About the Alliance for Higher Education
The Alliance for Higher Education in Prison (the Alliance) is dedicated to expanding quality higher education in prison, empowering students in prison and after release, and shaping public discussion about education and incarceration. The Alliance and its stakeholders believe that all people, regardless of their location or circumstance, should have access to quality higher education. Higher education in prison begins to challenge the lack of resources, support and connection between people that will challenge systems of injustice and that all humans need to thrive.

The Alliance is committed to embedding equity and inclusion in our organization. As a new organization, we are striving to do this in a variety of ways, including but not limited to: Increasing educational access for all students, including people in prison who have traditionally been excluded from such opportunities; challenging the existing equity gaps in educational access based on race/ethnicity and/or class status; centering our work around leadership development of people who have been impacted by the criminal-justice system.

About the Communication Director position
The Communication Director is responsible for the implementation of strategic communication for the Alliance both internally and externally. The Communication Director develops and oversees implementation of the Alliance’s Strategic Communication Plan, which involves strategies and tactics that aim to help the Alliance meet is communication and organizational goals. These strategies reach all stakeholders, including: practitioners, students, program directors, teachers, media and others. The Communication Director is also responsible for overseeing brand management, content development, media relations and social media.

About You
We’re looking for someone with deep enthusiasm for and commitment to our mission to expand quality higher education in prison, empower students in prison and after release, and shape public discussion about education and incarceration. Applicants should have experience in communications, public affairs or community relations and be able to effectively create and deliver compelling messages/content that drives interest in and support for our work. Applicants should have strong leadership skills, be a good mentor, and be committed to fostering a creative, thoughtful and collaborative team.

The Alliance strongly encourages applications from people who have been impacted by the criminal-justice system.

Primary Roles and Responsibilities

Management Practices

- Supervise and manage an existing communication team, including staff and volunteers and engaging in leading hiring efforts when necessary.
- Develop and lead implementation of the Alliance’s Strategic Communication Plan.
- Assess the effectiveness of the Alliance’s communication efforts and put in place measures that will create awareness and test the effectiveness of communication strategies and tactics.
● Identify and promote newsworthy stories and topics of interest, establishing the Alliance and its members/stakeholders/partners as thought leaders.
● Ensure the Alliance’s brand is promoted in a proper and consistent manner.
● Support, maintain and develop key relationships with external groups, partner organizations, individual influencers, local communities and other stakeholders.

Internal and External Communication
● Build and cultivate strategic relationships with key partners, including other organizations promoting higher education in prison, funders, elected officials and other influential connectors.
● Provide (or supervise staff that provide) written text and visuals as requested for reports and publications, webinars, campaigns and other projects of the Alliance.
● Proofread and edit text as needed for publications (print and digital) of the Alliance.
● Support staff in the creation, implementation and dissemination of a monthly newsletter.
● Implement a Speakers Bureau that position the Alliance staff and stakeholders as experts in the field of higher education in prison and expand the credibility of the Alliance.
● Direct the development of and actively maintain multiple databases of contact information for all targeted constituencies.
● Identify external events and campaigns such as Mass Incarceration Awareness Week in which to establish the Alliance as a partner.

Public Relations
● Develop and lead implementation of the Alliance’s media strategy, including writing and distributing press releases, cultivating relationships with targeted members of the media and influencers, proactively disseminating information about the Alliance and its work to help shape the narrative about the field of higher education in prison, hosting Twitter chats, etc.
● Maintain ongoing relationships with public relations counterparts at higher education in prison programs, foundations and other partner organizations throughout the country, and support joint efforts to promote one another’s work.

Required Qualifications
● A relevant degree in communication, journalism, marketing, public relations, multimedia, humanities or other related field.
● Five to seven years of experience in communication, public affairs or community relations.
● Proven experience in building, coaching and mentoring a team of communication specialists and in leading the implementation of a Strategic Communication Plan.
● Outstanding written and verbal communication skills, including demonstrated ability to write/edit compelling materials to achieve a goal, and to effectively and persuasively convey and build support for an idea or pitch.
● Demonstrated ability to develop working relationships with media and a demonstrated understanding of the national media landscape.
● Demonstrated ability to detect public relations issues as they emerge and address them directly and in a timely manner.
● Demonstrated skill in approaching sensitive and complex issues with respect, discretion and confidentiality.
● Strong interpersonal skills with an ability to motivate and build relationships with program and development staff, volunteers, community groups and other stakeholders.
● Outstanding analytical skills and must be highly familiar with new and emerging technologies that support content/message delivery and measurement.
● Ability to think and communicate in ways that challenge the status-quo and work to implement positive change.
Proficiency in MS Word, PowerPoint, Excel

Preferred Qualifications
- Previous experience with higher education sector, criminal justice reform sector and/or the nonprofit sector.
- Previous experience working with criminal justice or education reports/media and established relationships with relevant media.
- Some experience with a graphic design program (e.g., InDesign or Illustrator), a digital photo editing program (e.g., Photoshop or Lightroom) and an audio/visual production program (e.g., Premiere or Final Cut).
- Demonstrated diversity, equity and inclusion fluency, commitment and successful leadership
- Basic level proficiency in Spanish

This is a full-time, permanent position based out of our Denver office. The Communication Director reports to the Alliance’s Director.

Application and Deadlines:
Review of applications will begin on January 13, 2020. Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis, until the position is filled.

To apply for this position, please submit the following:

1. Cover letter;
2. Resume;
3. Contact information (name, email and phone number) for three references;
4. One professional writing sample (e.g., press release, blog/web posting, news article).

Attach all materials in a single PDF document and submit to: hiring@higheredinprison.org with “Communication Director application” in the subject line.

Compensation:
The Alliance for Higher Education in Prison provides a competitive salary and benefits package, commensurate with our size and budget. Starting salary range for the Director of Communication is $70,000-$80,000 annually, depending on skills and experience. Relocation support will be offered to candidates outside of the Denver Metro area. Annual Benefits include: health, dental, vision, life and long-term disability insurance, vacation and holiday pay and staff wellness and professional development programs. All employees (full-time, part-time and on-call) may also participate in a 403b retirement plan (commencing on the first day of employment) with an employer contribution and match after two years of 1,000 hours worked each year.

The Alliance strongly encourages applications from people who have been impacted by the criminal-justice system.

Statement of Non-Discrimination:
The Alliance for Higher Education in Prison and its fiscal sponsor, Community Partners, is an equal opportunity employer committed to a diverse and inclusive workforce. In keeping with our beliefs and goals, no employee or applicant will face discrimination or harassment based on: race, color, ancestry, national origin, religion, age, gender, marital/domestic partner status, sexual orientation, gender identity or presentation, disability status, veteran status or former incarceration status. The Alliance is fiscally
sponsored by Community Partners (located in California), which provides a full range of human resources, legal/contracts and financial services, as well as advising, training, and networking opportunities. The Alliance and Community Partners will consider for employment qualified applicants with criminal histories in a manner consistent with the requirements of the Los Angeles Fair Chance Initiative for Hiring, a "ban the box" law that significantly restricts employers when conducting a criminal background check or taking adverse employment action merely because of an applicant's criminal history.

More information about the Alliance for Higher Education in Prison can be found on our website: www.higheredinprison.org. Questions can be directed to hiring@higheredinprison.org.