

Tūranga Mahi / Position Description: Manager – Communications and Engagement

Nāu te rourou, nāku te rourou ka ora ai te iwi

With your basket of knowledge, and my basket of knowledge, all will be well

Rotorua Lakes Council is one of the largest employers in Rotorua, building a positive future for our district with approximately 70,000 residents, and visitors numbering in the millions. We are determined to be among the best councils in New Zealand and are committed to continually improve the service provided to our customers, both external and internal.

Our customers remain at the heart of everything we do, and their satisfaction is our highest priority. We are committed to building meaningful relationships, listening carefully to feedback, and responding promptly to concerns. By continuously improving our services and empowering our teams to excel, we strive to deliver outstanding customer experiences at every touchpoint.

Our people are central to achieving Council's Priorities and providing high quality community services that offer best value for money. And we are committed to building a high performing culture based on our **core values** of being *innovative, helpful, respectful, engaging and inspiring*. In addition to our values, there are **core competencies** required of all Council staff, being:

- **Performance Orientation:** A high performer consistently delivering performance outcomes
- **Solutions Focused:** Committed to customer-centred continuous improvement
- **Teamwork:** Contributes effectively within a team providing leadership where appropriate
- **Relationships:** Well-developed interpersonal, and relationship engagement and management skills
- **Collaboration:** Works collaboratively across teams and functions within a matrix organisation
- **Accountability:** Willingly takes accountability and engage in problem solving
- **Te Ao Maori:** Proficiency in te reo Māori me ōna tikanga appropriate to their role¹.

Rotorua is in the heart of the Te Arawa region. 40% of the population are Māori. Being a bicultural city provides a foundation for us to recognise and celebrate our increasing diversity which enriches us as individuals and as a multi-cultural community.

Our top priority is to ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of our people at work. We want you to go home healthy and safe each day. Safety is everyone's job – all of our staff have a shared responsibility to manage our work environments to prevent harm, and to actively engage with health and safety initiatives and procedures. Managers are responsible for the health, safety and wellbeing of the areas and people under their leadership.

Rotorua Lakes Council has statutory responsibility for Civil Defence and Emergency Management (CDEM) within the District. This responsibility extends to all staff, who may be called upon to undertake CDEM roles in addition to their position specific responsibilities.

We are one team. To be successful, it is important that all staff are aligned to and actively support the organisation's direction, working collaboratively, and actively participating in activities and initiatives to advance the organisation e.g. activities to build bicultural capability, improve health and safety, or promote diversity.

¹ This is informed by our Bicultural Competency Framework, and staff are actively supported in gaining competency.

The following outlines the requirements of your specific position. In addition to these, you are also expected to be proactive in knowing and following Council policies and procedures.

TE ĀHUA O TE MAHI - POSITION SPECIFICATION	
MAHI - POSITION:	Manager – Communications and Engagement
RANGATIRA - REPORTS TO:	Group Manager - Organisational Performance & Innovation
KĀHUI - GROUP:	Organisational Performance & Innovation
TAUNGA MAHI - LOCATION:	Civic Centre
PŪTAKE - POSITION PURPOSE:	The purpose of a Manager of Communications & Engagement is to effectively communicate an organisation's message and build relationships with both internal and external stakeholders. This involves developing and executing communication strategies, strengthening engagement with communities, managing various communication channels, and ensuring consistency in messaging, all while fostering strong relationships with key audiences.
NGĀ WHAKARITENGA - DELEGATIONS	Direct reports: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communications & Engagement Leads
HONONGA WAIWAI – KEY RELATIONSHIPS: Rāroto - Internal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mayor and Elected Members • Te Tatau o te Arawa • CE's Group • Manahautū Te Arawa Partnership • Destination Development • Organisational Performance & Innovation • Infrastructure & Assets • Chief Financial Officer • People & Culture • Community Experience
HONONGA WAIWAI – KEY RELATIONSHIPS: Rāwaho - External	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council stakeholders • Contracted service providers • Technical professionals in your field • Consultants and Contractors • Auditors • Mana Whenua • Neighbouring local authorities • Mayor and Elected Counsellors • Local Government New Zealand (LGNZ) • Media and professional groups • Regional Council • Chamber of Commerce • Rotorua Community & Partnership • Police • Māori Wardens • Neighbourhood support

<p>NGĀ MAHI MATUA - KEY ACCOUNTABILITIES:</p>	<p>Community Engagement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and implement comprehensive community engagement strategies and plans to guide standards and best practices across Council, ensuring a strategic, organisation wide approach to high quality engagement. • Lead the community engagement function, promoting a culture of meaningful and effective engagement throughout the organisation. • Implement the IAP2 framework across all Council projects and activities to ensure consistency and excellence in engagement practices. • Lead the 'Participate' platform, ensuring that all operational and governance activities are informed by robust community input. • Develop tailored engagement plans for each corporate work programme, including the Long-Term Plan (LTP), Annual Plan (AP), Water Services, and major projects. • Advise Council teams on recommended engagement approaches for issues and initiatives of interest or significance to the community. <p>Relationship Management & Advocacy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop, build, and manage effective and mutually beneficial relationships with Mana Whenua and all stakeholders, including regional and national partners, private and public sector organisations, special interest groups, and town/community representatives. • Lead, coordinate, and facilitate meetings and engagement with key stakeholders and special interest groups as required, ensuring open communication and collaborative outcomes. • Lead and direct advocacy efforts at both the regional and national levels to advance Council's interests and priorities. • Proactively manage relationships with the private and public sectors to secure and maintain funding streams for Council-wide projects and initiatives. <p>Strategy and Planning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead the development/co-development and implementation of a client-focused Communications & Engagement strategy that directly supports council's organisational goals and stakeholder needs. • Develop structured data-driven processes for prioritising and allocating resources across service-facing teams based on strategic value and organisational impact. • Drive the transition from reactive responses to proactive, anticipatory service delivery through effective planning, staff resource allocation and use of pre-planned and developed resources. • Actively manage group performance through a robust KPI framework with client satisfaction, operational efficiency, and strategic alignment metrics at its core. <p>Records and Reporting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure accuracy of information/records in systems adopted by the department/organisation. • Produce accurate reports as required for elected members, managers and/or the executive team. • Lead the formation of both long- and short-term budgets and financial plans. Take ownership of reviewing monthly financial results for relevant
--	---

cost centres, and work with the finance team to understand and explain variances.

Communications

- Foster a client-centric service culture across the Communications & Engagement Group, emphasising collaboration, continuous improvement.
- Drive cross-functional collaboration and ensure cohesive operations across all service-facing teams (Citizens & External, Elected Members, Internal Units, Technical Support, Engagement).
- Ensure consistency and quality in stakeholder experiences through standardised systems, transparent workflows, and clear service expectations.
- Implement efficient resource management practices, including strategic use of contracted specialists for technical deliverables.
- Lead RLC's approach to crisis communications and reputation management, ensuring rapid mobilisation of planned resources and consistent messaging.
- Develop and implement educational communications that clearly explain council initiatives, policies, and services, aiming to increase community understanding and engagement with council activities.
- Report quarterly to GM on performance metrics, strategic initiatives, and continuous improvement efforts.
- Advocate for and implement appropriate digital solutions to enhance work-flow management, stakeholder self-service, and service delivery.
- Ensure RLC commitment to Reorua and Te Reo Maori is visible in our Communications

Leadership

- Take ownership of your role in the wider Council leadership, providing strategic thought leadership and expertise across the organisation. Collaborate effectively with the executive and third-tier leadership teams to deliver collective success for Council and our communities.
- Demonstrate success in managing complex stakeholder relationships and building strategic partnerships, including with diverse community groups and Mana whenua, ensuring inclusive and effective engagement.
- Apply strong business acumen to align communications and engagement initiatives with organisational strategies, objectives, and resource constraints.
- Lead and embed organisational change, particularly in shifting from technical-specialist to client-servicing models. Influence and role model Council values, behaviours, and desired culture both vertically and horizontally across the organisation.
- Utilise data-informed decision making and implement performance measurement frameworks to drive accountability, transparency, and continuous improvement.
- Lead multidisciplinary teams in service-oriented and politically sensitive environments, fostering collaboration, innovation, and high performance.
- Drive continuous improvement by identifying, prioritising, and delivering value-adding outcomes for Council and the communities it serves.
- Lead by example on health and safety, demonstrating that the safety and wellness of staff and stakeholders is critically important in all Council activities.

	<p>Project Management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake projects and/or other initiatives that may be assigned by your Group Manager or the executive team. <p><i>NB: the key accountabilities listed above are not an exhaustive list. You may be expected to undertake additional delegated responsibilities in the course of your employment that are consistent with the purpose of your role.</i></p> <p>There will also be the annual delivery of agreed KPIs.</p>
TE ĀHUA O TE TANGATA - PERSON SPECIFICATION	
<p>NGĀ MAHI MATUA - FORMAL QUALIFICATION S: (Ngā matau ā-wheako rānei - Or experience recognised as equivalent)</p>	<p>Required</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A tertiary qualification (bachelor's degree or higher) in Bachelor of Communication Management, or Strategic Communication, Bachelor of Business, Bachelor of Management Studies, Bachelor of Public Relations or Bachelor of Commerce. Significant experience (8+ years) in communications, stakeholder engagement, or a related leadership role, with proven ability in managing complex community relationships and leading multidisciplinary teams. Demonstrated expertise in communications relations, and strategic communications planning. Proven ability to build trusted relationships with diverse communities and Mana Whenua, including the use of Te Reo. Knowledge of local government processes and protocols is highly valued, especially for roles within councils or public sector organisations. Excellent oral and written communication skills, including the ability to convey complex information to diverse audiences. Experience in organisational change and implementing performance measurement frameworks is also desirable.
<p>NGĀ PŪKENGA - POSITION SPECIFIC COMPETENCIES AND ATTRIBUTES</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategic mindset with the ability to translate organisational priorities into actionable service plans. Exceptional leadership skills with an emphasis on empowering teams and fostering high performance and accountability for stakeholder satisfaction at all levels. Proven ability to manage competing priorities and establish transparent triage systems Strong negotiation and decision-making skills, with ability to resolve resource conflicts, prioritisation, and alignment challenges. Ability to design/co-design and implement governance mechanisms that drive collective ownership and consistent service delivery. Change management expertise in a communication environment with a focus on improving operational efficiency and stakeholder satisfaction. Business analysis skills with the ability to identify ongoing process improvements and implement structural enhancements. Commitment to public service excellence and transparent, community-focused governance. <p>Customer Focus</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is dedicated to meeting the expectations and requirements of internal and external customers. Gets first-hand customer information and uses it for improvements in products and services.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acts with customers in mind. • Establishes and maintains effective relationships with customers and gains their trust and respect. <p>Managing workflows</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clearly assigns accountabilities for tasks and decisions. • Sets clear objectives and measures for subordinates. • Monitors process, progress, and results. • Designs feedback loops into all workflows. <p>Gets things done</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good at figuring out the processes necessary to get things done. • Knows how to organise people and activities. • Understands how to separate and combine tasks into efficient workflow. Knows what to measure and how to measure it. • Can see opportunities for synergy and integration where others can't. • Can simplify complex process. <p>Decision Skill</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Makes good decisions (without considering how much time it takes) based upon a mixture of analysis, wisdom, experience, and judgement. • Most of their solutions and suggestions turn out to be positive in outcome when judged over time. • Respected, and sought out by others for advice and solutions.
NGĀ UARATANGA - VALUES:	<p style="text-align: center;">Tatou Tatou – We Together Kotahi Tatou – One Community – One Team</p> <p>WHY WE DO IT..... We believe in empowering our people and providing them with the tools to create value and make a positive difference in their lives and the lives of others</p> <p>HOW WE DO IT..... We do this by working in partnership, making it simple and solutions focused</p> <p>WHAT WE DO..... We provide quality services for our community and people to prosper</p> <p>OUR CORE VALUES – PEOPLE FIRST</p> <p>RESPECTFUL: Integrity, Listening, Pride, Honesty, Empathy, Understanding, Considerate</p> <p>HELPFUL: Approachable, Supportive, Collaborate, Go the extra mile, Proactive, Friendly, Caring, Guiding</p> <p>ENGAGING: Communication, Connectivity, Partnership, Working Together, Inclusive, Supportive, Responsive</p> <p>INSPIRING: Make a difference, Motivated, Take people with you, Encourage, Have pride in your work, Be proactive, Energised</p>

	<p>INNOVATIVE: Find solutions, Progressive, Continuous improvement, Empowered</p>
--	--

	<p>BICULTURAL: Willingness to learn and understand the Māori worldview, consideration, leading by example, sharing experiences</p>
--	---