

IIRR Communications Director

Background

The International Institute of Rural Reconstruction is an international development, research and training organization with over 80 years of grassroots experience working in people-centered, sustainable development in Africa and Asia. Today, IIRR maintains a strong presence in Eastern Africa and Southeast Asia with country presence in Kenya, Uganda, Ethiopia, Philippines, South Sudan and Cambodia. Plans are underway to open offices in Rwanda, Indonesia and Malawi or Zimbabwe. There is also an IIRR US office based in New York.

IIRR is well-known for its wide range of publications and informational materials on practical development issues. IIRR is seeking to further strengthen its publication activities by appointing an international Communications Director. This person will be responsible for managing IIRR's external communications, including its publications.

Responsibilities

As part of its 2015 strategy, IIRR plans to establish a strong program of knowledge documentation, acquisition, packaging and distribution using the Writeshop and other relevant methods to contribute to social change. In the process, IIRR will build the capacity of selected universities and academic institutions. The Communications Director will contribute towards this broad goal but will be responsible specifically for documenting, packaging and disseminating locally relevant and well-contextualized materials for various audiences. He/She will lead IIRR communications in a coordinated manner and ensure that regions and countries build and maintain positive media relations, ensure adherence to the communication guidelines and develops materials and tools and be responsible for institute wide branding. More specifically, the communications director will be responsible for the following:

Communications Management - The Communications Director will be a member of IIRR's senior management team, with responsibility for coordinating the Institute's publications and external communications. This will involve conceptualizing, planning, managing and implementing the Institute's communication strategy and its various components, coordinating with IIRR's country and regional offices, and with team of communication officers, project managers and partner organizations.

Publications- A large part of the Communications Director's work will be writing, rewriting, editing and finalizing books, annual reports and other publicity materials, newsletters, training manuals and policy briefs. Many IIRR communication materials are written by people whose first language is not English, or by technical specialists who are not used to expressing themselves in simplified terms. The Communications Director will rewrite their drafts in clear, simple language and present them in a way that is user-friendly. This requires excellent language skills, an understanding of the subject-matter, an ability to translate technical information into simple text, and an ability to communicate with authors.

Writeshops. Many of IIRR's publications are produced through a "writeshop" (writing workshop) process developed at IIRR, which brings together authors to develop, write and review publications.

The Communications Director will be a key member of the team that manages such writeshops. He/she will be primarily responsible for conceptualizing the structure and content of the publication, preparing guidelines for authors, assisting authors during the writeshop to rewrite their manuscripts, conceptualizing graphics (to be drawn by an artist) and editing the resulting drafts into a form ready for publication. He/she may be required to make presentations and facilitate writeshop sessions as needs may arise. In addition the Communications Director will perform the following specific tasks.

1. Develop and popularize writeshop as an important IIRR method for knowledge acquisition, documentation, packaging and dissemination
2. Build the capacity of researchers, NGO workers and IIRR staff to facilitate and use Writeshops for policy dialogue and convene forums that enhance knowledge translation and use of best practices.
3. Produce, package and widely distribute simple and relevant materials for grassroots-level organizations, communities, schools, and women/youth groups.
4. Facilitate and build capacity within select academic institutions to produce locally-relevant resource materials/training manuals. Produce graduate and post-graduate textbooks, field guides, and resource manuals, with the involvement of faculty and students using the Writeshop methodology
5. Fundraise to realize the above actions. .

Communication Strategy - Develop IIRR's Communications Strategy and assume responsibility for its implementation using appropriate channels. The Communications Director will coordinate a virtual team of Communication Officers spread in Asia, Africa and United States, part-time or contracted editors, writers, designers, artists and web specialists.

Publication layout and design- The Communications Director will design and lay out the simpler publications, and commission a professional designer to produce the more complex publications. He/she will be responsible for ensuring the quality of such work.

Publication production- The Communications Director will manage the production of IIRR's publications and other information materials of high quality. This will involve coordinating with authors, staff, artists, designers and printers.

Training- The Communications Director will provide training on writing, editing and other aspects of communications to IIRR staff, partner organizations and clients. More importantly the Communications Director will assist in improving the communication skills of staff.

Audiovisual media- The Communications Director will manage the production of videos, quality photos, presentations and other audiovisual media.

Writing and communication- Excellent writing, editing and oral communication skills and an ability to simplify various materials for a diverse audience are required. He/she will support program and project staff to generate powerful impact stories that will be shared widely

Website- The Communications Director will support the US office and a team of IIRR Communications Officers responsible for the content and management of the IIRR website www.iirr.org and advise management on the appropriateness and use of social media (Twitter, Facebook, blogs, etc).

Fundraising- The Communications Director will be responsible for building up the communications unit and raises funds to grow the communications program and support fundraising efforts of IIRR's President and senior staff, through quality editing and analysis of major proposals.

Skills and experience

Education- Master's degree in journalism, development communication or a development-related subject preferred.

Language- Excellent English language abilities required. Other languages, especially French, will be an advantage.

Experience and knowledge- Minimum of ten years' experience in writing and editing for different audiences on various aspects of rural development required. Field experience in rural development will be an asset.

Teamwork- Excellent interpersonal skills, a demonstrated ability to work with diverse and disperse teams, and an ability to engage with a range of stakeholders required.

Publications - Experience managing production of various publications such as books, manuals, field guides, policy briefs, posters, practical guides, etc. required.

Computer skills- Proficiency in Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and Adobe InDesign required. Skills in Adobe Photoshop and Illustrator will be an asset.

Other

Location- The position will be based in the Philippines with frequent travel to Eastern Africa and within Southeast Asia.

Reporting- The Communications Director will report directly to the President of IIRR but closely coordinate activities with Regional Directors, the US Office, and the global communications team members.

Remuneration- Salary depends on experience; a generous benefits package and housing are included.

Equal Opportunity- IIRR is an equal opportunities employer and welcomes applications from candidates irrespective of age, gender, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, disability, religion, health, sexual orientation or marital status. Selection will be based on merit.

APPLICATION PROCESS- Applicants are invited to submit a cover letter illustrating their suitability, together with detailed curriculum vitae, including names and addresses of two references.

All correspondence should be addressed to the Human Resources Coordinator, Maita Alida C. Ordoñez, Maita.Ordoñez@iirr.org.

Closing day for application is July 31, 2012.