**Marketing and Communications Specialist Job Description**

**Position Title:** Marketing and Communications Specialist  
**Position Type:** Full-time permanent position with a robust benefits package  
**Salary:** $48,000 - $50,000; Commensurate with experience  
**Position Location:** Highlands, NC  
**Target Start Date:** Flexible, with target start date by January 2, 2025

**Reporting Relationship:** This position reports directly to the HBF Executive Director

**Description:**

The Highlands Biological Foundation (HBF) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit in Highlands, North Carolina that is dedicated to stimulating, promoting, and funding biological research and  
education in the southern Appalachians. HBF offers a wide array of place-based programs, primarily through the Highlands Nature Center and an adjacent Botanical Garden that together host more than 10,000 visitors annually. The Nature Center and Garden are part of the Highlands Biological Station, a multi-campus center of Western Carolina University.

HBF is seeking a Marketing and Communications Specialist responsible for digital content creation, HBF’s editorial calendar, and managing all aspects of the organization’s media presence, event support, and donor communications. Additionally, the Specialist manages and organizes customer communication, digital ticketing/point of sale, and registration processes and workflows for the Foundation’s special events and educational programming.

This position is the team’s primary point of contact for internal and external communications and requires effective communication skills, collaborative style, and maintaining a general knowledge of special events and programming in the region.

**Hours:**

This position is full-time, permanent, and will include some evenings and weekends during the high season of late spring to early fall. Because most of the public outreach component in this seasonal town occurs in the summer, flexibility is a must. This position is based in our office in Highlands, NC. After an orientation period and if work allows, this position may choose to work remotely for up to 20% of the schedule.

**Benefits:**

* Health, Vision, and Dental Insurance paid 100% by organization for employee and 50% for dependents
* Life Insurance
* IRA match up to 3%
* Flexible PTO
* Professional development opportunities
* HBF can offer assistance in finding local housing

**Responsibilities & Duties:**

*Marketing & Communications*

* Write and edit content for HBF website and email marketing efforts, including newsletters, eblasts, social media, press releases, etc.
* Monitor and maintain organizational websites and shared databases to make sure that all information is correct, up-to-date, and easy to reference
* Work with ED and consultants in developing and implementing marketing and communications plans to promote HBF resources, research, publications, public awareness and advocacy efforts, events and development campaigns
* Manage all aspects of HBF’s online presence (website, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube)
* Develop copy, lead content creation, and implement marketing campaigns for HBF social media platforms (i.e., written content, posts, tweets, videos, sponsored ads, event pages)
* Monitor, report, and present on online engagement analytics (web, email, social media, earned media)
* Leverage key engagement metrics across platforms to optimize content, messaging, and distribution
* Design, create, and distribute print collateral including Nature Center Rack Cards, Nature Center monthly program calendars, HBF program brochures, seasonal newsletters, garden brochures, program fliers, etc.
* Manage relationships with agencies and vendors including photographers, printers, and local press outlets
* Coordinate press requests and interviews; develop press releases, media alerts, and program ads
* Design and print HBF marketing and program signage (i.e., HBF pop-up banner, MAPS Education Station, camp signage, etc.)
* Work with Foundation and Station staff and students to increase digital presence via informational videos and other content

*Events*

* Work with HBF Executive Director on all HBF events including fundraisers, lectures, board meetings
* Manage event registration and publicity
* Design, create, and distribute special event invitations
* Manage HBF presence, publicity, and volunteer assistance at local events (i.e., Plateau Pickup, Bear Shadow, etc.)
* Participate in HBF event and program meetings, contributing ideas and recommendations to optimize marketing strategies
* Assist with educational programs as needed

*Development*

* Manage donor communications including tax receipts and fundraising event and campaign materials
* Coordinate, develop, and distribute HBF’s seasonal fundraising mailers including seasonal newsletters as well as other donation appeals such as the End of Year appeal
* Work with HBF Executive Director in grant development and implementation - identifying grant opportunities, writing/submitting proposals & post-grant reports, tracking expenses and metrics

*Operations*

* Manage digital ticketing and point of sale workflows by tracking and completing payments and refunds, updating participant data, and facilitating communication between internal and external customers
* Oversee HBF donor database and process all HBF donations
* Check CRM v QB files for accuracy
* Collect data and run reports for program evaluations, participant surveys, and historical program data
* Assist Executive Director and Accountant with HBF’s annual audit as needed
* Take and manage minutes for HBF committee meetings as needed
* Support HBF board members as needed; update Board Directory annually
* Assist with Nature Center operations as needed (i.e., animal care, front desk coverage, special events, gift shop, etc.)

The above-listed duties are general statements of required major duties and responsibilities performed on a regular and continuous basis. They do not exclude other duties as assigned.

**Requirements and Skills:**

***Education:*** College degree in marketing, public relations, mass communications or relevant field.

***Experience:***

* At least three years' experience working in marketing, PR and or mass communications
* Strong computer skills, including proficiency in Google Applications and Microsoft Office
* Experience working with CANVA/InDesign or other graphic design platforms, NEON or CRM/POS platforms, and QuickBooks
* Dealing effectively with the public
* Working independently and as a team member
* Excellent written and verbal communication skill
* Experience working in an educational or non-profit environment is preferred

***Physical Requirements:***

* Sit, Stand, walk and reach with hands and arms
* Use a computer for extended periods
* Talk and hear, use finger and hand motion for keyboarding
* Typical ability to collect and analyze numerical and written data and verbal information to reach logical conclusions; ability to determine the time, place and sequence of operations and actions
* Constant ability to read, record, or type/enter data quickly and accurately
* Ability to load/unload/haul supplies over moderate distances for events and programs

***Environmental/Working Conditions:***

* Ability to work under and handle stress in an appropriate manner is required
* May be exposed to high, medium, or low noise intensity
* Affinity for nature and animals is preferred
* Exposure to fluctuations in temperatures, extreme heat, and/or outdoor conditions may be required
* May be required to work holidays, weekends, and occasional after-hours events

**Other qualifications:**

Applicants must be U.S. citizens and must have a vehicle and valid driver’s license as some travel is required for this position (mileage reimbursements provided). Applicants must successfully pass a background check.

**Application Instructions:**

To apply, submit one document that includes your cover letter, resume, and 3 professional references to Jamie Creola at jamie@highlandsbiological.org with the subject line “HBF Marketing Communications Specialist”. Applications will be accepted through October 30, 2024 or until the position is filled.

*The Highlands Biological Foundation is an Equal Opportunity Employer. All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race; color; religion; sex; sexual orientation; gender identity or expression; national origin; age; disability; genetic information; political affiliation; National Guard or veteran status, consistent with applicable federal, state and local laws, regulations, and policies, and the policies of The Highlands Biological Foundation. This nondiscrimination policy applies to employees, volunteers, participants, and all aspects of our operations.*

*Given the nature of this work and responsibilities of the position, HBF completes an annual background check on each staff member as a condition of employment.*