



## Housatonic Valley Association

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### **Position Announcement: HVA Communications and Engagement Manager**

The Housatonic Valley Association (HVA) is seeking an enthusiastic and qualified communications and engagement professional to manage all aspects of our communication, event planning and outreach program. The Communications and Engagement Manager is part of HVA's Advancement Team and plays a pivotal role in expanding public outreach, strengthening the delivery of HVA's mission, values and vision, and building our network of collaborators, advocates, supporters, members and donors. Applicants should be passionate about, and able to communicate effectively and visibly on behalf of, a healthy Housatonic Watershed with our partners and the public.

**Who we are:** HVA leads and collaborates with partners to take action for conservation in communities across the Housatonic Watershed in Massachusetts, Connecticut and New York. Our mission: We are the voice of the Housatonic River, its tributaries and watershed lands in Connecticut, Massachusetts and New York. We work and act to protect, restore and advocate for its natural beauty and climate resilience through collaboration, education and engagement.

We restore and protect the Housatonic River and its tributaries, conserve strategically important lands, and work together with municipalities, government agencies, fellow non-profit organizations, business leaders, and concerned citizens for a clean and healthy natural environment to achieve climate-readiness for communities and ecosystems across the region. Our overarching vision is a climate-ready Housatonic Watershed by 2040. Two watershed-wide conservation campaigns toward our 2040 goal are underway: *Follow the Forest*, aimed at conserving a linked forest corridor from the Hudson Highlands through the Housatonic Watershed to Canada that supports wildlife migration and protects the ability of forests to provide clean water for people and ecosystems; and *Clean, Cold and Connected*, aimed at restoring and protecting waterways from the Berkshires to Long Island Sound by reducing pollution, restoring stream connectivity and habitats, and improving recreational access to water for residents and visitors.

**Reports to:** **HVA Advancement Director** and on occasion works closely with the Executive Director, Watershed Conservation Director, Land Protection Director, and field staff.

**Status:** Full-time (40 hours/week, plus some evenings and weekends), salaried, exempt.

**Compensation and benefits:** The starting annual salary range for this full-time position is \$60,000 to \$65,000. Benefits include health insurance, 403b retirement plan and HVA match, life and short-term disability insurance, paid holidays and time off, some remote work flexibility with the expectation of reporting to the Cornwall Bridge office 1-2 days per week on average.

**Core skills and competencies:** The requirements listed below are representative of the knowledge, skills, and/or abilities required:

- Evidence of superior communications skills (verbal, written and visual); presentation/public speaking and writing/editing skills, with a strong sense of narrative and storytelling; verbalizing in wide-ranging contexts—basic, unambiguous information-sharing; social media; persuasive or inspirational writing—and being able to communicate effectively with different “audiences.”
- Proficiency in Canva or other design software, Constant Contact, Office 365 and Meta management.
- Strong interpersonal skills to foster effective working relationships at all levels, inside and outside of the organization, and demonstrated ability to build rapport with collaborators, donors and members of the press.
- Strong ability to work independently, adhere to timelines, and adapt to changing goals and/or performance metrics.
- Ability to work evenings and weekends as needed for networking, tabling and events.
- Adept at developing audio visual and other digital files to produce program content (slides of auction items, videos of HVA work, for example) and sharing with appropriate vendors and partners at events, etc.
- Ability to design visual elements and perform basic design work such as lay-out, communication templates, membership materials, etc.
- Strategic-minded and self-starting; nimble ability to capitalize on communication needs and opportunities on short notice; detail-oriented; and a mindset for devising communications that drive to specific organizational goals.
- Pro-active with a demonstrated track record of achieving measurable results and meeting quantifiable objectives.
- Demonstrated initiative and ability to work effectively under frequent deadlines, respond quickly to unexpected challenges and shifting priorities, and follow through on time-sensitive tasks with minimal supervision, both autonomously and with a team.
- A valid driver’s license and access to a personal vehicle, with the ability to travel throughout the Housatonic Valley and beyond for events and meetings.

**Education and/or experience:** A bachelor’s degree preferred; skills relevant to the responsibilities above, including successful track-record of executing strategic communications; technically skilled in website management and adaptability for software applications as needed to perform the job; and an understanding/appreciation of environmental issues and non-profit organizations.

**Duties:** To perform this job successfully, an individual must be able to perform each essential duty satisfactorily, including but not limited to:

1. Planning and implementing events, such as the annual Auction for the Environment, recreational outings, summer celebrations, *Dining for a Cause*, and small information and education gatherings for members and for the public to promote HVA and our partners, and manage event systems such as QGIV for event management and revenue processing.

2. Collaborating with other staff to conceive activities (events, meetings, etc.), taking responsibility for creating needed communications such as public remarks or presentations, audio/visuals, hand-outs, and other materials as needed.
3. Keeping event planning documents updated and maintained, and available for comparison with future and past events (year over year results, for example).
4. Maintaining and building a digital presence engaging donors and mission supporters on multiple platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Twitter, TikTok, and eblasts and web communications.
5. Gathering content from other staff and establishing and managing a robust, up-to-date and dynamic online presence. This includes responsibility for managing the organization's website, ensuring a strong presence on social networking and third-party sites as relevant, creating e-blasts, blogs and other distribution channels as appropriate, capitalizing on relevant stories, video and photos, and serving as the organization's resource on communication and information technology including various applications such as Constant Contact.
6. Executing against specific audience or program goals to achieve data collection and improved donor engagement. Examples include weekly digital activity, event support, press outreach, solicitation or informational mailings and eblasts designed for recipient engagement and donor growth.
7. Building and maintaining a marketing toolkit/storybook of HVA's on-going achievements, projects and history to be utilized in donor outreach including member renewal and new member and funder solicitations, reports to funders, grant support, public marketing materials, and press.
8. Developing and maintaining a "library" of communication materials and other marketing tools and supplies. This includes visuals (photography, design work including logos), basic reference materials, etc.
9. Safeguarding overall visual identity by establishing and monitoring consistent design elements, serving the guardian of visual branding and consistent design elements.
10. Developing and implementing a regular press communications plan that is focused for each of the watershed's 5 regions, including releases, notices, direct outreach, etc.
11. Researching and building a resource on new funder prospects to support events, etc.
12. Developing mail merges (with the team) for membership appeals and communications.
13. Coordinating internal and external scheduling of outreach and attendance tracking for Board meetings including the Annual Meeting and Party.
14. Coordinating regular HVA Board Advancement Committee meetings.

**To Apply:** Please send cover letter describing interest and qualifications, resume, and contact information for 3 references to **Gina Scherbner, Advancement Director**, at [gscherbner@hvatoday.org](mailto:gscherbner@hvatoday.org). Applications will be reviewed and interviews scheduled on a rolling basis; position open until filled.

**HVA is an equal opportunity employer.** HVA provides equal employment opportunities to all eligible persons and administers personnel policies and practices in accordance with all applicable state and federal laws. We do not discriminate or abide discrimination on the basis of race, color, religious creed, age, marital status, national origin, ancestry, gender, gender identity or expression, political belief or affiliation, veteran status, sexual orientation, legal history, genetic information, mental disability or physical disability. Our commitment to equal opportunity is a guiding principle in all of our employment practices and policies. HVA is

committed to being fully representative of the watershed's people and diverse communities in all our work and across our organization. We strive to make our actions equitable and inclusive by enabling participation and leadership by all, actively listening to and leading with our BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) community partners, and increasing our understanding of and responsiveness to environmental inequity. Please visit or find us on social media. [www.hvatoday.org](http://www.hvatoday.org) or find us on social media.

**Please note:** This position description has excluded duties and responsibilities incidental to the performance of the above listed duties and responsibilities, for example the timely filing of timesheets and other paperwork; responsiveness to other overall organizational needs; maintaining positive and respectful relationships with staff and board; etc. All duties and responsibilities are essential job functions and requirements. To perform this job successfully, the incumbent(s) will possess the skills, aptitudes, and abilities to perform each duty proficiently. The requirements listed in this document are the minimum levels of knowledge, skills, or abilities. This job description in no way states or implies that these are the only duties to be performed by the employee(s) incumbent in this position. HVA reserves the right to modify, change, or add to the position's job duties and responsibilities as business needs may require. This document does not create an employment contract, implied or otherwise, other than an at-will relationship.