



## Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

### **Assistant Vice President for Strategic Communications**

*Princeton, NJ*

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF), the largest philanthropy in America dedicated solely to health, seeks a forward-thinking professional to serve as its new Assistant Vice President for Strategic Communications (AVP). A new position, the AVP will provide critical communications leadership and alignment as the Foundation broadens and refines its communications efforts in pursuit of a Culture of Health.

As the Foundation enters its 50<sup>th</sup> year, staff and leadership are redoubling their efforts to build a Culture of Health and are positioning RWJF's Communications Department for the next 25 years. The new AVP will be a vital partner in building upon the Foundation's past communications successes, working to drive forward-leaning strategies that look high and far and swing big. Through these efforts, the AVP will help the Foundation realize and increase the impact of its distinct voice for the health of everyone in America.

Reporting to the Vice President for Communications, [Allyn Brooks-LaSure](#), and working collaboratively with RWJF senior leadership and others across the communications team, the AVP will help lead efforts to define, develop, refine, and deploy a coherent and cohesive communications strategy that maximizes the Departments' efficacy and impact across internal and external audiences. An essential partner in this work will be the [Associate Vice President of Communications](#), who oversees Communications Operations and Foundation Brand management. Together, the Associate and Assistant Vice Presidents will meld their unique assets around institutional knowledge, communications strategy, and inspired leadership.

The AVP will serve as a key thought partner to the VP for Communications and Department Directors in seeing the 36,000 ft communications view, braiding together the high-level goals of RWJF thematic and functional communications planning and in marshalling the Foundation's resources, influence, and evidence-base in driving a proactive agenda to engage and support the communities RWJF aims to serve. The AVP will lead a dynamic team that includes Digital Director, Senior Director of Program Communications, Executive Communications Director, Director of Messaging and Content, and Media Relations Director.

The ideal candidate will bring a demonstrated track record of spurring strategic communications impact in a way that shifts mindsets, supports communities, and fosters a national culture that supports health equity, opportunities for all to thrive, and a generational Culture of Health. As such, the new AVP will need to be a strategic, collaborative professional and bring an understanding of communications at the enterprise level of complex organizations, including the myriad platforms and avenues through which communications can have the greatest impact (media relations, digital, brand strategy, social media, etc.). Compelling candidates for this position must be highly motivated, capable of self-directed work, be holistic in their thinking as well as detail-oriented and able to work collaboratively across teams and departments. Incumbents must have a keen sense of responsibility and enjoy working with multiple demands, shifting priorities and constant change.

The successful candidate will be a consultative thought partner and strong relationship builder. Excellent organizational and interpersonal skills are necessary. Strong verbal and written communications skills are absolute musts. Experience leading multi-portfolio teams and designing and leading communications campaigns or initiatives to support policy is highly preferred. An undergraduate education is required, as is experience



successfully working in complex environments. with significant post-graduation experience will be considered. Most importantly, a personal and professional commitment to anti-racism, equity and inclusiveness is vital to advancing the Guiding Principles of RWJF, including the understanding of how one's own identity and lived experiences inform their work.

## **THE ASSISTANT VICE PRESIDENT FOR STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS**

Reporting to the Vice President for Communications, the Assistant Vice President for Strategic Communications will help to oversee a well-functioning Communications Department of 40-plus staff members – along with supporting the oversight of RWJF's communications consultants who assist grantees and staff in developing and executing communications strategies. In this cross-functional and collaborative environment, the AVP will serve as crucial connective tissue, allowing RWJF Communications to realize maximum impact.

### **CORE RESPONSIBILITIES of the Assistant Vice President for Strategic Communications**

- Supports the development, execution, and impact assessment of the Foundation-wide strategic communications plan.
- Manages Digital Director, Director of Program Communications, Executive Communications Director, Media Relations Director, and Director of Messaging and Content Coordination – while providing matrixed management to other department directors, as required.
- In partnership with the VP for Communications, support the development, implementation, and maintenance of a high-impact strategic communications plan that builds brand equity and positions the Foundation and its grantees as trusted nonpartisan voices for health and health equity among key audiences.
- Provides inspired and motivating leadership that strengthens the department's ability to devise and implement strategies that employ cutting-edge technology, innovative thinking, and communications best practices.
- Leads the alignment of distinct communications streams, supporting efforts to ensure that the Foundation speaks with one consistent, clear, and courageous voice.
- Serves as core member of senior communications staff that drives overall Foundation communication strategy and brand development.
- Oversees the evaluation of effectiveness and influence of Foundation's communications activities and implements ongoing quality improvement measures.
- Serves as communications representative on various cross-Foundational working groups and committees, and participates in senior staff and other leadership meetings that inform strategy and shape the future direction of the Foundation's programmatic work.
- Develops and manages relationships with key RWJF partners and organizations.



## QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCES

### *Base*

- Commitment to the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's Guiding Principles.
- 12 to 15 years of communications experience, including demonstrated history of crafting and managing communications strategies in issue or policy campaigns.
- A history of developing and assessing communications metrics, measurements, and analytics to guide high-level strategy – shaping the trajectory of efforts in media relations, digital, executive communications, and message development.
- Extended track record of results-driven, people-centered leadership that effectively models courage, humility, and honesty to peers, direct reports, and supervisors alike.
- A gifted manager who has coached and developed excellence in other communications leaders and managers.
- Experience serving as an effective and persuasive internal change agent – with a history of effectively introducing new communications strategies, tools, or processes to an organization.
- Demonstrated unswerving and thoughtful commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion in previous leadership positions.
- Impeccable written and verbal communication skills, with the ability to synthesize material quickly, identify strategic communications opportunities, and to see and articulate the big picture.
- Exceptional project and people management skills, including the demonstrated ability to think and act independently and manage multiple priorities and projects in a decentralized, matrixed organization.
- Excellent interpersonal skills that support the collegial, thoughtful, and professional working environment within the department.

### *Aspirational*

- Experience providing key leadership during periods of significant organizational change.
- Experience in communicating health equity messages.
- Experience in philanthropic communications.
- Demonstrated track record of exceptional operational effectiveness – with innate instincts for how to get things done within bureaucratic structures.
- Expertise in health/public health; an understanding of structural systemic barriers around race and class regarding health and public health is important.

Salary is highly competitive and commensurate with experience. The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation offers comprehensive medical (health, dental, vision) and retirement benefits. While the AVP may be primarily based at one of the Foundation's three offices – headquarters in Princeton, N.J. (preferred), New York City, or Washington, D.C. – this is not a remote position. The AVP will be required to visit the Princeton office as defined by the Foundation's return-to-work policies still to be determined.

## **Nominations & Instructions to Apply**

Talent Citizen, a national executive search and talent consulting firm focused on the pursuit of positive social impact with equity at its center, is partnering with the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation on this search. President Tracy Welsh, Senior Associate Connor Daley, and Senior Associate Eva Kotilinek are leading this engagement. Additional questions and nominations of candidates should be directed to Connor ([cdaley@talentcitizen.com](mailto:cdaley@talentcitizen.com)).



Interested parties should please send an updated resume, cover letter, and how you learned of the position to [RWJF-AVPSC@talentcitizen.com](mailto:RWJF-AVPSC@talentcitizen.com).

### **The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation**

Since 1972, RWJF has been providing funding, assistance, and research for projects and programs to help people, their families, and their communities be as healthy as possible. RWJF is committed to working alongside others to build a Culture of Health that provides everyone in America a fair and just opportunity for health and well-being. This requires removing obstacles to health, such as poverty, powerlessness, and discrimination, and their harmful consequences. The Foundation takes seriously its responsibilities, and it pledges to work in ways that reflect its [Guiding Principles](#). These are rooted in equity and influence everything at RWJF. Equity, diversity, inclusion, and collaboration allow the Foundation's staff's wide range of experiences, passions, and perspectives to enrich their work and strengthen their ability to address our nation's most pressing health issues.

People experience the dynamics of health inequities and racism in the places in which they live, learn, work, and play and through the ways in which they consume and share information. RWJF pioneered the approach of philanthropic communications as a programmatic area itself, affirming that the ways in which communities learn about and understand their health is as critical to more equitable systems change as grantmaking, research, and convening. Today, the Foundation's Communications department continues that innovation across brand strategy, print, digital, executive, and media communications in addition to its own grantmaking.