a COVID-19 vaccination, (ii) whose sincerely held religious belief, observance or practice conflicts with the vaccination requirement, or (iii) who qualifies for an exemption under applicable state or local law may request an exemption from this vaccination policy.

#### **Location**

Washington (DC) Metro Region preferred. Grounded Solutions Network has a physical office located in Washington, DC, with additional staff working from home or co-working spaces throughout the contiguous 48 states. Remote locations with direct local access to a major airport will also be considered. All staff are expected to demonstrate the ability to work remotely while maintaining high levels of efficiency and productivity and communicate effectively with their supervisor and colleagues.

#### **Join our team and build your career with us! We offer:**

- Supportive, stimulating and collaborative environment with passionate colleagues dedicated to building community, equity and justice
- Opportunities for professional growth and development
- Competitive, comprehensive benefits package including health, dental, matching 401k and paid time off.

#### **How to Apply:**

Please submit, as 1 document (PDF or word), a cover letter, resume and two writing samples (one writing sample should be a press release) here: [Position open until filled](#). Interviews will be conducted on a rolling basis.