Senior Media Relations Writer (5885U), Public Affairs - 82302

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Berkeley
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

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About Berkeley

At the University of California, Berkeley, we are dedicated to fostering a community where everyone feels welcome and can thrive. Our culture of openness, freedom and belonging make it a special place for students, faculty and staff.

As a world-leading institution, Berkeley is known for its academic and research excellence, public mission, diverse student body, and commitment to equity and social justice. Since our founding in 1868, we have driven innovation, creating global intellectual, economic and social value.

We are looking for applicants who reflect California's diversity and want to be part of an inclusive, equity-focused community that views education as a matter of social justice. Please consider whether your values align with our Guiding Values and Principles, Principles

of Community, and Strategic Plan.

At UC Berkeley, we believe that learning is a fundamental part of working, and provide space for supportive colleague communities via numerous employee resource groups (staff organizations). Our goal is for everyone on the Berkeley campus to feel supported and equipped to realize their full potential. We actively support this by providing all of our full-time staff employees with at least 80 hours (10 days) of paid time per year to engage in professional development activities. Find out more about how you can grow your career at UC Berkeley.

Departmental Overview

UC Berkeley's Office of Communications and Public Affairs leads communications for the most elite public higher education institution in the world, conveying the quality, diversity, vitality, preeminence and dedication to service of UC Berkeley. We tell the Berkeley story to inspire audiences and elevate the image of the university.

Our mission is to promote the University's excellence in teaching, research and public service. We provide leadership and services in five integrated functions: News and media relations, executive communications, critical communications, marketing and social media.

Position Summary

Turn UC Berkeley's research into compelling stories on UC Berkeley channels and in the media by connecting faculty and their discoveries to the journalists and outlets that shape public conversation. Help the team position Berkeley experts as the go-to voices on AI, climate, health, democracy and other issues that define our future.

This senior media relations writer serves as one of UC Berkeley's primary research storytellers, working with the media relations team in the Office of Strategic Communications/Public Affairs to amplify faculty discoveries that shape how the world understands critical challenges. The focus of the writer and the team evolves as the world does - who anticipated AI would dominate public discourse just two years ago? This writer will develop deep expertise in assigned strategic areas, becoming the go-to person who knows the key researchers, understands the policy landscape and has the media relationships to get Berkeley's story told.

The role involves strategically positioning Berkeley research for maximum impact - establishing climate scientists as trusted sources for The New York Times ahead of wildfire season, pitching AI experts as guests on the Hard Fork podcast as policy debates intensify or securing appearances for democracy researchers on Pod Save America. When Berkeley scientists develop new cancer treatments or create AI safety protocols, the writer helps

transform those discoveries into compelling narratives that reach wide audiences, including UC Berkeley News, the campus news website that reaches 350,000 visitors worldwide each month.

This position requires working closely with Nobel Prize winners and MacArthur Fellows while uncovering the human stories that make complex research accessible - understanding not just what researchers discovered, but who they are and what motivates their work. The writer must have a strong ability to navigate and communicate complex issues related to race, ethnicity, gender, ability and other intersectional topics. The writer builds relationships with traditional reporters, podcast bookers, newsletter writers and research-oriented social media creators.

The role demands editorial judgment about which stories will resonate most powerfully - recognizing what merits front-page coverage versus what requires a different storytelling approach. Working collaboratively with UC Berkeley's video, social media, marketing and web teams, the position adapts narratives for diverse platforms while maintaining scientific accuracy. It also involves coordinating with communications staff across Berkeley's schools and colleges to identify emerging opportunities and to avoid duplicated work.

Berkeley offers something unique: research driven by public mission rather than profit. This role ensures those discoveries reach the audiences that matter most.

This hybrid role will report to the executive director of news and media relations.

Application Review Date

The First Review Date for this job is: 11/18/2025.

Responsibilities

Research Story Development and Faculty Relations

- Find research with immediate relevance to current events and major societal challenges.
- Work directly with faculty to craft compelling narratives that connect discoveries to urgent needs.
- Exercise editorial judgment about the right channel for each story - determining when research merits external media pitching, when to feature experts in owned content, or when a multi-platform approach will maximize impact.
- Pitch and write original stories for UC Berkeley News.
- Uncover the human stories behind the science.
- Train faculty researchers on effective communication and media engagement.
- Build relationships across Berkeley's research community to spot emerging stories with broad appeal.

- Work with faculty to time research announcements for maximum impact.

Media Outreach and Relationship Building

- Build relationships with science reporters, education writers, and journalists covering research areas.
- Develop partnerships with influential newsletter writers, podcast teams, and social media creators focused on science.
- Pitch complex research stories to diverse media platforms, adapting narratives for different audiences while maintaining accuracy.
- Secure exclusive access and interview opportunities for high-impact research stories.
- Track media trends and emerging platforms that reach audiences interested in science and research.

Campus Coordination

- Work with media relations representatives in schools and colleges across campus to identify emerging research stories and coordinate outreach efforts.
- Collaborate with Berkeley's in-house video, social media teams and marketing teams to develop multi-channel approaches that amplify research stories across all channels.
- Coordinate with campus units to avoid duplicate work and ensure consistent messaging.
- Support team initiatives while maintaining primary focus on research communications and faculty relations.

Professional Development

Maintain currency with emerging news, media relations and communications trends, requirements and developments (for example, the rise of subscription newsletters).

Required Qualifications

- Experience in science communication, academic media relations or research-focused journalism.
- Strong initiative and idea generation skills with ability to proactively identify opportunities and propose creative approaches.
- Proven ability to translate complex topics into clear, compelling stories for general audiences.
- Strong understanding of current global challenges including AI, climate change, health, economic inequality and democracy.
- Demonstrated success building relationships with both academic researchers and media professionals.
- Experience working with diverse media platforms including traditional outlets, podcasts, newsletters, video outlets, documentaries and social media.
- Strong storytelling skills with ability to identify human interest angles in academic research.

- Ability to navigate and communicate complex issues related to race, ethnicity, gender, ability and other intersectional topics.
- Understanding of academic publishing cycles, peer review processes, and research communication protocols.
- Strong collaboration skills with experience working effectively within communications teams.
- Ability to work independently and prioritize effectively with limited resources.
- Fluency in using metrics and analytics to measure media relations success and optimize outreach strategies.
- Bachelor's degree in journalism, communications, science, or related field with understanding of academic research environments and/or equivalent experience/training.

Preferred Qualifications

- Professional confidence and interpersonal skills to work effectively with world-renowned faculty while collaborating generously with colleagues at all levels.
- Experience with multimedia storytelling including video, audio, and interactive content.
- Background in science journalism or academic communications.
- Knowledge of the higher education environment, including its issues, audiences and unique challenges.

Salary & Benefits

For information on the comprehensive benefits package offered by the University, please visit the University of California's Compensation & Benefits website.

Under California law, the University of California, Berkeley is required to provide a reasonable estimate of the compensation range for this role and should not offer a salary outside of the range posted in this job announcement. This range takes into account the wide range of factors that are considered in making compensation decisions including but not limited to experience, skills, knowledge, abilities, education, licensure and certifications, analysis of internal equity, and other business and organizational needs. It is not typical for an individual to be offered a salary at or near the top of the range for a position. Salary offers are determined based on final candidate qualifications and experience.

The budgeted annual salary range that the University reasonably expects to pay for this position is $101,600.00 - 130,000.00.

This is an exempt monthly-paid position.

How to Apply

To apply, please submit your resume and cover letter.

Other Information

This is not a visa opportunity.

SB 791 and AB 810 Misconduct Disclosure Requirement: As a condition of employment, the final candidate who accepts a conditional offer of employment will be required to disclose if they have been subject to any final administrative or judicial decisions within the last seven years determining that they committed any misconduct; received notice of any allegations or are currently the subject of any administrative or disciplinary proceedings involving misconduct; have left a position after receiving notice of allegations or while under investigation in an administrative or disciplinary proceeding involving misconduct; or have filed an appeal of a finding of misconduct with a previous employer.

"Misconduct" means any violation of the policies or laws governing conduct at the applicant's previous place of employment, including, but not limited to, violations of policies or laws prohibiting sexual harassment, sexual assault, or other forms of harassment, discrimination, dishonesty, or unethical conduct, as defined by the employer. For reference, below are UC's policies addressing some forms of misconduct:

UC Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment Policy

UC Anti-Discrimination Policy

Abusive Conduct in the Workplace

Equal Employment Opportunity

The University of California is an Equal Opportunity Employer. All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, disability, age, protected veteran status, or other protected status under state or federal law.

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