

MICHIGAN ASSOCIATION OF REGIONS
JOB POSTING

Title: Communications and Outreach Coordinator

Location: Flexible (mainly remote)

Employment Type: Independent contractor

About Us:

The Michigan Association of Regions (MAR) is a nonprofit statewide association of the state's 14 regional planning agencies (planning commissions and councils of government) established through state legislation. MAR is organized as a 501(c)(3) public charity with 509(a)(2) status. MAR's mission is to advance and advocate on behalf of Michigan's planning regions as a means to support sustainable, collaborative communities and a prosperous state. More information about MAR is available at: <http://www.miregions.com>

Regional councils are funded primarily by state and federal grants and thus are highly impacted by state and federal policy and priorities. Strong relationships and communications with these entities are critical and are the focus of this position.

MAR seeks a skilled and strategic Communications and Outreach Coordinator to:

- 1) Develop and implement the organization's communications and marketing strategy and activities.
- 2) Perform outreach to, and engagement of, federal and state agencies, elected leadership, and partner organizations.

This position plays a key role in translating a wide variety of complex regional issues and economic development initiatives into clear messaging for a wide range of audiences, including state agencies, legislators, and partner organizations (such as other related nonprofit associations). The position will execute communications strategies that strengthen MAR's visibility, secure and support grant-funded initiatives, and enhance agency and partner engagement across the state. The position will also serve as the voice of MAR in programmatic discussions with various state government entities.

Fulfillment of responsibilities shall be upon direction of, and in consultation with, the MAR Board of Directors or its Executive Committee.

Key Responsibilities

Strategic Communications

- Develop communications plan consistent with MAR's 2024-25 Strategic Plan Review, including implementation, as appropriate, of website, social media strategy, objectives, and messaging.

- Develop an Annual Impact Report on MAR's activities and other information relevant to statewide regional planning; highlight member activities, partnerships, and success stories.
- Develop an Annual Brief – based on facilitated discussion with MAR Board members – focused on MAR's consensus priorities for federal and state legislative and regulatory issues.
- Consolidate and organize relevant external communications and policy issues to be reported back to MAR members.
- Ensure consistent messaging, branding, and tone across all internal and external communications.

Content Development & Management

- Produce general content on the nature of MAR and its policy priorities that can be utilized by the Board in a manner that can be tailored/"translated" to specific audiences.
- Design and deliver as digital files the Annual Brief and Annual Impact Report.
- Proofread and edit content that may be developed/drafted by board members for the use of MAR.

Digital & Media Communications

- Develop and implement social media strategy, including, at minimum, a LinkedIn presence with regular postings and periodic updates.
- Coordinate media relations through targeted channels (not to the general public), including press releases, content for stories, and responses to media inquiries.
- Monitor the organization's website and be attentive to making routine updates as needed. Incorporate new branding and any relevant documents that are produced.
- Evaluate the need for and benefits of more significant website changes or redesign (which would be performed through a separate contract).

Targeted Outreach

- Coordinate with board members and partner organizations to support collaborative messaging.
- At the direction of the MAR Board, coordinate meetings with state agencies and officials on issues of importance to the state's planning regions.

Brand & Design Oversight

- Develop, produce, and incorporate into all documents and promotions a refreshed "brand" for the organization.

Administrative & Reporting

- Track communications metrics and evaluate effectiveness of outreach efforts
- Maintain communications-related databases and distribution lists
- Report on progress and activities at all monthly MAR Board meetings.

- Provide relevant supporting documentation on programs, issues, and activities to MAR President or designee for inclusion in board meeting packets.
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Qualifications

Required

- Bachelor's degree in communications, public relations, journalism, marketing, planning, public policy, or a related field; or equivalent combination of education and professional experience. *We recognize that experience takes many forms. Candidates who do not hold a degree but demonstrate equivalent skills and professional background are encouraged to apply. Typically 4-6 years of relevant work experience may be substituted for a degree.*
- Minimum of two years of professional communications experience
- Excellent writing, editing, and proofreading capabilities
- Experience managing websites, social media platforms, and digital content
- Demonstrated experience with external relationship building
- Maintenance of a professional appearance and attitude in any interactions

Desirable

- Experience working in government, regional planning, economic development, or a nonprofit environment
- Familiarity with public engagement, community outreach, or stakeholder communications
- Graphic design and desktop publishing experience; proficiency with tools such as Adobe Creative Suite or Canva
- Experience with email marketing platforms and content management systems
- Residence or place of business in close proximity to Lansing, providing feasibility for occasional in-person meetings with state government officials

Other Necessary Skills

- Strong organizational skills
 - Strong attention to detail and commitment to accuracy
 - Ability to communicate complex information clearly and effectively
 - Collaborative, flexible, and self-directed work style
 - Professional judgment and discretion when handling sensitive information
 - Ability to critically evaluate, refine, personalize, and customize any content generated by artificial intelligence for work products
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Other Conditions of Employment

- Requires attendance at 2-3 in-person monthly board meetings per year and remote attendance during other months of the year.

- Requires occasional meetings via videoconference, and/or in person if MAR deems it cost-effective (depending on travel), with state government officials.
- Costs of reasonable travel in direct fulfillment of scope of work will be reimbursed at standard IRS rates.
- Contractor shall be responsible for all of their own equipment and software costs.
- Time commitment of 20-40 hours/month as needed to fulfill responsibilities.
- Contract amount up to \$30,000/year DOQ for an initial one-year period.