



# GROUNDED 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 inclusive and filled with opportunity for all. Where we live matters. It determines what opportunities we have and how our kids grow up. Everyone should be able to live in a place that offers opportunity: access to jobs, parks, public transit, quality schools and stable homes. 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 partner with over 200 members in 45 states, Washington, D.C., and Puerto Rico to support and grow a shared equity housing sector serving nearly 255,000 families. Our work specifically targets creating and expanding the resources, programs and policies dedicated to community-led housing with lasting affordability, using a racial equity lens. Our staff team consists of recognized, national technical assistance experts, advising both local governments and nonprofits on inclusive housing policies and programs that lead to access, equity, and inclusion by providing training, tools and resources for community land trusts, deed restricted housing and inclusionary affordable housing programs.

Over the next decade, we are strategically focused on building the technical capacity and collective power of our members and the local communities we serve, to significantly multiply the impact of our data proven models and outcomes. We seek to expand our membership, pursue new dedicated resources, and recruit additional active partners, who match our sense of urgency to assist some portion of the millions of families who even prior to the COVID-19 global pandemic were paying more than 50% of their income toward housing.

Grounded Solutions Network is committed to fostering an organizational culture rooted in critical thinking and consciousness about race and class. We seek candidates who are dedicated to achieving racial equity as both a process and outcome. We are committed to 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 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 1-2 communication professionals, and manage a team of consultants. The communications team supports staff located in Oakland, CA and Washington, D.C., as well as multiple staff working in remote locations across the country.

### **Key Responsibilities:**

The primary goal for this position is to create and lead an external-focused strategic communications plan.

#### **1. Strategy/Management (60%)**

- Provide strategic communications counsel to the CEO and senior leadership team, and occasionally to external partners;
- Collaborate with key internal staff, consultants, and stakeholders to identify priority target audiences and develop and implement a strategic communications plan;
- Develop a marketing plan that promotes awareness of the organization's robust policy and capacity building technical assistance services, builds membership, and promotes adoption of organization's tools and resources;
- In collaboration with appropriate staff, manage the strategy for producing and disseminating 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 plan;
- Manage relationships with multiple external consultants, such as PR consultants, marketing consultants, copywriters, web developers, graphic designers, photographers, and videographers;
- Lead and mentor communications staff to help them achieve success in their roles and support their professional development; and
- Support communication activities for our national conference and other key organizational events.
- 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 highlight the organization's commitment to racial justice and message the connection between race, housing inequalities, and the critical need for resources to expand our lasting affordability focused solutions;
- Develop nuanced messaging as needed and communicate complex ideas to a variety of stakeholders;
- 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, including event marketing copy, social media posts, press releases, technical reports, blog posts, op-eds, and major publications, 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, namely the implementation and evolution of its style guide across all contexts, from written publications to in-person events
- Oversee marketing for an array of training and other programs to drive attendance, including a robust calendar of email communications;
- Oversee all marketing, communications, and messaging for the national conference to ensure high attendance and high-quality content, including email marketing, advertising, design, media relations, web/social, and providing general strategic input;
- Participate, as appropriate, in conferences and other events by providing communication support and possibly developing and presenting panels or training; and
- Serve on the senior leadership team, providing strategic input on organization-wide planning and related activities.

### **3. Media Relations/Digital Communications (10%)**

- 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) and ensure social media presence, 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:**

### **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, able to connect communications strategies to programmatic objectives and identify synergies across technical program areas;
- Possess or procure and manage consultants with a diverse range of communications skillsets, including marketing, communications campaign management, media relations, visual branding, editing, website management, and social media management; graphic design experience is a plus;
- Have experience successfully managing staff, budgets, and external consultants;
- Have experience in using key performance indicators to evaluate communications campaigns and overall impact;
- Have a demonstrated commitment to public service and racial equity, with enthusiasm for Grounded Solutions’ mission;
- Be a highly effective project manager, able to successfully oversee multiple simultaneous projects with competing deadlines. 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;

- Experience managing strategic relationships with press and media outlets;
- Proficiency with MS Office Suite, social media tools, Adobe desktop publishing software and data management systems preferred;
- Self-motivated, team-spirited, and highly organized; enjoys creating and implementing new initiatives;
- 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; and
- Interest and familiarity in implementing digital media best practices (e.g., website user experience, email marketing, and social media) is a plus.

### **Minimum education level**

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

### **Starting Salary Range**

\$90k-\$115k 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.

### **Location**

**Washington, D.C.** The organization has two primary office locations in Oakland, CA and Washington, D.C. The Director of Communications position will be based in Washington, DC to facilitate direct interaction with the Chief Executive Officer. All staff are working remotely until further notice, but applicants must be willing to transition to an office or co-working location when it is safe to do so. Other Grounded Solutions Network staff, including those supervised by the Director of Communications, may be located anywhere in the contiguous 48 states. All staff are expected to demonstrate the ability to work remotely while maintaining high levels of efficiency and productivity and communicating effectively with their direct 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 with salary requirements, resume and two writing samples (one writing sample should be a press release) here: <https://bit.ly/2TEvD7T>. Interviews will be conducted on a rolling basis.