



Job Title: COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER, Canadian Observatory on Homelessness

Type of Position: Contract – 1 year with possibility of renewal

Salary: \$49,000

Closing Date: November 27, 2020

THE ORGANIZATION

The [Canadian Observatory on Homelessness \(COH\)](#) is a non-partisan research and policy partnership between academics, policy and decision makers, service providers and people with lived experience of homelessness. Housed at York University, the COH evolved out of a 2008 Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council funded project called the Canadian Homelessness Research Network. Led by Dr. Stephen Gaetz, CEO & President, the COH collaborates with partners to conduct and mobilize research that contributes to better, more effective solutions to prevent and end homelessness.

In an effort to bridge the gap between research, policy and practice, the COH goes beyond the mandate of a traditional research institute. As one of the largest homelessness-dedicated research institutes in the world, we support service providers, policy makers, and governments to improve their capacity to end homelessness. Our philosophy is simple: through research, evaluation and design, we can develop evidence-based solutions and together, solve homelessness.

THE ROLE

The Communications Officer is responsible for researching and developing written and multi-media content for the COH and our partners, including blogs, press releases, social and digital media content, newsletters, reports, etc. They also support the development of the COH's websites, the [Homeless Hub](#) and the [Homelessness Learning Hub](#), and social media activities.

Under the direction of the Director of Communications with the support of the Communications Team, the Communications Officer assists with the creation and dissemination of social media content, blogs, reports, webinars, videos and other digital resources as required.

MAJOR DUTIES

Knowledge mobilization:

- Support in the creation of communications plans to promote COH and partners' projects and initiatives.
- Distill research findings into plain language documents that are easily accessible to a non-academic audience.
- Prepare content in multiple formats to enhance knowledge mobilization and engagement.

- Edit and proofread content and reports by the COH and partners.
- Apply new, innovative ideas and creative ways to tell stories through content.

Social and digital media:

- Execute social media content as per COH's social media strategy.
- Write content for COH and our partners, aimed toward a range of audiences, including newsletters, reports, blog posts, policy and media relations documents, social and digital media content, etc.
- Coordinate social media campaigns and promotional activities (i.e. report launches, webinars, events), working collaboratively with COH staff and partners to disseminate resources. Analyze the effectiveness of campaigns using metrics.
- Setup, manage and support live webinars using Gotowebinar. Troubleshoot technical issues for attendees.
- Write, format and manage blog posts for the Research Matters blog on Homeless Hub.
- Remain apprised of, and open to, the latest marketing and communications technology trends.
- Define and implement search engine marketing and optimization strategies; Assist with annual web usability testing.
- Create and edit short, shareable videos for social media and the Homeless Hub website
- Collect new research for the Homeless Hub library; organize new research, write compelling copy and distribute weekly Homeless Hub newsletter via Mailchimp.
- Regularly conduct A/B testing to improve the newsletter's click-through and open rates.

Public relations:

- Monitor the Homeless Hub's general email account; respond to queries in a professional and timely manner.
- Reach out to key stakeholders and members of the media to promote the release of new reports or research by COH.
- Foster a strong relationship with media partners to increase coverage of COH publications.

Administration:

- Monitor the COH's general email accounts; respond to queries in a professional and timely manner.
- Coordinate Internal Communications initiatives including: conference line bookings; monthly All Team meetings; monthly Short Helpful Informative Talk series; team use of with survey software (e.g. Doodle polls, Qualtrics).
- Provide administrative support for COH Senior Leadership; duties as assigned.

QUALIFICATIONS

Educational and Experience Requirements

- Degree or diploma in communication, journalism, marketing or related discipline, or equivalent experience
- At least 2-3 years' experience in online marketing, social and digital communications

- Candidates should also be familiar with and/or have a genuine interest in homelessness and social justice issues.

Skills and Competencies

- Experience managing multiple social channels, including Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and Instagram using Hootsuite
- Proficiency in Adobe Creative Suite and MS Office is essential.
- Expert knowledge of managing content through Wordpress and Drupal.
- Strong understanding of UI/UX principles is required.
- Experience analyzing web metrics using Google Analytics and implementing SEO/SEM to optimize web content's reach is an asset.
- Familiarity with online email marketing tools (Mailchimp).
- Strong writing skills for diverse audiences, including the ability to clearly articulate and explain technical ideas and concepts in non-technical terms.
- Ability to develop simple, easy-to-understand, user friendly content.
- Excellent online communications skills and experience with social media platforms, mobile devices and multiple communications channels.
- Strong project management skills and ability to meet project deadlines with minimal supervision.
- Good listening skills.
- Team player with a positive attitude, sense of urgency, and willingness to work collaboratively to achieve project goals and requirements.
- Ability to establish priorities and handle multiple assignments concurrently in an evolving work environment.
- Knowledge of communications and knowledge mobilization best practices.
- Fluency in French an asset.

The Communications Officer should demonstrate competence in the following areas:

- **Adaptability:** Demonstrate a willingness to be flexible, versatile and/or tolerant in a changing work environment while maintaining effectiveness and efficiency.
- **Behave Ethically:** Understand ethical behaviour and business practices and ensure that own behaviour and the behaviour of others is consistent with these standards and aligns with the values of the COH.
- **Build Relationships:** Establish and maintain positive working relationships with others, both internally and externally, to achieve the goals of the COH.
- **Communicate Effectively:** Speak, listen and write in a clear, thorough and timely manner using appropriate and effective communication tools and techniques.
- **Focus on Stakeholder Needs:** Anticipate, understand, and respond to the needs of internal and external stakeholders to meet or exceed their expectations within the organizational parameters.
- **Foster Teamwork:** Work cooperatively and effectively with others to set goals, resolve problems, and make decisions that enhance organizational effectiveness.
- **Organize:** Set priorities, develop a work schedule, monitor progress towards goals, and track details, data, information and activities.

- Solve Problems: Assess problem situations to identify causes, gather and process relevant information, generate possible solutions, and make recommendations and/or resolve the problem.
- Think Strategically: Assesses options and actions based on trends and conditions in the environment, and the vision and values of the COH.

BENEFITS AND PERKS

- Competitive compensation package
- Generous vacation entitlement — starting at 3 weeks
- Flexible working hours; work remotely on Fridays*
- Growth and development opportunities
- Health benefits — Medical, Dental & Vision
- Casual, diverse and inclusive work environment
- Work perks program with Perkopolis

* This position is currently remote due to COVID-19 but this may change during the contract. However, it is preferred that the candidate is located within commuting distance of our office at York University.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Applicants should send a cover letter, resume, and the names of at least 3 work-related references by e-mail to thehub@edu.yorku.ca by **5pm ET on November 27, 2020**.

Only those selected for an interview will be contacted. Priority consideration is given to Canadian Citizens and permanent residents in Canada. We are committed to Employment Equity and encourage applications from all qualified candidates.