



January 2019

Start date: March 1, 2019

Communications and Impact Specialist

Full time (40 hours per week)

About Life Lab

Life Lab is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization located on the farm of the Center for Agroecology & Sustainable Food Systems at the University of California, Santa Cruz. Life Lab cultivates children's love of learning, healthy food, and nature through garden-based programs.

Founded in 1979, Life Lab is a pioneer and national leader in garden-based learning, providing children's programs, training and curriculum to inspire children locally and nationally. We serve more than 5,000 local children each year through in-school and after-school programs, field trips, and day camps at partner schools across Santa Cruz County and in our Garden Classroom in Santa Cruz and our Blooming Classroom in Watsonville. Through professional development workshops here and around the U.S. and curriculum sales and a dynamic knowledge network, Life Lab also has national impact, positively affecting the lives of more than 500,000 children across the U.S. annually.

Life Lab is committed to building a culturally diverse team and is an anti-discrimination, pro-equity organization. Because we are committed to building a staff that reflects the diversity of the communities and students we serve and to increasing the diversity of our workplace, people of color and from diverse backgrounds are strongly encouraged to apply to join our team.

About the Position

The Communications and Impact Specialist position reports to the Executive Director. The work schedule is flexible and will include occasional weekend work for events. The position may have the opportunity to hire and supervise a student worker for additional support.

The Life Lab office is located in a trailer on the UC Santa Cruz farm, about a 5-minute walk on a dirt path from the nearest parking lot. Closer parking is available for anyone with a disabled parking placard, and Life Lab makes reasonable accommodation for applicants and employees with known physical or mental disabilities. In keeping with the working farm environment, dress is casual. The office and surrounding Garden Classroom and farm are nonsmoking areas.

Responsibilities

Life Lab's Communications and Impact Specialist provides positive, energetic, hands-on support for all areas of the organization, including local and national programs, fundraising, and administration. The Communications and Impact Specialist focuses on the following work areas:

Communications (65%)

- Work closely with the Management Team to develop external communications strategies and then implement those strategies, usually directly and sometimes with assistance from the Senior Program Associate, student staff, interns, and occasionally with contractors;
- Serve as staff lead and in-house expert for all matters related to our customer relationship management system (currently NeonCRM), coordinating and supporting all staff users of the system to ensure its utility for our team, and working with Neon support staff and systems to address new needs and issues as they arise;
- Develop and maintain internal information sharing systems, to help all staff and board keep abreast of progress and impacts of our work;
- Manage email communications, including marketing of workshops, curriculum and other program services, donor campaigns, event registration and marketing, and Moment of the Month updates;
- Support communications among local and national professional learning communities that Life Lab facilitates, using Google Groups, Hangouts, webinar systems, and other tools;
- Maintain Life Lab website content using WordPress tools (design needs will usually be contracted out);
- Maintain and expand Life Lab's social media presence (FaceBook, YouTube, Instagram, Twitter);
- Design and produce fliers, brochures, info cards, and other print materials as needed;
- Lead development and production of our overall Annual Report;
- Design presentation materials (slide shows, infographics, posters) for internal and external audiences;
- Maintain consistent look and feel and branding across all of our communications;
- Develop and maintain media relationships, and work with staff and board on sharing timely information and stories with local media outlets;
- Coordinate joint media outreach with partners' communications staff (funders, program partners, school districts, etc);
- Manage and support our Google apps account.

Impact (25%)

- Serve as central coordinator for all program and organizational assessment processes and data;
- Work with staff and outside partners to ensure consistency and strategic value of data;
- Analyze assessment data using Excel, built-in tools of our data systems, mapping programs, and other resources as needed;
- Synthesize assessment data for various audiences, internal and external, in coordination with other staff;
- Develop organizational metrics reports to support strategic plan development and updates.

Other (10%)

- Staff meetings, retreats, and occasional board meetings;
- Team support for occasional large group projects;
- Professional development;
- Basic admin for the position (timekeeping, receipts, etc).

Core Values

Life Lab values respectful communication, collaboration, connection with people and nature, and open, inquiring minds. We value all people and recognize that having a diversity of backgrounds and perspectives on our team improves our decision-making and impacts. The directors undertake management functions as partners with the rest of the staff, in support of their work toward Life Lab's mission. A management team of program directors and the executive and associate directors cooperatively assesses strategic choices and organizational direction with the support and partnership of the board of directors. We value individual initiative and cultivate a culture in which it can thrive.

Qualifications

This position requires a friendly disposition, flexibility, the ability to learn new systems and enjoyment of that process, and the ability to prioritize and manage varied projects and tasks simultaneously. Excellent organizational skills, verbal and written communication skills, and attention to detail are vital. The Communications and Impact Specialist has significant communications and data analysis experience, excellent interpersonal skills, strong knowledge of common office equipment and procedures, and a passion for providing collaborative support as part of a team. This person has the ability to take direction from and collaborate with several people and prioritize tasks, as well as to supervise entry level staff for support and special projects.

Key qualities of the Communications and Impact Specialist are:

- a strong sense of and experience with the value of data and ideas and how to share them well in different presentation settings, from short and simple to longer and more detailed;
- strong experience creating and managing organizational information systems;
- understanding, appreciation and experience with donor-centered communications in nonprofits;
- excellent personal organization, with systems for maintaining focus and priorities;
- excellent skills for communicating with diverse audiences, colleagues and partners in writing, by phone and in person;
- cross-cultural experience and competency;
- written Spanish language competency;
- strong understanding, skills and experience with complex CRM systems;
- very strong Macintosh-based computing skills, including Mac OS management, word processing, spreadsheet, presentation, and online search and communication tools – specifically with Microsoft Word, Excel, Powerpoint, and Google Apps;
- excellent eye for design and layout and strong skills with Adobe Creative Suite programs (especially Photoshop, Acrobat, InDesign, and Illustrator) and other design tools, such as Canva;

- skills and experience with managing website content using WordPress or a similar tool;
- skills and experience with managing social media content for organizations;
- skills and confidence in supervising volunteers and/or student workers;
- individual initiative within a collaborative group culture;
- flexibility and a sense of humor;
- a passion for children's education and development, nature, and garden-based learning.

The ideal Communications and Impact Specialist also has some or all of the following:

- experience with NeonCRM;
- experience with Mac computer systems and troubleshooting, and working with IT consultants when needed;
- experience with Synology and/or similar NAS systems;
- experience in the field of education.

Compensation

Salary: \$52,000 to \$56,000 annual full time (40 hours per week), depending on qualifications.

Generous paid vacation, sick time, and holidays.

Excellent health, dental and vision insurance as part of Life Lab's group plans, including family coverage. (Life Lab contributes up to \$1,300 monthly to these combined premiums).

403(b) retirement plan available for employee contributions (no employer contribution).

Process

Please send a cover letter and resumé to Amy Schwerdtfeger at admin@lifelab.org. Please include how you heard about the position in your cover letter to help us improve our recruiting. We will review materials and schedule interviews on a rolling basis. A background check will be conducted with finalists for this position. We would like the new Communications and Impact Specialist to begin work March 1, 2019 or as soon as possible.

Life Lab is committed to a policy of non-discrimination as an Equal Opportunity Employer. Employment candidates and employees will be considered and managed without regard to race, color, gender, national origin, age, religion, creed, disability, veteran's status, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or any other basis in accordance with applicable law.

Applicants only. Recruiters, please do not contact this job poster.