



RIFT VALLEY INSTITUTE

JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Title: Programme Officer: Communications and Public Engagement

Employment type: Full-time contract, one year

Location: Nairobi

Reporting Structure: Reports to Communications Manager

Job Context

The Rift Valley Institute (RVI) is an independent, non-profit organization focused on advancing useful knowledge of eastern and central Africa. Through research, education, and public engagement, RVI seeks to bring a deeper understanding of local realities to support informed social and political action.

To better promote its work and increase visibility, RVI is expanding its communications team. The Communications and Public Engagement Officer will play a key role in supporting RVI's strategic communication goals by coordinating website content, social media, public engagement initiatives, and knowledge management. This role includes responsibilities in IT support, media readiness, event preparation, video production, and graphic design, ensuring that RVI's communications are cohesive, professional, and effectively targeted.

Job Purpose

The purpose of the Communications and Public Engagement Officer role is to implement RVI's communications strategy, supporting the Communications Manager in enhancing RVI's public profile and outreach. This includes managing and updating website content, coordinating content across social media platforms, maintaining RVI's digital archives and contact databases, providing foundational IT support to staff, and assisting with graphic design and video production. The officer will also introduce structured media and event readiness processes to ensure RVI staff are equipped for public engagements, facilitating a consistent and impactful representation of RVI's work.

Key Working Relationships

- **Reports to:** The Communications Manager, who provides oversight and strategic guidance on RVI's communications initiatives.
- **Collaborates with:** RVI's project and programme managers, and their teams, to ensure consistent communication across projects.
- **Supports:** RVI staff with IT setup and troubleshooting, media engagement and preparation for public events and forums.

Scope and Limits of Authority

- **Digital and Social Media:** Update RVI's website content and implement the social media calendar, aligning posts and materials with RVI's communication goals.
- **Support in public convening and managing events:** Execute activities to support public events by preparing relevant materials including media engagement by coordinating resources and logistics.
- **Knowledge Management and IT:** Implement data management protocols, maintain digital archives, and provide IT support for account management and troubleshooting. Ensure systems are in place to secure data in line with RVI's data protection policy.
- **Design and Media Production:** Carry out graphic design tasks, such as branded templates and presentations, and support video editing and multimedia projects as required.
- **Coordination:** Liaise with external consultants and vendors, handling associated administrative tasks and timelines.

Responsibility for Resources

- **Material resources:** Video and photography equipment, digital design tools.
- **Information resources:** RVI's website, social media accounts, digital archives, and databases.
- **Software and application resources:** Adobe Creative Suite, Google Workspace, Dropbox, MailChimp, and other relevant digital tools.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Digital, Website, and Brand Management (30%)

- **Digital Presence:** Manage and publish content across social media platforms, expanding RVI's presence on new channels such as Instagram and TikTok. Curate inputs from programme teams, maintain a social media style guide, and ensure brand consistency. Track engagement metrics across digital channels, providing analytics to inform strategy and optimize outreach.
- **Website Management:** Regularly update the RVI website with news, publications, events, and job postings, working with programme teams to ensure content is timely, accurate and engaging. Collaborate with external developers for enhancements of usability and a strong user experience.
- **Brand Consistency:** Ensure RVI's brand identity is consistently represented across digital and print channels. Develop and manage visual materials, including logos, templates, and other branded items, to maintain a cohesive look and feel in all outward-facing communications outputs.

2. Strategy, for conceptualisation of public facing key messages (30%)

- **Strategy Implementation:** Work closely with the Communications Manager to implement RVI's communications strategy, focusing on tailored communication plans for each programme (e.g., Courses, Forums and other RVI existing and new projects).
- **Promoting and delivering key messages:** Deliver information based on bespoke plans, using data-driven insights to refine messaging, channels, and formats for maximum impact.
- **Content Creation:** Develop high-quality, engaging multimedia content as outlined in public facing communication plans, including social media posts, videos, blogs, and newsletters, to reach and engage target audiences.
- **Support for Fundraising and Visibility:** Support, and if necessary, coordinate public engagement plans that showcase RVI's achievements and reinforce the organisation's value to potential funders. Prepare and promote materials that highlight impactful outputs and programme success to raise awareness, indirectly supporting RVI's fundraising goals.

3. Stakeholder Engagement, Media Relations, and Public Affairs (20%)

- **Media Liaison and Press Readiness:** Develop an introductory press kit and basic media protocols; support staff training for media engagement; ensure teams have resources to handle press requests confidently and professionally.
- **Stakeholder and Event Engagement:** Equip staff attending or hosting events with consistent, branded materials (e.g., brochures, slides) to ensure RVI's public events and outreach initiatives promote the organisation's work strategically.
- **Organisational values and reputation:** Ensure all public-facing materials uphold RVI's values, principles and standards. Support EMT with media activities in situations where RVI's reputation is at risk due to negative publicity including by developing communication protocols to guide timely and effective responses in critical situations.

4. Knowledge Management and IT Support (20%)

- **File Storage and Database Management:** Oversee RVI's file storage protocols on Dropbox and contact database on Daylite or similar software; ensure compliance with organisational standards, providing training and support to staff as needed.
- **Digital Archives:** Maintain and update RVI's digital archives, ensuring accurate, accessible records of publications and multimedia outputs for monitoring and evaluation.
- **Software Administration:** Manage access and operation of RVI's suite of software tools, including Adobe Creative Cloud, MS Office, Gmail, Slack, Zoom, and Google

Workspace; handle email setup and digital infrastructure support.

- **IT Support:** Provide IT assistance to the RVI team, troubleshooting technical issues and coordinating with external IT services for hardware maintenance and procurement.
- **Institutional Resources and Templates:** Support the maintenance and development of RVI's branded stationery and templates (e.g., logos, letterheads, forms, timesheets) to ensure consistency across organizational materials.
- **System and Process Enhancement:** Support the improvement of systems and processes for knowledge management and IT to increase operational efficiency and streamline account management across the organization.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Knowledge and Qualifications

- **Education:** Bachelor's degree in communications, marketing, public relations, or a related field.
- **Regional Knowledge:** Interest in and understanding of the region where RVI operates.
- **Technical Skills:** Proficiency in Adobe Creative Cloud, social media management platforms, CMS tools, PR tools (e.g., media monitoring software), and data/storage management platforms.
- **Analytics Proficiency:** Familiarity with digital analytics tools, including Google Analytics, to support data-driven campaign evaluation.

Experience

- **Communications and PR Experience:** Minimum of 3 years in a communications or PR role, with experience executing large-scale campaigns and coordinating public engagement activities.
- **Collaboration:** Proven ability to work both independently and collaboratively with cross-functional teams and external partners.

Skills and Abilities

- **Communication Skills:** Strong written, verbal, and visual communication skills, with the ability to produce engaging content across platforms.
- **Organizational Skills:** Excellent multitasking and organizational abilities to manage multiple tasks and meet deadlines.
- **Analytical Skills:** Competency in using communications metrics and digital analytics to evaluate and improve campaign effectiveness.

Languages

- **Fluency in English:** Essential for communication, content creation, and engagement with RVI's audiences.
- **Regional Language Knowledge:** Proficiency in a relevant regional language (e.g., Swahili, Arabic) is advantageous for local engagement and outreach.

Signature: _____ (job holder)

Signature: _____ (line manager)

Date: _____