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POSITION DESCRIPTION
DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS
THE CALIFORNIA WELLNESS FOUNDATION
Los Angeles or Oakland, CA – March 1, 2024

About The California Wellness Foundation

The California Wellness Foundation (Cal Wellness) is a private, independent foundation established in 1992 with a mission to protect and improve the health and wellness of the people of California. As one of the largest health-focused foundations in California, with over \$1 billion in assets, Cal Wellness is a nationally recognized leader for its strategic core operating support for grantees, public policy grantmaking, and a focus on violence as a public health issue. It is Cal Wellness' desire to promote equity and level the playing field so that everyone has access to good-paying jobs, healthy and safe neighborhoods, and quality healthcare services.

The foundation's current Advancing Wellness grantmaking strategy includes [four interrelated portfolios](#). Since its founding, Cal Wellness has awarded nearly 12,400 grants totaling more than \$1.3 billion. In addition to its grantmaking, the foundation has committed to using its voice, influence, and endowment dollars to advance its mission.

Cal Wellness has a diverse staff of approximately 45 located in its Los Angeles and Oakland offices and a diverse 13-member Board located throughout the state of California. The foundation's work underscores a belief that wellness requires social justice, a deep commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI), and sustained efforts to eliminate systemic barriers that prevent access to health care, education, employment, and safety.

Please visit <http://www.calwellness.org> for more information.

The Opportunity

The California Wellness Foundation is seeking an experienced, creative, strategic communications professional to serve as its new Director of Communications. The position is a key senior member of the Public Affairs team and a key resource to the new VP of Public Affairs, to whom the position reports.

The foundation is at an exciting inflection point under the leadership of a new President & CEO who envisions Cal Wellness stepping more fully into its role as a disruptive force that pushes

the boundaries of traditional philanthropy, advocates fiercely for racial and social justice, and uses its voice and influence to improve health and wellness for Californians. The Director of Communications will have the opportunity to amplify Cal Wellness' work using finely honed strategy, storytelling, and influence, collaborate across the organization, and serve as a senior communications consultant to the management team and Board of Directors.

The Public Affairs team merges communications, community relations, government affairs, and public policy. Public Affairs works collaboratively across teams and manages major projects and outside resources. The team currently includes seven dedicated professionals. The Director of Communications is currently responsible for managing a Public Affairs Manager and Digital Communications Manager.

The ideal candidate will be well-versed in strategic communications, media relations, and the full range of communications tools and tactics (e.g., branding, messaging, events, convenings, and digital, social, and print media) and passionate about social justice, social change, health, wellness and the mission of the Foundation. The Director will have substantial management expertise, a reputation as a connector and a strong colleague, exquisite writing skills, and exceptional interpersonal, collaboration, and communication skills.

Key Responsibilities

With guidance from the Vice President of Public Affairs and in close collaboration with department colleagues and other Cal Wellness departments, the Director of Communications will:

Develop and Execute a Communications Strategy

- Reimagine and bring a fresh perspective to the communications function. Lead the development and implementation of an innovative overarching communications plan encompassing strategic communications, messaging, and branding to support the Foundation's goals. Create short- and long-term proactive communications campaigns and plans for the organization in collaboration and partnership with Cal Wellness staff across its various functions to maximize our grantmaking, amplify our institutional voice, and strengthen our leadership position in the sector.
- Effectively communicate the Foundation's vision, mission, and key messages. Identify necessary tools and appropriate tactics and drive outstanding execution across all relevant channels of communications.
- Amplify the foundation's grantmaking efforts and grantee partners. Effectively communicate the foundation's mission-related investment and program-related investment strategies, which complement our grantmaking and promote innovations aligned with our health and racial equity vision. Cultivate and manage media relationships to increase awareness of foundation priorities.

- Ongoing development of Cal Wellness online presence. Evaluate and create an online presence aligned with the Foundation's short- and long-term strategic priorities, including reimagining and relaunching the Foundation's website and expanding its online presence via social media and blogging platforms.
- Develop and integrate key messaging. Build on existing assets to develop key messaging that elevates Cal Wellness priorities, impact, identity, and institutional voice. Integrate key messaging throughout all communication content and revise and refresh as necessary to ensure consistent utilization across the organization's written and visual communications.
- Steward effective communication processes. Evaluate the impact of communications campaigns and plans on an ongoing basis. Create internal and external feedback loops that inform the continued success of the communications function in helping the foundation achieve its strategic goals. Support the Foundation's commitment to learning and innovation by identifying meaningful metrics for communications work, tracking results, and reporting on successes and lessons learned.
- Crisis Communications. Develop and, if necessary, execute a crisis communications plan in collaboration with the foundation's management team that addresses potential scenarios related to our various programs and initiatives.

Thought Leadership Support

- External communications. Coordinate drafting of press releases, speeches, media advisories, blog posts, opinion pieces, talking points, and all external written material.
- Support the president and CEO and other key Cal Wellness spokespeople. Work with the Vice President of Public Affairs to guide and support the President and CEO as chief spokesperson for the Foundation. Work similarly with the Board of Directors and all external-facing staff, including the management team, program, finance, and operations staff.

Leadership and Supervision

- Manage, motivate, and mentor two direct reports. Empower staff and foster collaboration through active communication and thoughtful delegation. Manage expectations and resources to ensure staff goals and activities are challenging, realistic, and aligned with the department's strategies and Foundation priorities.
- Manage external resources. Identify and manage relationships with project consultants and vendors to ensure desired results are achieved on time and within budget.
- Organizational storytelling. Create tools and training to support staff and Board members in telling Cal Wellness' story consistently and effectively.

Qualifications

- Substantial experience working in an innovation-oriented communications role in a social justice- or social change-focused nonprofit organization, public sector entity, foundation, or other organization. Demonstrated experience driving positive social change through a comprehensive communications strategy is a plus.
- Demonstrated experience in both execution and management in communications. A strong track record working with executive management and board members.
- Knowledge of the issues related to the Foundation's mission, such as wellness, health equity, health disparities, race, class, and privilege, is a plus. Deep knowledge and understanding of California's unique assets and needs is a plus.
- Substantive experience in strategic communications, communications planning, digital media, content creation, and media relations. Strong relationships with reporters and experience successfully pitching and securing stories are a plus.
- Demonstrated ability to build relationships and collaborate across the foundation, serving as a resource to others and obtaining their input, using persuasiveness, persistence, and determination.
- Exceptional writing, editing, and presentation skills with strong attention to detail and a strong focus on a message-oriented storytelling approach.
- Demonstrated ability to establish strategy, develop work plans, multitask, and deliver quality work on time and within budget.
- Strong sense of priorities and objectives and a conscientious approach to problem identification and resolution.
- Excellent interpersonal skills with a demonstrated ability to effectively manage staff, lead teams, and work well with people at all levels of the organization.

Core Competencies

The ideal candidate will embody Cal Wellness' core competencies:

- Commitment to Justice, Equity, Diversity & Inclusion
- Communication
- Innovation
- Leadership
- Teamwork and Collaboration

Location

Cal Wellness operates with a hybrid work model that supports in-office and remote work. In-office attendance will typically be required on Tuesdays and Wednesdays. Travel is estimated at up to 40% to engage with the team, have a periodic presence at our Los Angeles headquarters and Oakland office, and attend meetings and convenings across the State. This position may be at our Los Angeles headquarters or Oakland office.

Compensation and Benefits

The target starting salary for the newly hired Director of Communications is \$200,000 annually. The full salary grade for the role is \$173,800 to \$260,800 annually.

Highlights from the foundation's benefits package include a variety of medical, dental, and vision plans, a generous 401(k) retirement savings plan with a 16% employer contribution, flexible paid time off, tuition reimbursement, professional development opportunities, 3:1 matching gifts, and the opportunity to work at a mission and values-driven organization.

Equal Opportunity Statement

The California Wellness Foundation is an equal-opportunity employer and welcomes a diverse candidate pool. Additionally, we are a fair chance employer and welcome candidates with lived experience with the criminal justice system.

The above job description is intended to describe the general nature and level of work performed and is not intended to limit the scope of potential work assignments. This is only a summary of the typical functions of the job, and duties may differ from those outlined above.

To Apply

[Martha Montag Brown & Associates, LLC](#) has been retained to conduct this search. Interested and qualified candidates should apply by emailing their resume and a targeted cover letter to search@marthamontagbrown.com.

Resume review begins immediately, and candidates will be considered on a rolling basis. Those selected for advancement will be asked to participate in several rounds of interviews (virtual and in-person), complete a writing assignment, and provide a list of professional references. Please let us know if you require a reasonable accommodation to participate in our application process.

Please direct all inquiries to the search firm.