Position Description

Position title: **Senior Communications Officer**

Date established: **February 2021**

Reports to: **Communications Manager, The Australian Prevention Partnership Centre**

Direct reports: **Nil**

Employment: **Full-time, 1.0 FTE (however open to considering part time 0.8 FTE)**

Background

The Sax Institute is an independent, not-for-profit organisation that improves health and wellbeing by driving better use of evidence in policies, programs and services.

The Institute has an international reputation as an Evidence Specialist, and nearly 20 years' experience in translating research findings into policy drawing on our own expertise as well as that of our more than 50 member organisations. We work with governments, health organisations, research organisations and a network of experts nationwide to analyse policy problems and find the best evidence-based solutions.

Program Area – The Australian Prevention Partnership Centre

The Australian Prevention Partnership Centre (the Prevention Centre) was established in June 2013 as a national collaboration to find and promote new ways to prevent Australia's greatest health challenge: the epidemic of lifestyle-related chronic diseases.

We conduct internationally significant research to accelerate the prevention of chronic disease. Our goal is to achieve sustainable, evidence-based, whole of system solutions and arm governments and health decision makers with the best evidence that will lead to people avoiding chronic disease and staying out of hospital.

We work in partnership across multiple research institutes, the private sector and government agencies, both in and outside of health, in every state and territory to develop and promote the evidence and tools to effect change.

Purpose of position

The Senior Communications Officer position sits within the Prevention Centre, based in Glebe Office in Sydney.

The Senior Communications Officer will manage, write, edit and produce high-quality communications about the Centre, its work and people, as well as about key issues in the prevention of chronic disease. Using skills and techniques from journalism they will translate the information telling stories about the science. They play a lead role in developing content for the Centre's many communication channels. Download a factsheet on Communications at the Prevention Centre here.

The successful candidate will excel at quickly and efficiently turning complex concepts into targeted messages and narratives for diverse audiences. Working under the direction of the Communications Manager, they will also be adept at weeding out technical jargon and know how to 'pitch' content to a level appropriate to the intended readership – without compromising accuracy or ignoring sensitivities.

Key accountabilities	Performance expectations
Lead the concept development, writing and production of content for the Centre's research programs	• Write, edit and produce a range of communications products for individual research programs, including fact sheets and evidence briefs • Edit and proof evidence reviews
Contribute to strategic directions to achieve the Centre's mission	• Contribute to the Communication team's strategic directions to achieve the Prevention Centre's mission • Write, edit and produce corporate resources, such as brochures and fact sheets
Lead production for the Centre's external e-newsletter, *The Chronicle*	• Plan strategy and content to increase subscriptions and build engagement and readership • Plan, gather, write and edit content for each edition • Source and edit images using Adobe programs • Work with the Communications team to design and lay out the newsletter in Campaign Monitor
Collaborate on website administration, maintenance, content development and strategy	• Collate, write and edit website content • Assist with monitoring website use and strategy • Update and co-administer the website • Develop and implement monitoring and evaluation tools
Provide writing and editorial support	• Provide writing and editing support for the Coordinating Centre and associated research projects
Develop media content and relationships	• Write for external organisations, such as partner newsletters, and public health journals and blogs • Pitch stories to journalists • Write media releases and respond to media enquiries • Provide media support for research projects
Build capacity around communications	• Provide advice on communication methods that researchers can utilise (build communications capacity)
Contribute content for social media	• Draft content for social media accounts • Develop strategies for monitoring and evaluating dialogue
Liaise with suppliers	• Liaise with suppliers as required, such as printers, photographers, graphic designers etc, including seeking and comparing quotes, negotiating suitable and cost-effective terms, agreeing acceptable timelines and deliverables, and ensuring quality control
Contribute to event communications	• Write and produce promotional content and coverage of events • Plan and commission event videos
Administration	• Ensure effective record-keeping, tracking Communications deliverables as appropriate • Assist with general team administration (including but not limited to invoice processing, mailouts, event support activities) as required

Qualifications, Skills, Experience and Personal Attributes - Selection Criteria

Essential

To be successful, the Senior Communications Officer should be able to demonstrate the following technical and behavioural competencies:

- Tertiary qualifications in Journalism, Communications, Media Studies or related area
- At least ten years' experience in a writing or editing role
- Highly effective writing skills, with the ability to translate complex information into clear, interesting and relevant content for a variety of audiences
- Excellent organisational skills, including the ability to problem-solve, manage a publication schedule, manage multiple concurrent tasks and prioritise
- Good interpersonal skills and ability to develop productive working relationships across different parts of the organisation
- Proven proofreading skills and experience in editing copy for digital platforms
- Motivation and ability to complete projects independently and have the energy for a busy communications team environment
- Flexible approach and aptitude for technology and learning new skills
- Willingness to brainstorm and pitch fresh ideas and solutions
- Ability and resilience to adapt to rapidly changing circumstances
- Identify with the Centre's values of collaboration, independence, innovation and respect

Desirable

- Experience in journalism and / or health writing
- Experience in media relations
- Demonstrated understanding of, and interest in, public health

Challenges

- Understanding and communicating a complex research program
- Juggling competing demands and priorities
- Working in a complex collaborative research-policy-practice environment
- Engagement with diverse stakeholder groups

Key stakeholders and relationships

- Communications Manager
- Science Communications Adviser
- Prevention Centre Coordinating Centre members
- Researchers, policy makers within the Centre's Research Network

Key meetings/committees/working groups (that this role must be a part of)

- Weekly team meetings
- Six-monthly planning sessions
- Weekly Communications meetings
- Special events such as conferences, workshops, seminars, and webinars.