Communications Manager - National Institute for Biofoundry Applications - IGB

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University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
in Urbana, IL

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Type: Full-Time
Salary: $60,000 - $80,000 per year
Posted: 22 days ago
Category: Communications, Marketing, and Public Affairs

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Carl R. Woese Institute for Genomic Biology

The Carl R. Woese Institute for Genomic Biology (IGB) is an interdisciplinary research institute at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, built on a team-science approach. Its mission is to advance life sciences research, engage the public in understanding the impact of genomic discoveries, and foster bioeconomic development across Illinois. IGB researchers lead groundbreaking genomic studies that tackle critical societal challenges in food security, energy, health, technology, and environmental sustainability. The institute's administrative infrastructure is designed to support dynamic research themes, enabling them to evolve with emerging discoveries, innovative methods, and changing needs.

Job Summary

The National Institute for BioFoundry Applications (NIBA) integrates synthetic biology, artificial intelligence (AI), and automation across three NSF-funded centers: the NSF Molecule Maker Lab Institute (MMLI) (moleculemaker.org), Illinois Biofoundry (iBiofoundry) (ibiofoundry.illinois.edu), and Global Center for Biofoundry Applications (gcba.illinois.edu).

We seek a strategic, proactive communicator to own our story, amplify partnerships, and position NIBA as the go-to institute for AI-driven molecular and biological innovation. This person will draft and implement the strategic communication plans, craft compelling narratives, manage digital channels, and translate complex science into content that broadens education, outreach, and workforce development, drives industry engagement, and elevates our scientific impact in academia and beyond.

Duties & Responsibilities

- Digital Strategy: Manage websites, social media and internal communication channels; use analytics to optimize reach and impact.
- Partnership Support: Develop clear, effective materials (templates, proposals, pitch decks, etc.).
- Event Promotion: Drive attendance and visibility for retreats, symposia, industry meetings, partnership events, and other.
- Stakeholder Engagement: Build lasting relationships with academic, industry, government partners, and other AI institutes.
- Education and Workforce Development: Provide support to the managing directors to advance the Education and Workforce Development effort of the NSF institutes.
- Content Creation: Write and edit press releases, newsletters, social posts, and feature stories, and assist in annual report writing.
- Brand Leadership: Maintain consistent identity across NIBA and its three NSF funded centers.

Minimum Qualifications

Bachelor's degree in marketing, business administration, communications, public relations, or a closely related field.

- Three (3) year (36 months) of professional work experience in marketing, public relations, communications, brand management, or a related professional area.
- Demonstrated experience in science, technology, and/or research communications.

Preferred Qualifications

Proficiency in:

- Adobe Creative Suite (Photoshop, Illustrator, Adobe Premiere Pro, Adobe Media Encoder)
- Web content management (e.g., WordPress, Drupal)
- Social media management
- Demonstrated ability to manage multiple projects with initiative and precision
- Portfolio required: 3-5 samples (writing + digital content) showcasing clarity, impact, and audience adaptation
- Experience in higher education or federally funded research communications
- Passion for AI in chemistry, biotechnology, AI, or synthetic biology
- Proven success in media relations or partnership development
- Experience creating visuals (infographics, event photos, social graphics)

Knowledge, Skills and Abilities

- Excellent interpersonal skills; builds trust with researchers, leadership, and partners.
- Exceptional writing, editing, and storytelling across scientific and general audiences to maximize outreach.
- Ability to synthesize complex biotech/AI concepts into clear, compelling messages.
- Strong project management skills; excels in deadline-driven environments and ability to manage priorities.
- Creative and enjoy learning new things.
- Meticulous attention to detail and brand consistency.

Appointment Information

This is a 100% full-time Civil Service 5004 - Marketing Associate position, appointed on a 12-month basis. The expected start date is as soon as possible after 2/2/2026. The budgeted salary for this position is $60,000 to $80,000. Final salary offered will be determined by a thorough assessment of available market data, internal salary equity, candidate experience and qualifications, collective bargaining agreements, and budget constraints.

For more information on Civil Service classifications, please visit the SUCSS web site at https://www.sucss.illinois.gov/pages/classspec/default.aspx.

Application Procedures & Deadline Information

Applications must be received by 6:00 pm (Central Time) on **January 5, 2026**. Apply for this position using the Apply Now button at the top or bottom of this posting. In order to be considered as a transfer candidate, you must apply for this position. Please provide a cover letter, resume, portfolio (by PDF or link) with 3-5 samples of writing or digital works), and contact information for at least 3 references with your application documents. Applications not submitted through https://jobs.illinois.edu will not be considered. If required by the position, transcripts or other documentation of credentials are to be provided no later than the first day of employment. For further information about this specific position, please contact Jana Lenz at janalenz@illinois.edu. For questions regarding the application process, please contact 217-333-2137.

This position is intended to be eligible for benefits. This includes Health, Dental, Vision, Life Insurance, a Retirement Plan, Paid time Off, and Tuition waivers for employees and dependents.

The University of Illinois System is an equal opportunity employer, including but not limited to disability and/or veteran status, and complies with all applicable state and federal employment mandates. Please visit Required Employment Notices and Posters to view our non-discrimination statement and find additional information about required background checks, sexual harassment/misconduct disclosures, and employment eligibility review through E-Verify.

Applicants with disabilities are encouraged to apply and may request a reasonable accommodation under the Americans with Disabilities Act (2008) to complete the application and/or interview process. Accommodations may also be requested on the basis of pregnancy, childbirth, and related conditions, or religion. Requests may be submitted through the reasonable accommodations portal, or by contacting the Accessibility & Accommodations Division of the Office for Access and Equity at 217-333-0885, or by emailing accessibility@illinois.edu.

Requisition ID: 1034005

Job Category: Professional and Administrative

Apply at: https://jobs.illinois.edu
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