

## Director of Communications – Global Institute for Food Security (University of Saskatchewan)

**Salary Information:** The salary range is \$79,448.00 - 132,331.00 CAD per annum (Specialist Professional/Phase 3). The starting salary will be commensurate with education and experience.

**Primary Purpose:** The Global Institute for Food Security (GIFS) is a multi-disciplinary research institute that specializes in sustainable food and nutritional security which is a strategic research priority of the university, the province and the nation. Food security has also been listed as one of the top challenges facing the world. The institute is unique within the university in that it is a public/ private partnership between industry, the provincial government and the university, and has its own board of directors. It is critical that the communications work reflects the local, provincial, national and international nature of the institute. For more information please refer to: [www.gifs.ca](http://www.gifs.ca) and [www.p2irc.usask.ca](http://www.p2irc.usask.ca).

The Global Institute for Food Security at the University of Saskatchewan values diversity and Indigenous engagement is a strategic priority. In support of this priority, this position will contribute to a team environment which recognizes and supports the importance and value of diversity in achieving the mission of the university, and actively seeks out those with diverse cultural backgrounds, perspectives and experiences to support the mission.

The Director of Communications is a member of the Global Institute for Food Security Senior Management Team and is responsible for leading and implementing the institute's strategic communications and marketing initiatives. The primary purpose of the position is to support the institute's goals and priorities with effective communications strategies as well as build and maintain a positive reputation for the institute and university (regionally, nationally and internationally). As part of this work, the Director will promote and extend the brand identity of the institute in accordance with GIFS and the University Strategic Research Plan.

**Nature of Work:** Reporting to the Executive Director and CEO of GIFS, and as a key member of the GIFS Senior Management team, the Director is responsible for the communications of GIFS, both internally and externally. This involves establishing and adapting strategies, ensuring appropriate resources are in place and is involved in the hiring and supervision of a communications staff. This position will work closely with the Director, Research Profile and Impact within the Office of the Vice President of Research, the Director of Development for the P<sup>2</sup>IRC program, the Director of the Omics and Precision Agriculture Laboratory, as well as University Relations (marketing/communications, alumni relations and development programs).

This position will establish and maintain a wide range of professional relationships, both within and external to GIFS and the university. This highly complex and challenging role involves effective management of relationships with a number of stakeholders, at a variety of levels—locally, provincially, nationally and internationally. The Director is required to work in an environment where it is critical to balance the conflicting needs of multiple stakeholders.

The Director has a proven ability to turn the conceptual into the practical, to critically assess opportunities and risks, and to propose and develop action plans. This position requires a strategic level of decision-making on a routine basis. Responsibilities are broad and diverse, reflecting the range of complex research issues and public opinion that require strategic thinking and experienced

communications approaches in order to achieve GIFS' research goals and while being cognizant of stakeholder reputational risks.

The individual in this position must exercise considerable judgment, discretionary decision-making, and must have an ability to build collaborative relationships with a cross-section of senior administrators, faculty, staff, students, alumni, supporters, donors, community partners and other key stakeholders at various sites to ensure workplace efficiencies and seamless service to stakeholders. Confidentiality and discretion are critically important as this position is privy to, and works with, sensitive and highly confidential information and will make communications-related decisions based on the impact of this information to GIFS, the university and its many stakeholders. This position may require long and/or irregular hours.

The work requires a proactive and strategic approach in a complex environment as well as the ability to communicate effectively to reach a diverse audience through a variety of methods and communication mediums. Establishing and maintaining positive relationships is essential to success. Attention to detail in communications is significant to the Global Institute for Food Security's and the university's reputation and profile.

### **Accountabilities**

Leads the strategic marketing and communications function for the institute through:

#### **Strategic Planning:**

- Working with the CEO, Board of Directors and GIFS senior scientists to develop and implement the institute's strategy for external and internal relations.
- Providing sound and strategic advice, messaging, speaking notes, briefing documents, issues management and crisis communications for the senior team.
- Measures effectiveness of communications plans and applies learning to future initiatives, with guidance and support from the Executive Director and CEO as well as the GIFS Board of Directors.
- Stewardship of the GIFS and university brand and visual identity.

#### **Strategic Communication:**

- Working collaboratively with the Director, Research Profile and Impact within the Office of the Vice President of Research, and Director of Development for the P<sup>2</sup>IRC program, as well as University Relations to develop a multi-party communications and marketing strategy and framework that supports major institute initiatives, events and recruitment efforts.
- Provides communications advice and support to groups within the institute, research pillars and themes, and Alumni and Development.

#### **Marketing:**

- Planning and execute marketing plans, including media buying and working with graphic designers and suppliers to create branded materials (e.g. swag, clothing, newsletters, banners, etc.) and publications (digital and print) that support institute initiatives and that build a cohesive brand that is aligned with the institute's and university's priorities.

#### **Knowledge Transfer:**

- Creating and sharing stories and content that help build profile for the institute's research, faculty, staff, students, teaching, and community outreach initiatives, written in accessible language that is appropriate for various mediums.

**General:**

- Manages budget for communications and ensures effective use of resources, following all university guidelines.
- Supports the needs of the institute's fund development and branding.
- Develops and manages the institute's websites, ensuring it is user-centered and content is accurate and updated regularly.
- Develops and manages the institute's social media channels.
- Media relations (pitch stories, respond to requests, assist with media interview preparation)
- Oversees internal communications for the institute (e.g. internal newsletter, posters within the institute, etc.).
- Takes photos for internal events and working with photographers as appropriate.
- Assists with some event planning and management, as determined by the needs of the institute.
- Supervises communications and marketing co-op students, managing relationships with consultants and suppliers (internal or external) working on marketing and communications activities related to the institute.
- Keeps informed of and follows communications best practices, learns from and shares with colleagues across campus, participates in training as appropriate.

**Qualifications**

**Education:** An undergraduate university degree, preferably in communications, marketing, public relations, journalism or related field. An equivalent level of education and experience may be considered. Membership in the International Association of Business Communicators is strongly preferred.

**Experience:** Ten years of directly related experience with a demonstrated progression in level of responsibility, including a breadth of experience developing, leading, and implementing all areas of strategic communications. Knowledge of the University of Saskatchewan, the academic and research environment and/or food security would be an asset. Experience presenting to a Board as well as working with Indigenous communities or environments will also be considered as assets.

**Skills:**

- Thorough understanding of communications and marketing principles and strategies, and proven experience in applying them and achieving results in a complex environment
- Highly effective interpersonal communications, with the capacity to build consensus and maintain positive relationships with a wide range of stakeholders while exercising diplomacy, judgment and tact, and acting confidentially and with cultural sensitivity
- Demonstrated strong leadership, analytical, and organizational skills, including the effective planning and management of multiple projects, and the ability to adjust to changing priorities in a fast-paced environment
- Excellent written communication skills
- Ability to work independently and collaboratively

- Demonstrated self-motivation and reliability
- Ability to problem-solve, think, and act strategically and creatively
- Proficiency in contemporary computer applications and knowledge of social media and web platforms
- Photography skills would be an asset

This position is in the scope of ASPA.

*Inquiries regarding this position can be directed to Gwen Miller at [gwen.miller@gifs.ca](mailto:gwen.miller@gifs.ca).*

**This position is posted in the University of Saskatchewan Career Centre under Current Job Opportunities. Please visit: <https://careers.usask.ca/> and follow the instructions to apply.**

**The deadline to apply for this position is March 22, 2019.**