

POSITION DESCRIPTION

Position Title:	Senior Communications Advisor
Reports To:	Strategy, Impact and Engagement Manager
Direct Reports:	Nil
Group:	Ag Emissions Centre
Key Relationships:	Ag Emissions Leadership team, the AgResearch Group - New Zealand Institute for Bioeconomy Science Ltd, Ministry for Primary Industries ('MPI'), AgriZero, Ag Emission Centre's Business Partners
Location:	Grasslands Campus, Palmerston North

WHO WE ARE

The Ag Emissions Centre plays a critical role in New Zealand's efforts to reduce emissions through shaping, funding, and managing a research and development portfolio, building capability and infrastructure, and partnering with others nationally and internationally to deliver our ambition and outcomes.

Reducing agricultural emissions is a critical contribution towards mitigating the impacts of climate change, meeting national and international emissions targets, and ensuring our primary industries thrive and continue to play their vital role in the New Zealand economy. The Ag Emissions Centre aims to discover, develop, and make available practical and cost-effective technologies and practices for New Zealand farmers and growers to reduce agricultural greenhouse gas emissions.

The Ag Emissions Centre is a core component of the Government's technology led approach to reducing agricultural emissions. In delivering to our vision and objectives we work with research organisations, government, Māori, the agri-industry, and farmers.

The Ag Emissions Centre employees are employed by the AgResearch Group - New Zealand Institute for Bioeconomy Science Ltd, a Crown Research Institute that is dedicated to making a difference to the future of New Zealand by delivering world-leading research and through complex problem solving across diverse agricultural areas.

We operate independently within our host the AgResearch Group - New Zealand Institute for Bioeconomy Science Ltd, and work with a wide range of research and development providers to mitigate agricultural greenhouse gas emissions. Our primary location is the AgResearch Group - New Zealand Institute for Bioeconomy Science Ltd Grasslands Campus in Palmerston North.

POSITION PURPOSE & SCOPE

The Senior Communications Advisor's primary purpose is to communicate the Centre's mission and purposes by showcasing how its programmes of work support the reduction of agricultural emissions – contributing to New Zealand's climate commitments, promoting a healthy environment, and enabling farmers to thrive. In doing this, the role is critical for enhancing and protecting the reputation of the Ag Emissions Centre.

The role of the Senior Communications Advisor is to translate our mission and complex science and research findings into accessible, compelling narratives that inform, inspire, and engage. From media liaison and digital content creation to campaign delivery and stakeholder engagement, the Senior Communications Advisor ensures consistent messaging that manages reputation, amplifies impact, and builds trust across a wide spectrum of audiences – including scientists, policy stakeholders, industry partners, farmers and growers, Māori agribusiness and the public.

KEY ACCOUNTABILITY AREAS

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION PLANNING

- Developing and executing communication strategies that align with the Ag Emission Centre's goals – this includes the purpose and objectives, key messaging by stakeholder group, channels and campaigns, timelines and milestones, crisis communication and measurement/evaluation.
- Brand and Reputation Management: ensuring all communications reflect the organisations values and tone and proactively managing its public image.
- Measurement and reporting: Tracking the effectiveness of communication efforts using metrics like engagement, reach, and sentiment, and adjusting strategies accordingly.
- Monitoring media coverage and public discourse to proactively identify emerging narratives, gauge farmer sentiment, and provide strategic insights that inform communication, crisis management and engagement efforts.

CONTENT CREATION MANAGEMENT

- Setting the overarching direction for content—what to say, how to say it, and where to say it. This includes aligning content with business goals and audience needs.
- Crafting compelling content for various channels including web, social media, press releases, newsletters, speeches and key messaging.
- Internal Communications - crafting content for employee updates (New Zealand Institute for Bioeconomy Science Limited), governance updates, leadership messages, and change communications to keep employees informed and engaged.
- External Communications: Overseeing press releases, media statements, newsletters, blogs, and website content that shape public perception. Support with external reporting.



STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

- Building and maintaining relationships with internal teams, media, research, and funding partners and key government organisations and to ensure consistent and effective messaging.

COMMUNICATIONS ADVISORY ROLE

- Acting as a trusted advisor to leadership on communication best practices, risks, and opportunities.
- Crisis and Change Communication: Leading or supporting communication during organizational changes or crises to maintain trust and clarity.
- Thought Leadership & Executive Comms: Supporting senior leaders with speeches, opinion pieces, and LinkedIn posts that position them—and the organisation—as credible voices in the industry.

EVENTS

- Define the event's communication objectives, key messages, and target audiences. During the event, manage real-time updates via social media, apps, or internal channels. This includes live posting and sending push notifications.
- Promotion: Create and schedule content across channels—emails, social media, press releases, internal comms—to build anticipation and drive attendance.
- Crisis Management: Be ready to respond quickly to any issues or changes, ensuring accurate and timely messaging.
- Stakeholder Briefings: Ensure speakers, sponsors, and internal teams are aligned on messaging and logistics.
- Content Repurposing: Turn event moments into blog posts, videos, or case studies to extend the event's impact.
- Evaluation: Analyse engagement metrics and feedback to assess what worked and what to improve next time.

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

- Ensure that information which is created or received during your work is managed as per the AgResearch Group - New Zealand Institute for Bioeconomy Science Ltd.'s Information Management Policy. This includes naming, storing, classifying, and ensuring it is available to other employee's as per the Policy.

HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELLBEING

- Maintain current knowledge and comply with all the AgResearch Group - New Zealand Institute for Bioeconomy Science Ltd.'s health, safety, and wellbeing (Te Whare Tapa Whā), policies, frameworks, systems, and procedures.
- Support the health and wellbeing of your team to ensure they are productive and engaged.
- Demonstrate safe workplace behaviour by taking all practicable steps to ensure own and others' safety in the workplace.



- Maintain current knowledge of the AgResearch Group - New Zealand Institute for Bioeconomy Science Ltd.'s Health and Safety Management policies, systems, and procedures and ensures awareness of own responsibilities and the procedures to follow in relation to health and safety.
- Identify and report any hazards, near misses or incidents as per prescribed policy and procedures.
- Ensure proactive and effective workplace injury management and ensure the appropriate rehabilitation and support for employees.
- Attend scheduled Health and Safety training and development initiatives on a regular basis.

ORGANISATIONAL OBJECTIVES

- Applies and implements prescribed project management methodology into all project work.
- Applies principles of continuous improvement by taking ownership for identification, analysis, and investigation of work-related matters to improve, manage compliance and initiate best practices in our place of work.
- Actively participates in and contributes to performance conversations and personal development.
- Takes responsibility to understand and apply the AgResearch Group - New Zealand Institute for Bioeconomy Science Ltd policy, processes, systems, and procedures daily.
- Commits to accurate and timely information sharing and recordkeeping per organisational standards.



PERSON SPECIFICATIONS

The person best suited to this position will possess most of the following:

EDUCATION & QUALIFICATIONS

- A tertiary qualification in communications or relevant experience (5-10 years in science communications).

CAPABILITIES & EXPERIENCE

- Word-wizard: strong writing and editing skills across formats: speeches, opinion pieces, social posts, web and internal communications.
- Experience managing crisis communications or sensitive messaging.
- An understanding and genuine interest in science, agriculture, agri-tech, farming, or the primary sector.
- Familiarity with stakeholder engagement, government relations, coalition-building, or grassroots mobilisation is a plus.

CORE ATTRIBUTES

- Purpose-Driven Mindset: A genuine passion for climate action to preserve the New Zealand environment whilst supporting the primary sector.
- Strategic Science Communicator: Skilled in crafting and executing multi-channel communication strategies. Confident in translating complex scientific information into actionable insights that make a difference.
- Storytelling Savvy: Able to humanize data and policy through powerful storytelling that resonates with diverse stakeholders.
- Empathetic Communicator - attuned to the needs of audiences and able to adapt tone and messaging to different stakeholders.
- Media Relations Pro: Experience building relationships with journalists, securing coverage, and managing press moments—especially in high-stakes or advocacy-driven environments.
- Agile and Collaborative - Comfortable wearing multiple hats, working across teams, and adapting to change. Whether it's a last-minute media opportunity or a shift in campaign direction, can stay grounded and responsive.
- Digital Fluency: Confident across multiple social media platforms, and content creation tools.
- Creative with Constraints - Can do a lot with a little—turning limited budgets into high-impact campaigns through smart partnerships, grassroots tactics, and digital savvy.



COMPETENCIES

Organisational-wide competencies that the organisation determines as critical to every role.	
Accountability	Accepts responsibility for one's actions regardless of outcomes.
Caring about people	Displays sensitivity towards the attitudes, feelings, or circumstances of others.
Developing people	Provides support, coaching, training, and career direction to others.
Integrity	Acts honestly in accordance with moral or ethical principles.
Driving results	Accomplishes goals, completes tasks, and achieves results.
Leveraging Diversity	Respects and values individual differences to obtain a desired effect or result.
Relationship building	Develops collaborative relationships to facilitate current and future objectives.
Self-Development	Actively acquires new knowledge and skills to remain current with and/or grow beyond job requirements.
Role-based competencies – these are the competencies required to perform this role.	
Plans and aligns	Plans and prioritises work to meet commitments aligned with organizational goals.
Flexibility	Changes direction as appropriate based on new ideas, approaches, and strategies.
Listening to others	Listens and restates the ideas and opinions of others to improve mutual understanding.
Processing Information	Gathers, organises, and analyses diverse sources of information.
Decision Making	Uses sound judgment to make timely and effective decisions.
Collaborates	Builds partnerships and works together with others to meet shared objectives.
Manages Ambiguity	Operates effectively even when things are not certain or the way forward is not clear.
Learning Agility	Ability to learn, adapt, unlearn, and relearn to keep up with constantly changing conditions.
Curiosity	Strong desire to know or learn something; seeks new information and explores possibilities.

