

Principal Communications and Engagement Advisor

Horopaki | Context

Kaunihera Taiao ki Waitaha | Canterbury Regional Council, also known as Environment Canterbury, is the Regional Council for the largest region in Aotearoa/New Zealand, covering an area of 44,500 square kilometres, with a population of approximately 700,000.

As a regional council, we are responsible for managing natural resources including air, soil, water and land. We work in partnership with mana whenua Ngāi Tahu to protect the health of our environment to ensure a sustainable and prosperous future for our region.

The region's evolving environmental and political context means we will continue to be agile and adaptive, as we respond to regulatory and environmental changes.

Our mahi (work) is organised around the delivery of our three core services:

- Environmental Regulation and Protection
- Community Preparedness and Response to Hazards
- Public Transport

We are guided by our strategic drivers (pou):

- Putting the community and our customers at the heart of everything we do
- Growing our relationship with mana whenua into a true partnership
- Maturing our governance model and understanding of our political environment
- Removing pain for our people (and customers) by improving our systems and processes.

Our mahi is also underpinned by our values:

- Kaitiakitanga (stewardship)
- Pononga (integrity)
- Manaakitanga (people first)
- Whanaungatanga (collaboration)
- Māiatanga (can do).

Aronga | Purpose

The purpose of this role is to:

- deliver consistent, professional, strategic communications and engagement advice and support across a variety of, often complex, workstreams and channels.
- take a lead role in developing and delivering significant strategies, campaigns and engagement outputs.

As a technical specialist, key to success is a high-level organisation wide understanding of the many interconnected facets of organisational goals and deliverables, to enable leveraging of opportunity and identification of risks to outcomes and to reputation and to enable participation and gain community commitment to achieving agreed outcomes across the region.

Ngā Haepapa | Accountabilities

- Develop and lead complex projects, identifying, advising, and mitigating risk through well managed communication and engagement strategies, identifying and capitalising on opportunities for consequent organisation-wide initiatives.
- Develop and implement communications and engagement plans, initiatives and campaigns, aligning with the organisation's Communications & Brand Strategy, bringing together key parties, monitoring effectiveness, evaluating outcomes to determine success and revising as appropriate to ensure goals are met.
- Provide regular communications advice and services to Senior Managers across a range of complex or politically sensitive topics. Represent the section and Environment Canterbury as a whole to promote and facilitate improvement in the perception of the team/organisation and our services.
- Identify issues that present communication risks or opportunities to the organisation, designing and implementing mitigation strategies or plans to leverage off opportunities.
- Explore new ways to drive desired outcomes, keeping up with industry trends and adapting work accordingly.
- Identify and pursue opportunities to increase participation and community/ stakeholder engagement.
- Produce quality communications content across a variety of channels as required including presentations, speeches, EDMs, video, social media, advertising, web-optimised articles etc., for different audiences- including staff, Councillors, rūnanga, general public, key stakeholders, community and interest groups.
- Manage budgets appropriately, in line with systems agreed by Finance and the Communications and Engagement senior leaders.
- Support the coaching, development and mentoring of other staff within the Communications and Engagement Group with respect to enhancing their skills and promoting best practice. Peer review other's work and participate in Principals' Working Group and portfolio level activity as required to ensure optimal engagement outcomes.

Toitū Te Tiriti | Treaty Partner Excellence

- Deliver outcomes that underpin and give effect to achieving Ngāi Tahu cultural and environmental aspirations, including but not limited to, mahinga kai and revitalisation programmes.

- Connect with our Ngāi Tahu partner to ensure understanding of Ngāi Tahu aspirations and priorities so that there is genuine input and contribution, which can be considered in mahi programme development and prioritisation.
- Demonstrate openness and courageousness in approaching issues and in co-design of processes and systems, supporting thought leadership that can give effect to the progression of the partnership.
- Contribute toward our effective, strong and valued relationship with all Papatipu Rūnanga within Waitaha/Canterbury and Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu, to demonstrate our commitment to recognise and provide for the kaitiaki/responsibility Ngāi Tahu has for the natural environment. This will include sharing of knowledge and information, creating opportunities for increased participation in decision-making processes, effective engagement and development of existing working relationships.
- Support the organisation's cultural capability journey, leading by example and identifying clear priorities, expectations, and development opportunities for individual capability; planning and aligning work to support organisational cultural capability across all aspects of delivery.

Hauora me te Marutau | Health and Safety

The health, safety and wellbeing of our kaimahi and community is a priority for the Council, and we proactively implement robust health and safety practices. To meet our legal obligations you must:

- Understand the health and safety and risk obligations that rest with this position, and care for your own health, safety and wellbeing and that of others you may interact with.
- Ensure awareness of, and compliance with, legislative and operational standards, policies and guidelines, including the Council's code of conduct.
- Maintain an enquiring mind, undertake your own due diligence, and apply your knowledge of best practice to ensure a detailed understanding of any risks associated with this position.
- Ensure that relevant certifications are maintained, if applicable.

Hononga ā-Mahi | Working Relationships

Kai rō Kaunihera | Within the organisation

- Accountable to the Lead Advisor
- Close, collaborative working relationships with others in the Communications and Engagement Group.
- Close working relationships with relevant programme and portfolio staff, the Principals' Working Group, the Tuia Team, relevant Director(s) to provide guidance, identify areas for upskilling e.g.

media training, manage group/stakeholder dynamics across unresolved issues, recommending actions, using influencing skills to facilitate win:win outcomes.

- Working relationships with Councillors to provide updates and exchange of information as appropriate and guided by management.
- A member of the Principals' Working Group, contributing to problem solving and organisation-wide project outcomes.

Kai waho i te Kaunihera | Outside the organisation

- Contribute toward our effective, strong and valued relationship with all Papatipu Rūnanga within Waitaha /Canterbury and Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu.
- Demonstrate Council's commitment to recognise and provide for the kaitiaki responsibility Ngāi Tahu has for the natural environment. This will include sharing of knowledge and information, creating opportunities for increased participation in decision making processes, effective engagement and development of existing working relationships.
- Government press secretaries and ministerial staff to negotiate media releases, agreed messaging and timing to stakeholder groups.
- Key stakeholder groups and individuals, to influence and facilitate the agreement of key message content, considering organisational outcomes and political sensitivities, gaining agreement on channels and timing of delivery. Managing group/stakeholder dynamics across unresolved issues, recommending actions, resolving conflict, using influencing skills to facilitate win:win outcomes.
- External consultants and suppliers to negotiate contracts for service.
- News media to provide news briefings and respond to media enquiries.

Ngā Herenga Motuhake | Special Conditions

As a regional council, we have a specific requirement to provide a civil defence function for Waitaha. Kaimahi are required to be available to assist, support or be associated, as reasonably required, with any Civil Defence emergency or any exercise organised in relation to this function.

Additionally, all kaimahi are expected to assist, support and respond, as reasonably required, to any event where the Business Continuity Plan is activated.

Some travel and after-hours work will be required to fulfil the requirements of the role.

From time-to-time you will have periodic after-hours responsibility for the media/PIM phone and inbox.

Participate in Civil Defence activities as required. The responsibilities to act as Public Information Manager in Civil Defence emergencies may involve weekends/after-hours work at short notice.

Māngai Whakahaere | Delegations and Authorities

Where specified, this role has delegated authority to make decisions in accordance with Council-approved delegations, and authority for decision making in accordance with policies and guidelines for financial, people management and media-related activities.

Additional specific delegations may be given by the Chief Executive to the Chief People Officer on people and safety matters from time to time.

Ngā Āheitanga | Capabilities

Tohu Mātauranga | Qualifications

- Relevant tertiary degree in Communications and Engagement or related discipline is preferred and/or sufficient relevant experience as noted below.
- Current drivers licence.

Mātau ā-wheako | Experience

- At least 10 years' experience in communications, public relations, digital communications, public engagement, e-commerce or a related field.
- Proven ability to grasp complex concepts quickly and translate into compelling communications.
- A proven record of delivering consistent, high-quality communications advice, including media relations.
- Demonstrable relationship building and interpersonal skills, with the ability to exercise diplomacy and discretion, recognise risk and take mitigating actions.
- Sound working knowledge of communications tools, techniques and channels.
- Good project management skills with the ability to manage projects in a complex environment and to use project planning processes and techniques.
- Sound analytical skills.
- Professional writing, editing and proofreading skills across a variety of mediums.
- Understanding and use of te reo and tikanga Māori is an advantage.
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Ngā Pūkenga Matatau | Core Competencies

Specific behaviours at the Team Member level sit beneath each of the following organisational competencies.

Customer Focus	Ensuring that the customer perspective is a driving force behind decisions and activities. Initiating and maintaining relationships inside and outside the organisation.
Business Acumen	Using an understanding of the organisation's position to contribute to effective strategies and tactics by using economic, financial and industry information. Thinking from the ratepayers' perspective.
Achieving Outcomes	Translating strategic priorities into operational reality; aligning communication, accountabilities, resources, internal processes and ongoing measurement systems to ensure that strategic priorities yield measurable and sustainable results.
Leading Change	Identifying and driving organisational and cultural changes needed to adapt strategically to changing demands, technology, and internal initiatives; using new approaches to improve results by transforming organisational culture, systems, or services.
Common Purpose	Working towards a compelling view of the future by engaging with the organisation's vision; understanding and aligning to the common purpose.
Building Capability	Attracting, developing, engaging, and retaining talented individuals allowing the organisation to meet current and future organisational challenges. Sharing authority, responsibilities and decision making to enable individuals to stretch their capabilities and accomplish strategic priorities.

The above statements are intended to describe the general nature and level of work being performed; they are not an exhaustive list of all responsibilities, duties and skills required of the position and incumbent. From time to time the incumbent will be required to accept and carry out other duties.

Band / Grade
6/17

Position Code
CREL.001

Last Updated
April 2025

I agree to undertake the responsibilities detailed in this job description:

Ingoa | Name:

Waitohu | Signature:

Rā | Date Signed:

***Taking action together to shape a thriving and resilient Canterbury, now and for future generations.
Toitū te marae o Tāne, toitū te marae o Tangaroa, toitū te iwi.***

