

Update

Ministry

Environment and Protected Areas

Describe: Basic Job Details

Position

Position ID

Position Name

Senior Science Communication Specialist

Current Class

Program Services 4

Job Focus

Operations/Program

Supervisory Level

00 - No Supervision

Agency (ministry) code

Cost Centre

Program Code: (enter if required)

Employee

Employee Name (or Vacant)

Organizational Structure

Division, Branch/Unit

Office of the Chief Scientist

Supervisor's Position ID

Supervisor's Position Name

Director-SciAdvice, Rep & Part

Supervisor's Current Class

Senior Manager (Zone 1)

Design: Identify Job Duties and Value

Changes Since Last Reviewed ☐

Date yyyy-mm-dd

2025-06-18

Responsibilities Added:

Prior to submitting a job requisition for an approved staffing request, I was reviewing the Job Description (JD) and noticed that the equivalences are not properly identified in the Required Education, Experience and Technical Competencies section; therefore, I have updated this JD to include the equivalencies. All other aspects of the JD remain the same.

Required Education, Experience and Technical Competencies include a Master's degree in environmental science, science communication, or science journalism/writing; or a Bachelor's of Science plus 5 years of progressive experience in environmental/natural science, science communication, science journalism/writing, or public relations fields.

Responsibilities Removed:

Current Required Education, Experience and Technical Competencies (Environmental/natural science;

science communication; science journalism/writing; public relations) were removed and replaced with new ones as indicated above.

Job Purpose and Organizational Context

Why the job exists:

Delivering on legislated, operational and strategic commitments for the Office of the Chief Scientist (OCS) (see Section 15 of the Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act), the Senior Science Communication Specialist provides credible and tactful communications leadership and project management for complex projects and works closely with internal and external scientific subject matter experts as well as leadership in the OCS, Environment and Protected Areas (EPA) and Communications and Public Engagement (CPE) in support of office priorities.

This position enables Albertans, the EPA minister, and the GoA to access best available science in support of making informed and evidence-based environmental management decisions. Key responsibilities for the Senior Science Communication Specialist are to: a) develop communications plans and activities that enable delivery of OCS priorities; b) communicate complex scientific information to non-technical audiences; c) ensure the Alberta Environmental Science Program (AESP) website provides credible public reporting on the condition of Alberta's environment; and d) plan and coordinate science communication events for both internal and external audiences.

The position is accountable to the Chief Scientist and reports to the Director of Science Advice, Reporting and Partnerships. The position requires expertise within a relevant subject matter area that has ideally led to broad scale recognition as an expert in science communication.

Responsibilities

The Senior Science Communication Specialist is responsible for:

1. Developing communications plans and activities that enable delivery of OCS priorities:

- Supporting the Office of the Chief Scientist to ensure projects and communications are delivered in alignment with the legislated mandate to “make environmental monitoring data and related scientific evaluations and assessments available to the public and to report to the public on the condition of the environment in Alberta on the basis of the scientific evaluations and assessments” (Section 15.1(1) Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act).
- Developing, implementing, evaluating and annually updating knowledge mobilization frameworks, strategies, and an operational plan to support knowledge synthesis products and effective dissemination and uptake of information, and ensure that goals and objectives are achieved.
- Lead or support development of processes to enable creation and establish mechanisms for dissemination of high-quality communications products based on best practices, which are appropriate for target audiences and various channels.
- Acting as focal point on communication files, providing strategic advice and reporting on progress to leadership, and supporting development and implementation of continuous improvement mechanisms and processes.
- Supporting capacity building within EPA by enhancing science communications skills, knowledge and technical know-how of EPA staff.
- Developing and sustaining professional relationships with key internal stakeholders, participating in building and maintaining information networks as appropriate.

2. Communicating complex scientific information to non-technical audiences:

- Leading regular internal and external communications through the production of accessible communications products (e.g., web articles published by the Chief Scientist on alberta.ca, infographics, presentation materials, bulletins, and social media).
- Researching, evaluating and analyzing information to support evidence-based policies, decision-making and continuous improvement.
- Developing and editing complex (and sometimes sensitive) scientific and technical, environmental data and information in written and graphic format while ensuring accuracy, clarity, and audience/medium appropriateness.
- Leading or supporting special environmental science priority projects assigned to the OCS by the Deputy Minister or Minister.
- Adhering to GoA writing and digital publication standards and style guides.
- Investigating and applying novel and creative technologies and approaches to communicate best available science for use by GoA scientists to communicate with target audiences internally and externally.
- Working closely with CPE and other internal stakeholders involved in communications to disseminate knowledge translation products.

3. Ensuring the Alberta Environmental Science Program (AESP) website provides credible public reporting on the condition of Alberta's environment:

- Providing leadership and project management to collaboratively deliver Condition of Environment reporting to the public, and represent the OCS in working groups and committees as required.
- Conducting literature reviews and reviewing research and synthesis papers and reports in support of development and public reporting of selected condition of environment indicators.
- Facilitating communications, review and approvals with GoA subject-matter experts, OCS Chief Scientist and science advisors, executive leadership and CPE.
- Building relationships with CPE and key stakeholders to ensure effective development and dissemination of communications products.
- Working collaboratively with CPE to ensure environmental science communications enabled through the OCS meet required standards for public release.

4. Planning and coordinating events for both internal and external audiences:

- Establishing forums to share best available science among scientific professionals from GoA, academia, industry and non-profits, and provide continuing education opportunities for GoA scientific and technical staff.
- Coordinating virtual and in person events for internal and external audiences, including speaker selection, technical support, management of audience mailing lists, and on-site execution as required.
- Leading development of survey initiatives including design of data collection, review, analysis and interpretation of responses, identifying issues and preparing recommendations for OCS and department leadership.
- Keeping up-to-date on new technologies relevant to the communication activities of the OCS and advising on and implementing possible changes.

5. Supporting science information management process:

- Collaborate with OCS leadership and key partners to develop and implement a coordinated, department-wide approach to science information sharing that meets user's needs.
- Referencing relevant publications approved for public release in a publication tool featured on the public website for Alberta's Environmental Science Program (AESP).

Problem Solving

Typical problems solved:

- This position analyzes complex environmental concepts, associated legislation and policy, and translates highly technical information into plain language to increase its impact and usefulness in a policy context; often with limited direction and constrained timelines.
- This position evaluates and communicates (verbal and written) strategic and operational issues and opportunities using a high degree of judgment to best meet the needs of the Chief Scientist.
- This position facilitates interactions between staff and scientists in different divisions with different timelines for delivery, expectations, and requirements, requiring significant coordination and negotiation to ensure deliverables arrive on deadline.
- Problems and challenges faced by the position are often without clear precedent. Broad knowledge of communications and scientific concepts, environmental issues and how they affect Alberta's society and economy is required to identify solutions.

Types of guidance available for problem solving:

- This position operates independently and collaboratively with senior scientific professionals within and external to the ministry as well as GoA program leadership to develop products to support evidence-informed decision-making.
- The incumbent uses professional judgment to adapt novel and innovative communications approaches to meet organizational needs while enabling delivery of the OCS mandate.
- The incumbent works with OCS leadership to develop innovative, effective and efficient approaches for managing unique situations.

Direct or indirect impacts of decisions:

- The impact of the position is high as it contributes to the success of the department's communication activities with public audiences.
- The incumbent enables the GoA to meet its legislated mandate of enabling stakeholders, decision-makers and all Albertans to access best available science in support of making more informed and evidence-based environmental management decisions.
- The position is responsible for translating complex environmental concepts and scientific results into accessible, plain-language products to various non-scientific audiences including the general public, professionals, advisory boards, among others.
- This position acts as a project manager coordinating the work of others in ensuring the appropriate implementation of communications projects.
- The incumbent works closely with the OCS director, chief scientist, senior department staff and internal and external scientific experts to ensure accuracy and relevancy of communications products.
- The incumbent uses high level interpersonal skills to consult with outside partners, such as academia, research institutions, or other government sectors to exchange information and promote collaboration. Continual review by peers, scientific experts, policy analysts, and other agencies is essential to ensure

credible environmental communications products.

Key Relationships

Major stakeholders and purpose of interactions:

- Chief Scientist (daily to weekly) to provide updates, briefings and recommendations for strategic and operational work, and obtain direction and guidance to support delivery of the OCS mandate and priorities;
- Director of Science Advice, Reporting and Partnerships (daily to weekly) to provide analysis and recommendations for strategic and operational work, report on progress, provide updates and briefings, address urgent issues, obtain direction and guidance to support delivery of the OCS mandate and priorities, and provide cover-off during the director's absence;
- OCS science communications staff and senior science advisors (daily to weekly) collaboratively deliver and support assigned science communication files and science advise projects, provide input, advice and expertise on strategy, planning, and reporting products, exchange information, receive feedback, and identify and address issues and opportunities;
- Department leadership and staff (weekly to monthly) to request and exchange information in support of development and release of environmental science communication content and publications, and to develop and maintain relationships required to collaboratively deliver office and department priorities;
- GoA Communications and Public Engagement (weekly to monthly) to collaboratively ensure environmental science communications enabled through the OCS meet required government standards for public release.
- Stakeholders and partners (weekly to monthly) (e.g., Government or university-based researchers and institutions, environmental non-profit organizations, citizen science groups) to develop science communication products on collaborative scientific research and to facilitate knowledge exchange.
- Public (weekly to monthly) to coordinate responses and information to inquiries from the public and external stakeholders.

Required Education, Experience and Technical Competencies

Education Level	Focus/Major	2nd Major/Minor if applicable	Designation
Master's Degree	Science	Other	

If other, specify:

or a Bachelor's in environ. sci., sci comm, journalism plus 5 years of progressive exper. in a related field

Job-specific experience, technical competencies, certification and/or training:

- Extensive knowledge in the following areas: Research and science communication, knowledge mobilization, writing principles, scientific concepts, environmental issues and how they affect Alberta's society and economy.
- Strong verbal and written communications skills and experience writing for executive audiences.
- Strong research skills and proven aptitude for understanding, analyzing and synthesizing complex technical information for various diverse audiences.
- Full command of Canadian Press style guide, strong proof-reading skills and attention to detail.
- Adaptable content style with the ability to adjust tone and voice for different audiences.
- Experience establishing positive working relationships with internal and external stakeholders.
- Ability to work independently.

- Ability to balance multiple projects and competing priorities daily while meeting and managing client expectations with a high degree of professionalism and judgement.
- Ability to mobilize diverse groups and build consensus.
- Proficient with virtual meeting and webinar platforms.
- Innovative and creative thinking, problem solving, and strategic thinking skills.
- Knowledge and understanding of the web and social media as communications mediums.
- Knowledge of GoA Communications Policy, GoA Website Standards and visual identity guidelines.

The following are considered assets:

- Knowledge of visual communication principles and techniques and the ability to convey scientific and technical concepts into visual graphics or videos.
- Experience with digital graphics software programs such as Adobe Illustrator and Adobe Photoshop.
- Experience with video production equipment and software such as cameras and audio equipment and Adobe Premiere.

Behavioral Competencies

Competency	Level					Level Definition	Examples of how this level best represents the job
	A	B	C	D	E		
Systems Thinking	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<p>Takes a long-term view towards organization's objectives and how to achieve them:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Takes holistic long-term view of challenges and opportunities • Anticipates outcomes and potential impacts, seeks stakeholder perspectives • Works towards actions and plans aligned with APS values • Works with others to identify areas for collaboration 	
Creative Problem Solving	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<p>Works in open teams to share ideas and process issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses wide range of techniques to break down problems • Allows others to think creatively and voice ideas • Brings the right people 	

		together to solve issues • Identifies new solutions for the organization	
Agility	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input checked="" type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	Identifies and manages required change and the associated risks: • Identifies alternative approaches and supports others to do the same • Proactively explains impact of changes • Anticipates and mitigates emotions of others • Anticipates obstacles and stays focused on goals • Makes decisions and takes action in uncertain situations and creates a backup plan	
Drive for Results	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input checked="" type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	Works to remove barriers to outcomes, sticking to principles: • Forecasts and proactively addresses project challenges • Removes barriers to collaboration and achievement of outcomes • Upholds principles and confronts problems directly • Considers complex factors and aligns solutions with broader organization mission	
Build Collaborative Environments	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input checked="" type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	Collaborates across functional areas and proactively addresses conflict: • Encourages broad thinking on projects, and works to eliminate barriers to progress • Facilitates communication and collaboration • Anticipates and reduces conflict at the outset • Credits others and gets talent recognized • Promotes collaboration and commitment	