

Job Title: Director of External Affairs

Organization: AccelerateMS

Location: Jackson

Job Type: Full-Time

Reports to: Executive Director

Effective: October 1, 2024

Overview:

The Director of External Affairs oversees all aspects of the organization's external affairs and communications. This role includes developing and implementing strategic communication plans, managing media relations, monitors legislative and regulatory developments, developing and implementing comprehensive public policy strategy that aligns with the organization's goals and priorities, and fostering relationships with key stakeholders to advance the office's mission of enhancing workforce development and economic growth in Mississippi.

Key Responsibilities:

Strategic Communications:

- Develop and execute comprehensive communication strategies to promote AccelerateMS's mission, programs, and initiatives.
- Oversee the creation, editing, and dissemination of press releases, newsletters, reports, and other communication materials.
- Ensure consistency, clarity, and accuracy in all external communications.

Media Relations:

- Develop and maintain relationships with local, state, and national media outlets.
- Coordinate and manage press conferences, interviews, and media events to enhance the organization's visibility.

Public Relations:

- Lead public relations efforts to enhance the public image and reputation of AccelerateMS.
- Develop and manage public relations campaigns to raise awareness about the agency's work and impact.
- Monitor public perception and address any issues or concerns proactively.

Digital Communications:

- Oversee the agency's digital presence, including website content, social media platforms, and online campaigns.
- Implement strategies to increase digital engagement and reach among target audiences.

Stakeholder Engagement:

- Establish and maintain strong relationships with community leaders, industry partners, government officials, and other key stakeholders.
- Represent AccelerateMS at public events, meetings, and conferences to articulate the agency's goals and achievements.
- Organize and facilitate stakeholder meetings to gather input and feedback on agency initiatives.

Advocacy and Policy Development

- Collaborate with the Executive Director to develop public policy recommendations for policymakers and governmental partners to strengthen Mississippi's workforce training and development system as well as to strengthen the office's ability to effectuate positive change.
- Collaborate with leadership to champion the office's interests as the primary voice for workforce development in Mississippi, focusing on advocacy efforts through engagement, coalition building, and campaigns.

Team Leadership:

- Manage and mentor a team of communications and external affairs professionals, including those contracted.
- Provide leadership, guidance, and support to ensure the team meets its objectives and produces high-quality work.

Qualifications:

- Bachelor's degree in Communications, Public Relations, Marketing, or a related field (Master's degree preferred).
- At least 5 years of experience in external affairs, communications, public relations, public affairs, or a related field.
- Proven experience in developing and implementing successful communication strategies.
- Demonstrated success in developing and implementing public policy campaigns and strategies, along with building dynamic relationships with key policymakers and public partners.
- Strong media relations skills and a track record of working effectively with various media outlets.
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills.
- Demonstrated ability to build and maintain relationships with diverse stakeholders.
- Experience in managing digital communications and social media platforms.
- Leadership experience with the ability to manage and motivate a team.
- Knowledge of workforce development and economic development issues is preferred.

To apply for this opportunity, please send a cover letter and resume, including the information below, to maryannmyers@acceleratems.org before 5:00 PM CST on October 15, 2024. AccelerateMS will review applications received at this time and will periodically review applications submitted after the deadline to identify candidates for this position.

- o Name, address, telephone number, and email
- o Previous positions, including titles, duties, employers, locations, and dates of employment
- o Names of previous supervisors
- o Specific prior experience and skills related to the job
- o Brief narrative describing interest in and qualifications for the role
- o Pertinent degrees, licenses, and/or certifications
- o References (typically three references with contact information)