

Updated: September 30, 2021
Position Title: Public Relations Director
Staff Group: Communications, Office of Outreach and Public Witness
Reports To: Director of Communications
Location: Boston, Massachusetts (onsite)*
Grade: 14, full-time with benefits

Purpose

To oversee public relations initiatives of the Unitarian Universalist Association and to amplify a values-based and moral voice in the news landscape on issues of social justice. To leverage the news cycle aligned with organizational priorities: voting rights, environmental justice, criminal justice, LGBTQ rights, Black and Indigenous People and People of Color equity, and the Movement for Black Lives.

To serve as part of the Communications staff group leadership team that includes the Senior Digital and Marketing Manager and Executive Editor. Working within the Office of Outreach and Public Witness, to advance UUA Public Relations and to grow the UUA voice and brand within the public arena. To spearhead and develop public relations plans and messaging on priority issues, performing pro-active news media outreach with a focus on issues management and crisis communications. To advise on best positioning for the voice of the UUA President and senior leadership, assessing and recommending opportunities within the national media space. To support congregations on effective crisis communications situations as needed.

Principal Responsibilities

1. Directs all public relations activities in the Office of Outreach and Public Witness, overseeing UUA strategies, tactics, and operations related to public communications, news media outreach, and innovative digital engagement on social media and on national outlets and platforms. Collaborates to develop Communications positioning and messaging for the Association. Supervises the work of the Justice Communications Associate and Social Media Strategist.
2. Develops overarching PR strategy and core set of messaging for UUA public voice, in keeping with larger Communications priorities for the organization and framing of key issues, and defined in consultation with the Director of Communications and UUA senior leadership. Oversees UUA presence on institutional social media platforms and leverages UUA voice across social properties.
3. Oversees the development of a PR framework for the UUA brand to determine how to insert our values and moral voice into the national conversation, reflecting current issues in public life and our commitments connected to global concerns. Builds awareness of UUA value-driven expertise and faith-based perspective among news media, positioning the Association as an influencer and significant thought leader within our faith sphere and the national arena. Makes effective use of digital platforms and broadcast channels to amplify issues in the political space, including podcasts and newer online news sites, and traditional channels, such as radio.
4. For the UUA President, takes primary responsibility for ensuring appropriate writing support, including for long form articles, columns, and op-eds, and writes key pieces as needed; drafts and edits related quotes, talking points, speeches, and presentations, providing media coaching and within crisis moments as needed. Coordinates media relations for the President's events. Assists with developing and implementing executive communications overall. Oversees writing production for presidential copy crafted by the Justice Communications Associate to align messaging.
5. Engages news media by serving as Association's spokesperson, develops relationships with key media actors, including editors, journalists, and producers, and participates in relevant Twitter conversations. Makes pitches, writes press releases and media advisories, PR plans, and pursues earned media placements in major news outlets nationally. Maintains a list of media influencers engaged with UUA priority areas.
6. Monitors news cycle on an ongoing basis to inform PR strategy and issues management for targeted audiences and outlets. Anticipates upcoming news benchmarks and makes recommendations for PR opportunities and planning (policy flashpoints, press conferences, Congressional legislation, SCOTUS decisions, key partner initiatives, etc.). Tracks trending topics daily to pivot for a crisis communications response that speaks to core UUA issues as they emerge in public debate and political life.
7. Assesses and reports on impact of PR and messaging via metrics that reflect key digital platforms, including mentions, coverage, reach, engagement, and sentiment analysis.

8. Works with Director of Communications, Senior Digital and Marketing Manager, and Executive Editor to map messaging with thematic content strategy for Communications ecosystem of channels, encompassing UUA values and unifying the brand.
9. Collaborates with other UUA offices and staff groups to develop and advise on PR efforts and plans for high-profile Association initiatives, including for justice priorities and at the UUA's annual General Assembly. Participates in Communications cross-staff meetings.
10. Advises congregations on best practices and tools for media engagement and crisis communications, using a systemic training approach and ad hoc consulting for highly visible issues. Coaches individual religious professionals and lay leaders on public relations matters during crisis situations.
11. Performs other duties as requested by supervisor, the Executive Vice-President, or the President.

Qualifications

This is a Grade 14 position with an expected hiring range of \$85,000 to \$95,000, depending on experience. Note that qualifications may be met as a result of lived experience, volunteer work, professional experience, and/or formal or informal training. A minimum of a Bachelor of Arts degree is expected. Candidates should have significant PR and media experience with 7 or more years of public and media experience and a portfolio of successful earned media placements within national news outlets. Competitive candidates will have a consultative and collaborative leadership style and broad skill set within the field of public and media relations and a track record of effective use of digital communications and social media to advance institutional priorities, promoting thought leadership and issue-driven messages.

The candidate should have a facility for assessing and identify emerging media trends and seizing opportunities within trending and breaking news. Consultant must be able to quickly develop messaging and advise senior leadership to meet a media request or crisis moment. Must have a track record of crisis communications, an ability to respond in the moment, and experience working directly with C-suite leadership. Strong messaging skills are essential, and candidates should have a demonstrated record of effective written expression across various PR channels. Previous supervisory experience, personal integrity, and discretion are required. Familiarity with digital metrics is highly desirable.

Strong skill set with countering systems of oppression and cultural marginalization, and in leading with intercultural fluency, multicultural awareness, and humility, is required. Experience with social justice issues and strategic partnerships is desirable. Proficiency in Twitter and Facebook is required and familiarity with YouTube, along with newer social media platforms, such as Instagram, is preferred. Proficiency with Microsoft Office Suite is required (especially Outlook and Word). Must be excited to promote the Unitarian Universalist Association stance on issues and Unitarian Universalist values. Worked or lived experience with communities of color or indigenous peoples is of particular value. Eagerness to work in an organization in which the dismantling of white supremacy is a high priority. Evening/weekend work required when responding to breaking events and news cycle. Occasional travel also required, including travel to the annual General Assembly each year in June.

*** IMPORTANT:** During the COVID-19 pandemic, UUA Boston offices remain closed and this will be a work-from-home position until our offices reopen.

How to Apply

People with disabilities, people of color, indigenous people, Hispanic/Latinx, and LGBTQ candidates are encouraged to apply. The UUA is committed to developing a diverse and talented staff team. If you are excited about this role but unsure whether you meet all of the requirements, we encourage you to inquire and/or apply. Send cover letter and résumé—indicating “Public Relations Director” in the subject line—via e-mail to careers@uua.org, via fax to (617) 948-6467, or to Human Resources, UUA, 24 Farnsworth Street, Boston, MA 02210. E-mail submissions preferred.

About the UUA

The Unitarian Universalist Association is a progressive religious denomination headquartered in Boston's waterfront Fort Point Innovation District. Our faith community of more than 1,000 self-governing congregations brings to the world a vision of religious freedom, tolerance, and social justice. Our normal workweek is 35 hours, we pay 80% contribution towards health insurance premiums, 10% towards retirement (after one year), and have generous paid time-off policies. We are a great place to work and we value diversity. The UUA is an Equal Opportunity Employer and is committed to the full inclusion of all. As part of this commitment, the UUA will ensure that applicants and staff with disabilities are provided reasonable accommodations. If reasonable accommodation is needed to participate in the job application or interview process, to perform essential job functions, and/or to receive other benefits and privileges of

employment, please contact the Office of Human Resources at (617) 948-4648 or humanresources@uua.org. For more information on the UUA, visit us online at UUA.org and uuworld.org.

Support for the Mission and Values of the Association

The Unitarian Universalist Association is a progressive and historic religious denomination. While it is not generally required or expected that an applicant/employee identify as a Unitarian Universalist (UU) or be a member of a UU congregation in order to work at the UUA, all UUA staff members are expected to perform their job duties in accordance with the UUA's values, principles and mission. In particular the following points, drawn from the Seven UU Principles, are of particular importance for the UUA's work environment and staff culture:

- The inherent worth and dignity of every human being: We affirm the need for a human-centered workplace that allows our diverse staff to flourish. We also understand that our wider culture and society oppresses and denies human dignity, and we seek to counter the effects of that oppression in our hiring and workplace culture so that each person feels whole and valued.
- Justice, equity and compassion in human relations, and the goal of world community with peace, liberty and justice for all: We speak openly and publicly of our support for social and political issues, including LGBTQ equity, racial justice, climate justice, gender equity, and reproductive justice.
- The interdependent web of existence: We recognize that the liberation of all people is interwoven, and we work to counter patriarchy, white supremacy, colonialism, homophobia, transphobia, ableism, environmental exploitation, and other interrelated systems of marginalization.