

Position Title:	Senior Communications Advisor
Reports To:	Head of Communications and Marketing, AgResearch Group – Bioeconomy Science Institute
Direct Reports:	N/A
Group:	Strategy and Communications, AgResearch Group
Key Relationships:	AgResearch Group: Communications and Marketing Team, Senior Leadership Team, Senior Leaders, AgResearch staff, Key Industry Stakeholders; Bioeconomy Science Institute: Plant & Food Research Group, Manaaki Whenua - Landcare Research, Scion Group, Transition CEO, Board; External Agencies like Ministry of Business Innovation and Employment (MBIE) and the Minister of Primary Industries (MPI).
Location:	Lincoln

WHO WE ARE

The Bioeconomy Science Institute brings together AgResearch, Manaaki Whenua - Landcare Research, Plant & Food Research and Scion into a single organisation. We are more than 2,000 people, including more than 1,500 scientists and researchers, located across Aotearoa New Zealand and around the world.

We're here to drive innovation and commercial outcomes in the bioeconomy, using research and technology to support enduring economic growth and resilience, a healthy environment and beneficial social outcomes for Aotearoa New Zealand.

We are here to support the growth and resilience of the bioeconomy in New Zealand and beyond. Our science develops new products, processes and technologies that optimise the use of biological resources to deliver food and materials from a resilient supply chain while protecting the natural environment. We translate science into real-world outcomes, impact and commercial success.

Our new organisation brings together New Zealand's four leading bioeconomy research institutes into one. Together, our world-class science can do more to advance innovation in agriculture, horticulture, forestry, aquaculture, biotechnology and manufacturing; protect and enhance ecosystems from biosecurity threats and climate risks; and develop new bio-based technologies and products.

The Bioeconomy Science Institute is a Crown Research Institute, owned by the New Zealand Government and governed by an independent Board of Directors. We have deep relationships with business, industry bodies, Māori iwi and hapū, universities, independent research organisations, government and communities.



And we are brand new, formed on 1 July 2025, building on 100 years of history to make a difference to the future. While we build the Bioeconomy Science Institute, we are committed to ensuring we continue to deliver high-quality science and commercialisation activities through our temporary Group structure.

POSITION SCOPE & PURPOSE

The Senior Communications Advisor is primarily a writing-focused role, responsible for delivering strategic, influential content across a range of audiences and channels. This includes compliance reporting, parliamentary accountability responses, science writing (such as impact case studies and stakeholder content for newsletters, websites, and social media), support for Official Information Act requests, and drafting other documents or reports required by any of the Groups or the Bioeconomy Science Institute.

Initially, the role will sit within the AgResearch Group Communications and Marketing team, with a primary focus on AgResearch needs, while also providing writing support across the Bioeconomy Science Institute as needed. Over time, the role's portfolio may evolve.

KEY ACCOUNTABILITY AREAS

HIGH QUALITY WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

- Writes clear, concise, and engaging content about our science, our people, and our organisation for use across various channels (intranets, newsletters, web, social media channels, etc)
- Writes and/or shapes science impact case studies, research summaries, and any other reporting documentation required
- Drafts and contributes to statutory reports and documents (annual report, statement of corporate intent)
- Drafts responses to parliamentary accountability processes, including parliamentary annual review questions
- Drafts other reporting and content required by MBIE, MPI, etc, on a weekly, monthly, quarterly basis
- Contributes to accountability processes such as OIA responses, select committee questions, and performance reporting

STAKEHOLDER COMMUNICATION

- Develops communication materials tailored to key stakeholders (e.g. Ministers, government agencies, iwi, industry, research partners)
- Provides trusted communication advice to leaders and teams
- Builds and maintains effective relationships with internal and external stakeholders to promote the benefits and impacts of Bioeconomy Science Institute research and the organisation itself
- Works across the Groups to plan, develop and deliver proactive communication activity, and to develop and deliver reactive responses as required



- Lead or contribute to the development and delivery of communication campaigns that promote research, initiatives, or organisational goals
- Keeps on top of national and international trends that could impact the organisation and its work
- Provides back-up media support to the AgResearch Group External Communications Manager, as required

HEALTH, SAFETY & WELLBEING

- Complies with relevant health, safety, and wellbeing policies, procedures and safe ways of working and event reporting
- Always ensures own and others' safety
- Identifies and reports any hazards, near misses or incidents

OTHER

- Contributes to the development of communications and marketing strategic and tactical plans
- Applies principles of continuous improvement to all mahi
- Embraces AgResearch Group values and develops behaviour to demonstrate these values
- Plays to strengths and takes an active learning approach to professional development
- Carries out any other duties as required by the Head of Communications and Marketing

PERSON SPECIFICATIONS

The person best suited to this position loves writing, is naturally curious, and will possess the following:

KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

- Understands of the machinery of government and the wider public sector including how Crown Research Institutes and Public Research Organisations fit in
- Understands how different channels interact and work best together to achieve objectives
- Keeps up to date with current affairs and/or science and is aware of the broader political/government/scientific context
- Strong writing, editing and oral communications skills
- Measures results against communication objectives, and adapts as required
- Tertiary qualification desired, preferably in related area (PR, communications, journalism) and/or comparable relevant experience



CAPABILITIES AND EXPERIENCE

- 5 to 7 years of experience in the writing and delivery of appropriate audience-focused outputs
- Proven ability to effectively and clearly communicate ideas through written language, encompassing both the technical aspects of writing (grammar, mechanics, etc) and the ability to craft well-organised, persuasive, and informative pieces.
- Proven ability to take a strategic, proactive approach in the management of reputation issues – internal, external, and stakeholder engagement
- Proven ability to build solid relationships across the organisation, with senior leaders, and with government and other stakeholders
- Proven ability to research and understand the wider context, analyse, and think strategically
- Experience working within the public sector and/or with a Crown Research Institute is desirable
- Māori communications experience would be very welcome
- An understanding of the primary sector within Aotearoa New Zealand and/or life sciences is desirable

COMPETENCIES

Organisation-wide competencies (critical to every role)	
Competency	Definition
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.
Driving for 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.
Integrity	Acts honestly in accordance with moral or ethical principles.
Role-specific competencies	
Competency	Definition
Intellectual Curiosity	Curious, open-minded, eager to learn, explore, question, and embrace new ideas
Writing	Clear, effective, and technically sound written communication of ideas
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.
Solving Problems	Identifies solutions given available information.
Business Insight	Applies business knowledge to achieve organisational goals and objectives.
Dealing with Ambiguity	Comfortably handles unclear or unpredictable situations.
Professionalism	Acts in accordance with job-related values, principles and standards.

