

**COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR  
HIGHSTEAD FOUNDATION  
REDDING, CONNECTICUT**



**POSITION SUMMARY**

Highstead ([www.highstead.net](http://www.highstead.net)) seeks an accomplished change-agent to create a communications program to boldly propel its land conservation, science, and stewardship programs, and to inspire people to advance the Wildlands and Woodlands Initiative ([www.wildlandsandwoodlands.org](http://www.wildlandsandwoodlands.org)) of conserving New England's forests and farmlands. Creative self-starters with an extensive communications background and strong conservation ethic are encouraged to apply for this newly created position. The Communications Director will lead, develop, and implement a collaborative effort to restructure the communications team and advance a comprehensive outreach and communications strategy for Highstead, its many collaborators, and Wildlands and Woodlands.

Highstead is a regional non-profit conservation organization dedicated to working with a range of partners and deploying the best available science to conserve the New England landscape towards the Wildlands and Woodlands vision of regional landscapes supporting nature and society. Its principal programs include catalyzing land protection and planning through Regional Conservation Partnerships, conservation finance, ecological research, policy analysis, and land stewardship. Highstead employs nine staff members and supports senior fellows and academic collaborators in advancing its goals. Founded in 1982 and located in the conservation landscape of Redding, CT, Highstead encompasses diverse natural areas, long-term studies of ecological dynamics, beautiful office and meeting facilities, and unique displays of ecologically sensitive landscaping.

In addition to a strong background in communications, the ideal candidate will demonstrate experience advancing non-profit, environmental policy, conservation, and/or land planning initiatives and will be committed to the ideals of the Wildlands and Woodlands vision. S/he will be a strong leader and decision-maker, even in the face of ambiguity and change, and welcome the challenge of shaping and implementing communication strategies that inspire people to increase the pace of conservation in New England through ideas that resonate locally, regionally, and nationally.

The Communications Director is supported by the Communications Assistant, a full-time, mid-level position that currently exists, but that can be re-shaped or hired to best fit organizational needs. The Highstead Office and Technology Manager and other Highstead staff and consultants lend intermittent support to various communications projects. The Director oversees a low six-figure budget. The Communications Director will collaborate closely with senior program leaders at Highstead and with Wildlands and Woodlands partners throughout the region.

## **OBJECTIVES**

- Leverage communications to motivate target audiences to engage in local conservation or stewardship actions on their land or in their community.
- Educate local, state, and national policymakers to inform decision-making and policy implementation.
- Empower diverse collaboratives of individuals and organizations to build capacity to create and protect healthy, sustainable communities.
- Educate individuals on the value of forest and farmland conservation for society and nature, and inspire them to enjoy, invest, and protect the natural lands and communities they support.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

- Help shape the public messages and identity for Highstead and develop new approaches for positioning W&W effectively within target markets to build broad-based, regional support.
- Work closely with program leads and the W&W Steering Committee to develop and coordinate a comprehensive outreach and communication strategy to advance regional conservation efforts through traditional and digital/social media.
- Develop and implement a comprehensive media relations strategy leading to earned print, broadcast, and online media.
- Leverage communications expertise of W&W partners and others to amplify our communications reach while supporting the work of other conservation NGOs in the New England landscape.
- Oversee communications and outreach for special events, workshops, meetings, and conferences.
- Oversee and manage the communication activities of office staff and interns; coordinate closely with Highstead staff, the outreach and communication staff at the Harvard Forest, and other partners.
- Strategize, develop, and oversee the production and dissemination of Highstead and W&W Initiative publications and social media, including annual updates, print and electronic newsletters, as well as targeted W&W outreach.
- Lead new approaches to creating and distributing multimedia content.

## **REQUIREMENTS**

- Bachelor's degree (master's preferred) in a communications-related or environmental field.
- Extensive experience leading cause marketing, public relations, media campaigns, or non-profit communications.
- Demonstrated success in leveraging organizational branding and positioning to influence others.
- Familiarity with the New England landscape and a commitment to its conservation.
- Ability to translate complex information into persuasive print and digital media.
- Excellent writing, editing, and verbal communication skills.
- Strong organizational habits, extremely detail-oriented and quality-focused.
- Ability to lead, make decisions, delegate, manage varied activities, manage budgets efficiently, and balance multiple deadlines.
- Ability to work as part of a team as well as independently with minimal supervision.
- Willingness to travel regionally on occasion in support of W&W events and other outreach.

**TERMS**

This is a senior level, full-time position preferably based near Redding, CT with limited evening and weekend work and occasional regional travel for meetings and events. The Communications Director works in close collaboration with Highstead Senior Staff and Board President, and in close partnership with the Outreach and Education Director of Harvard Forest and the W&W leadership. Salary will be commensurate with experience and includes a competitive benefits package and relocation assistance. Highstead is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

**TO APPLY**

Please submit your cover letter and resume to [jcologgi@highstead.net](mailto:jcologgi@highstead.net) as a single PDF file and reference Communications Director Application as the email subject. Applicants are encouraged to submit a brief portfolio of their cause marketing successes. Please provide names and contact information for three relevant references as part of your application. Applications will be accepted through September 23<sup>rd</sup>.