



Tūranga Mahi / Position Description:

Communications Partner

At Rotorua Lakes Council, we are guided by Tai Kawenga, which reflects both our purpose and the values that shape how we work together.

Tai means tide or current. Kawenga refers to the values we carry within us and the principles that carry us forward in our daily work. Together, Tai Kawenga provides the foundation for our culture, decision-making, and service to our community.

Our purpose speaks to why we exist and is expressed through three ideas that reflect our vision:

Customer Focused - Community Driven - People at the Heart

How we work together is guided by our **Purpose**, why we exist, our **Promise**, what we commit to delivering every day; our **Practices**, how we behave; and our **Principles**, the values we believe in and stand by:

Stronger Together - Lead with Integrity - Challenge and Innovate - Steward our Future

These principles set the expectations for how we work with colleagues, customers, iwi, stakeholders, and the wider community.

To be successful in this role, you will embrace the belief that:

"The organisation's success is my success. My job is only done when everyone's job is done."

Rotorua Lakes Council serves approximately 78,000 residents and millions of visitors each year. We are committed to continuously improving services for our community and customers.

Rotorua sits in the heart of the Te Arawa region, where approximately 40% of the population identify as Māori. Our bicultural foundation strengthens our understanding of Te Ao Māori and enriches our diverse community. We are committed to honouring our responsibilities to mana whenua and reflecting these relationships in how we work and serve our district.

Health, safety, and wellbeing are a top priority. Safety is everyone's responsibility, and we all play a role in creating environments where people can thrive and return home safely each day.

Rotorua Lakes Council has statutory responsibility for Civil Defence and Emergency Management (CDEM). As a result, all employees may be required to undertake CDEM duties in addition to their normal position responsibilities when responding to, or recovering from, an emergency event.

As one team, we are committed to supporting Council's strategic direction, working collaboratively, embracing innovation, and making decisions that contribute to a sustainable future for our district.

Through Tai Kawenga, we recognise that every role contributes to the outcomes we achieve for our community.



The position description below describes the specific requirements of this position. The description within this position description is not an exhaustive list of responsibilities or tasks and staff are expected to contribute to the organisation through other tasks and activities assigned by their manager. In addition, you are also expected to be proactive in knowing and following Council policies and procedures.

TE ĀHUA O TE MAHI - POSITION SPECIFICATION	
MAHI - POSITION:	Communications Partner
RANGATIRA - REPORTS TO:	Communications Manager
KĀHUI - GROUP:	Organisation Performance & Innovation
TAUNGA MAHI - LOCATION:	Civic Centre, Rotorua
PŪTAKE - POSITION PURPOSE:	The Communications Partner provides senior-level strategic communications advice and business partnering support to Council leaders, elected members and assigned business areas. The role is responsible for developing and implementing communications and engagement plans and initiatives that support organisational priorities, strengthen community understanding and participation, and protect and enhance Council's reputation. Working within a business partnering model, the Communications Partner builds trusted relationships across the organisation, proactively identifies communications risks and opportunities, and delivers effective communications outcomes across a diverse portfolio of projects, programmes and services.
NGĀ WHAKARITENGA - DELEGATIONS	Direct reports: • Number and nature of direct reports - Nil • Budget responsibility – Nil
HONONGA WAIWAI – KEY RELATIONSHIPS: Rāroto - Internal	• 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	• 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 • Te Arawa Entities • Rotorua Community & Partnership • Police • Māori Wardens • Neighbourhood support
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NGĀ MAHI MATUA - KEY ACCOUNTABILITIES:	Strategic Communications and Business Partnering • Provide senior-level strategic communications advice and support to Council leaders, elected members and business areas. • Build trusted partnering relationships with assigned business areas to understand and forecast priorities, identify communications risks and opportunities, and support organisational outcomes. • Lead the development and implementation of effective communications and engagement strategies, plans and activities for Council programmes, projects and initiatives. • Support the communication of Council plans, policies, strategies, consultations and community initiatives. • Provide strategic communications advice to support informed decision making and organisational priorities. • Act as the primary communications advisor for assigned portfolios, programmes, projects or business areas, ensuring communications and engagement activities align with organisational priorities. • Support major organisational programmes, projects and initiatives through the development and delivery of strategic communications and engagement plans. Stakeholder, Community and Media Engagement • Develop and maintain effective relationships with internal and external stakeholders, including elected members, mana whenua, community organisations, industry groups and partner agencies. • Support proactive and responsive engagement with stakeholders through appropriate communications channels and activities. • Prepare and coordinate communication materials across a variety of channels, ensuring consistent messaging and alignment with Council priorities. • Collaborate with Engagement Advisors and business units to support consultation, engagement and participation activities. • Support the Engagement Advisors to coordinate and facilitate workshops, public meetings, stakeholder briefings and engagement activities as required. • Support the Engagement Advisors with planning and delivery of consultation and engagement activities that encourage meaningful community participation and reflect organisational engagement principles and best practice. • Represent the Communications & Engagement team in project groups, workshops, meetings and engagement activities as required. Media, Reputation and Issues Management • Lead proactive communications activities that enhance and protect Council's reputation and public profile.
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- Develop key messages, media content, speaking points and communication materials to support organisational priorities.
- Coordinate media enquiries, public information requests and stakeholder communications as required.
- Monitor media coverage, public sentiment, emerging issues and reputational risks, providing advice on appropriate communications and mitigation responses.
- Monitor communications performance and utilise data, analytics and insights to evaluate effectiveness and identify opportunities for improvement.
- Support proactive and reactive media relations, including media enquiries, media releases, briefing materials, messaging and spokesperson support.
- Support issues and reputation management activities, including the identification and mitigation of reputational risk.

Emergency Management and Critical Communications

- Participate in emergency management, critical incident and crisis communications activities as required.
- Contribute to Civil Defence Emergency Management (CDEM) and Public Information Management (PIM) responsibilities when activated.
- Participate in an on-call roster and provide emergency/urgent communications support outside normal working hours where required.

Team Contribution

- Actively participate in and contribute to Communications & Engagement team activities, fostering collaboration, innovation and continuous improvement.
- Contribute professional expertise to organisational communications, engagement and campaign planning.
- Share knowledge and expertise across the team to support capability development and high performance.
- Build and maintain positive working relationships across Council and with external stakeholders.
- Maintain awareness of projects, trends and emerging issues that may impact Council, business areas or communities

Accessibility & Inclusion

- Ensure communications materials, content and activities produced, managed or commissioned as part of the role are accessible, inclusive and comply with Council accessibility requirements and applicable New Zealand Government accessibility standards.
- Consider accessibility and inclusion requirements when developing communications, consultation and engagement materials and activities.

	Health and Safety • Participate in the maintenance of a safe and healthy work environment for self and others. • Comply with and undertake responsibilities set out in the Council's Health and Safety Policy. • Support our statutory Civil Defence and Emergency Management (CDEM) obligations by maintaining readiness to undertake assigned emergency management roles, participating in required CDEM training and exercises, and carrying out response and recovery duties as directed during emergency events, in addition to normal position responsibilities. Portfolio Responsibilities Communications Partners operate within a business partnering model and may be assigned specific portfolios, projects or areas of specialist focus from time to time. Portfolio responsibilities may include, but are not limited to: • Internal Communications • Media and Public Relations • Mayoral Communications • Corporate Communications (Governance, Strategy & Compliance, Annual Plans, Long-Term Plans) • Major Projects and Infrastructure • Rotorua Museum Te Whare Taonga o Te Arawa • Manahautū Te Arawa Partnerships • Infrastructure & Assets (Transport, Local Water Done Well, 3 Waters, Environment, Strategic Planning and Growth) • Destination Development (Community Safety, Regulatory Building Services, Economic Development, Housing, Inner City, Parking) • Community Experience (Parks & Open Spaces, Libraries, Partnerships & Programmes, Thriving Communities) • People & Culture • Special Projects – Head Start/Local Government Reform • Emergency Management Communications Portfolio allocations may change based on organisational priorities, team capacity and business requirements. Any other duties as required that are consistent with the position held, other than in exceptional circumstances such as rehabilitation after injury or sickness.
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TE ĀHUA O TE TANGATA - PERSON SPECIFICATION



NGĀ MAHI MATUA - FORMAL QUALIFICATIONS: (Ngā matau ā-wheako rānei - Or experience recognised as equivalent)	Essential: • Tertiary qualification in communications, marketing, public relations, or a related field. • Minimum five years' experience providing strategic communications advice and managing complex communications programmes, projects or issues within a large or complex organisation • Data and analytical skills. • Experience of providing communications support at a strategic and tactical level. • Experience in producing communications and collateral for a variety of stakeholders across multiple channels with a strong understanding of digital. Desirable • Knowledge and/or experience in the local government environment. • IAP2 certification
NGĀ PŪKENGĀ - POSITION SPECIFIC COMPETENCIES AND ATTRIBUTES	• Proven ability to work as part of a creative, connected team. • Demonstrated innovative thinking and planning abilities. • Excellent interpersonal and communication skills, including the ability to build and maintain effective relationships with diverse and senior stakeholders within a large organisation. • Excellent written and oral communication skills with demonstrated ability to present complex information in a clear and accurate written and verbal format. • Excellent communication and relationship management skills and ability to work effectively as an influencer. • Ability to accurately convert complex information into engaging copy and communications material for different audiences. • Ability to work under pressure and meet deadlines. • Proven positive relationship development and management with key stakeholders. • Knowledge, understanding and experience with communities. • Passionate believer in the value of local government. • Demonstrated understanding of accessibility and inclusion principles, with the ability to apply these across communications, engagement and stakeholder-facing activities.