

Explore Asheville Convention & Visitors Bureau

Public Affairs Specialist – Job Description

JOB TITLE:	Public Affairs Specialist
REPORTS TO:	Director of Public Affairs
DEPARTMENT:	Public Affairs
PAY STATUS:	Non-Exempt

ABOUT EXPLORE ASHEVILLE:

Our team helps to create and sustain a vibrant tourism economy by attracting overnight visitors and expanding the customer base for local businesses. We work on behalf of the Buncombe County Tourism Development Authority (BCTDA) to support local tourism partners including attractions, lodging, retail, recreation and the arts.

Nestled in the highest mountains in the East, Asheville is a hip, artsy destination with Southern flare and a welcoming nature. A vibrant, eclectic downtown featuring art galleries, farm-to-table and independent restaurants and a thriving music scene beckons visitors and residents. America's favorite scenic byway, the Blue Ridge Parkway winds its way through Asheville to Mount Mitchell, the highest peak in the East, about 20 miles northeast. Biltmore, America's largest home is located here. With surprises around every corner – from a spontaneous drum circle, avant-garde theater, brew pubs, chocolate lounges, art that inspires the soul, to lush mountain peaks with biking trails, hikes, zip lines and whitewater, Asheville is a destination with a style and rhythm all its own.

With over three decades of focused promotion, Asheville has become a top destination for travel, earning Lonely Planet's 2017 #1 Best in the US Destination designation, among many accolades. Explore Asheville promotes the destination through out-of-market advertising and other marketing, public relations and sales initiatives, resulting in approximately 3.8 million overnight leisure visitors each year and a tourism economy that generates nearly \$3 billion of annual economic activity in Buncombe County. The success of the tourism sector has been a big part of the economic vitality of Asheville, fostering new businesses of all kinds — including many new hotels that will generate additional customers, jobs, and millions of dollars of property and sales taxes.

We value teamwork, excellence and camaraderie. Qualified candidates are invited to apply to join our accomplished and dedicated team.

THE POSITION:

This position will serve as the primary point person for managing tourism industry partner business information for Explore Asheville to support overall organizational goals of connecting local industry partners to the sales and marketing opportunities provided by Explore Asheville. This position serves as the primary contact for Explore Asheville tourism partners creating a new account on ExploreAsheville.com and maintaining all the elements of a business listing, plus qualified packages, deals and coupons.

Responsibilities include database management, partner engagement, event coordination, hosting and presenting orientations, providing extranet training and support, email newsletter creation, occasional

design for marketing materials, maintain and update the industry partner Wordpress website and other in-house projects, including the creation of presentations for various Team Members and events.

It provides support for monthly Partner Events including coordinating and developing materials for the event and managing all AV functions. Supports the Director of Public Affairs in community outreach efforts.

JOB FUNCTIONS:

Partner Relations & Data Management

- Ensure all tourism partners conform to Explore Asheville's policies for eligibility.
- Create new accounts for eligible tourism industry partners; ensure partners conform to the policy
- Provide extranet support and troubleshooting to partners and develop training materials
- Review and approve all listing edits submitted by partners on the extranet; provide quality control of data, imagery, and category
- Manage partner listings for ExploreAsheville.com
- Conduct extranet training sessions at the CVB office and external locations as needed
- Enforce website and visitor guide listing and event calendar policies
- Manage a process for Visitor Guide business and event listings, partner communications, data collection, interfacing with publisher and proofing
- Serve as primary contact with SimpleView for CRM management and partner data oversight
- Audit and update database as needed, ensuring it remains current and relevant
- Maintain and update the industry partner Wordpress website
- Assist in partner communications including creating newsletter emails and managing distribution lists
- Utilize proprietary CRM database management system to process and track all data and communications
- Manage a partner engagement process to promote use of extranet and increase frequency of business update submissions
- Provide support on managing events calendar submissions

Partner Events

- Work under the guidance of the Director of Public Affairs to plan and execute the BCTDA's industry events, including but not limited to monthly partner forums, annual meetings, Hospitality Outlooks, Tourism Summits, social events, and others as scheduled
- Manage A/V functions for these events, including computer, projector, and presentation set-up
- Prepare event/meeting materials as needed including invitation emails, handouts, and supplementals
- Provide support in monthly event preparation including procurement of food/beverage, decorations, supplies and other as needed and ensures needed supplies are ordered and/or purchased in advance of event.
- Creates registration pages on EventBrite and CVB industry website, manage and track attendance
- Print registration lists and create name tags.
- Process invoices and track costs
- Support Director of Public Affairs in assigning and managing staff duties at events

Public Affairs

- Support Director of Public Affairs in managing tourism product development projects, hosting community engagement events, plus growing and maintaining connections with various community organizations and committees

EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE:

A Bachelor's Degree is required and at least three years of relevant experience.

JOB KNOWLEDGE:

The candidate must possess:

- Critical thinking skills and the ability to help define the questions that need to be asked.
- Proficiency in MS Office programs including Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and OneNote.
- Proficiency in Adobe Creative Suite including InDesign, Illustrator, and Photoshop.
- Familiarity with website management and customization utilizing Wordpress and associated plug-ins, and HTML.
- Good written and verbal communication skills.
- Ability to develop visual interpretations of data as well as translate data insights into meaningful information and reports.

COMPLEXITY OF DUTIES:

Performs some routine tasks, however, work is also very project driven. Must be able to organize and prioritize a challenging workload. Flexibility and speed of execution to capitalize on opportunities quickly is imperative. Computer skills and utilization of technology is required. Ability to use spreadsheets, analyze data, interpret data, and provide understandable reports is also a necessity.

SUPERVISION RECEIVED:

Works under the direct supervision of the Director of Public Affairs.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR ACCURACY:

Accuracy is highly critical in all aspects of work performed by this position. Attention to detail is imperative. Analysis and reports will be used to promote Explore Asheville's tourism reach and positive exposure within the local market; therefore, accuracy and reliability are imperative.

CONTACT WITH OTHERS:

Ongoing contact with tourism partners requires professionalism and tact. Additional contacts include CVB staff at all levels, BCTDA Board and Explore Asheville CVB partners and vendors. It is imperative that this position crosses easily between Explore Asheville departments to achieve an integrated online presence that is both expansive and, in some areas, highly targeted.

CONFIDENTIAL DATA:

Has access to marketing and sales information, database files, financial statements, Web statistics and other Explore Asheville-related information, all of which is considered confidential.

MENTAL/PHYSICAL/VISUAL EFFORT:

The degree of concentration is generally focused and intense based on the work being performed. At the same time, the position is subject to frequent interruptions which require varied responses. While performing the duties of this job, employee is routinely required to be mobile, sit, reach with hands and arms, talk, and hear. Requires visual acuity, manual dexterity, and good eye/hand/foot coordination. Assisting the Director of Public Affairs with monthly Partner Events requires a certain level of physical ability, such as carrying boxes of materials, AV equipment and other items required for the event.

ENVIRONMENT:

Works in a cubicle within a modern office environment. Free parking is available on-site.

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS:

Some local travel, generally within Buncombe County, is required, but not extensive. Must have a valid driver's license and own or have regular access to an automobile. Travel to an annual website platform conference in Arizona may be required as well as possible professional development opportunities. A background check and drug testing are required as a condition of employment.

CORONAVIRUS IMPACT ON OUR WORK:

Most of the Explore Asheville Team is working remotely from home as we make our way through phases of the COVID-19 pandemic. Team Members will return to work when the State and County deem it safe. However, the safety of our Team Members will remain our priority in all our future decision making. Whether in the office daily or working remotely, Explore Asheville requires all Team Members live within a daily commute of our Asheville office.

Submit your resume demonstrating applicable experience and knowledge to Glenn Cox at gcox@ExploreAsheville.com.