

Job Description

Position Title: Senior Director of External Affairs

Location: Remote work based in Michigan with occasional travel

Schedule: Example: Monday - Friday

Salary Range: \$90,000 - \$105,000

Class: Exempt

Position Summary:

The Senior Director of External Affairs is responsible for driving ECIC's external engagement strategy by leading policy and advocacy efforts, communications, and stakeholder relations. This role will oversee and integrate the work of the Policy and Advocacy team and the Communications team to ensure alignment with ECIC's mission, vision, and goals. The Senior Director will work closely with coalition partners, policymakers, and media to advance policy change, elevate ECIC's brand, and strengthen public awareness and support for Michigan's youngest children and their families.

By combining policy and advocacy expertise with strategic communications, this role plays a pivotal part in ensuring ECIC's voice and vision are represented in an informative, impactful, and cohesive manner.

Job Requirements

Duties and Responsibilities:

This list is intended to represent job-related duties and should not be viewed as exhaustive.

Strategic Leadership

- Develop and lead an integrated strategy for policy, advocacy, and communications that advances ECIC's mission and priorities.
- Oversee and manage the Policy and Advocacy team and Communications team, ensuring their work is aligned with organizational goals.
- Provide leadership, mentoring, and professional development opportunities for team members.
- Collaborate with ECIC leadership to align external affairs with overall organizational strategy.

Policy and Advocacy

- Facilitate coalitions of early childhood advocates, policymakers, and community leaders to support policy change at the state and federal levels.
- Develop strategies to strengthen relationships with government officials and stakeholders, enhancing their understanding of and support for early childhood issues.
- Coordinate the development of policy materials, such as talking points, legislative summaries, and advocacy toolkits.
- Oversee grant-related advocacy efforts, including tracking activities, managing budgets, and preparing proposals.

Communications Strategy and Branding

- Lead the development and implementation of a comprehensive communications strategy that positions ECIC as a leader in early childhood issues.
- Oversee branding, messaging, and digital presence to ensure consistent and compelling communication of ECIC's vision.
- Manage the creation of collateral materials, press releases, and public-facing content that highlights ECIC's programs, initiatives, and accomplishments.
- Serve as the primary contact for ECIC when engaging with media and external stakeholders.

Stakeholder Engagement

- Cultivate relationships with key partners, including policymakers, coalition members, media outlets, and community leaders.
- Represent ECIC at public events, town halls, and forums to advocate for early childhood issues and raise organizational visibility.
- Collaborate with internal and external stakeholders to amplify ECIC's impact and share its successes.

Requirements, Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities:

- Bachelor's degree in public policy, public administration, political science or related field.
- Minimum of 7 years of experience in policy, advocacy, external affairs, or a related role with leadership experience required.
- Demonstrated success in managing large-scale projects, grants, or campaigns.
- Knowledge of early childhood policy issues, including federal early childhood funding streams and policies, the state legislative process, grassroots, and grass tops advocacy and strategies.

- Excellent advocacy, consensus-building, coalition-building, and leadership skills; demonstrated ability to work collegially and collaboratively with other staff and other organizations; demonstrated ability to work with groups and individuals across the political spectrum.
- Ability to serve as public spokesperson and advocate for the organization.
- Ability to analyze and articulate legal concepts and other complex issues and to communicate them to a variety of audiences.
- Understanding of and commitment to social change through building the capacity and power of low-income people and people of color to change their communities and to participate directly in changing public policies.
- Ability to work in partnership with and alongside parent leaders, especially parents and families whose households are low-wealth or low-income.
- Demonstrated skill and comfort in proactively building relationships with diverse audiences, including public officials, coalition partners, community leaders, and members of the media.
- Effective group consultation and meeting facilitation skills.
- Proficient in Microsoft Office, Adobe and web-based applications.
- Possession of a valid driver's license and vehicle or other ability of travel throughout Michigan and nationally, including periodic overnight travel.

Physical Requirements

Talking - Expressing or exchanging ideas by means of the spoken word to impart oral information to others accurately. (4-5 hours daily)

Hearing - Perceiving the nature of sounds at normal speaking levels with or without correction. Ability to receive detailed information through oral communication, and to make the discriminations within sound. (4-5 hours daily)

Standing – In one position, particularly for sustained periods of time. (2-3 hours daily)

Visual Acuity – Viewing objects with close visual acuity to perform an activity such as: preparing and analyzing data and figures; transcribing; viewing a computer terminal; and/or extensive reading. (5-6 hours daily)

Office Setting - Sedentary work in which exerting up to 10 pounds of force is occasional and a negligible amount of force is frequently or constantly used to lift, carry, push, pull or otherwise move objects, including the human body. Sedentary work involves sitting most of the time.