

**SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT, PUBLIC AFFAIRS  
CORTEX INNOVATION COMMUNITY  
ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI**

**POSITION SUMMARY**

The Senior Vice President, Public Affairs is a new senior leadership position reporting directly to the president and CEO. This person will design strategy and lead execution of communications, government relations and strategic partnerships functions resulting in positioning Cortex as a leader in accelerating inclusive economic growth in the region toward equitable economic impacts.

The successful candidate will assess current communications and business-related partnership plans, strategies and tactics to determine what changes need to be made to existing strategies and what the new strategies need to be adopted to support the entire organization effectively implementing its [new strategic plan](#). Internally, the successful candidate will lead the communications team, contribute on the senior leadership team and advance cross-organizational priorities in partnership with other departments. Externally, this role will build and implement convening strategy around our key clusters and drives our business development efforts. The position is critical to the fulfillment of Cortex’s mission as we execute our strategic plan focused on accelerating inclusive economic growth in St. Louis.

**ABOUT CORTEX**

Cortex is a vibrant space serving as an inclusive economic engine for St. Louis. Cortex creates equitable economic impacts by leveraging high-quality facilities, developing programs that build knowledge and networks, and convening strategic partnerships that attract and support emerging and established companies. Founded in 2002 through a collaboration of Washington University in St. Louis, BJC HealthCare, the University of Missouri – St. Louis, Saint Louis University, and the Missouri Botanical Garden, the Cortex Innovation Community ([CortexSTL.org](http://CortexSTL.org)) is an internationally recognized hub of innovation and entrepreneurship that is focused on accelerating inclusive economic growth in St. Louis.

Cortex’s mission is to advance inclusive economic growth in the St. Louis region. Cortex’s new 5-year strategic plan can be found [here](#).

**ORGANIZATIONAL RELATIONSHIPS**

Reports to:	President/CEO
Supervises:	Communications Manager

Collaborates with: All staff; partner organizations (including but not limited to cluster-focused innovation centers such as Global Center for Cyber Security and Advanced Pharmaceutical Ingredients Innovation Center); key funders such as Washington University, St. Louis University and University of Missouri-St. Louis; district tenants; regional/state political leadership and key partnerships

## **POSITION RESPONSIBILITIES**

The SVP, Public Affairs will support Cortex's aspirational objectives through strong and innovative leadership of the external affairs function. The successful candidate must be able to translate strategic plans into specific short- and long-term objectives and define metrics and accountabilities. Operating through influence, they will facilitate the building of strong relationships with senior management and employees across the organization. They also will cultivate productive internal and external business and government-related relationships across key stakeholder groups.

### **This position will advance our mission by:**

*Marketing and Brand Strategy Design. Together with your team, you will:*

- Be the lead on defining, building, protecting, measuring, and promoting Cortex's brand.
- Create, implement, oversee, and measure the success of a comprehensive, culturally competent marketing and communications program that will enhance Cortex's position as the center of the region's inclusive tech economy.

*Marketing and Brand Strategy Implementation. Together with the team, you will:*

- Oversee design, production, and effective multi-channel distribution of Cortex's messaging, communication, and promotional campaigns.
- Design proactive media, PR and thought leadership strategies to stimulate media interest, build brand awareness and convey Cortex messages. Ensure regular contact with targeted media and timely responses to requests (in conjunction with contracted consultants/agencies as appropriate).
- Redesign and manage Cortex's website to assure that our web presence aligns with our brand of excellence and innovation.
- Devise and manage a robust digital and social media strategy and intelligence capability. Measure ongoing consumer and stakeholder engagement with Cortex's brand, research, thought leadership, programming and advocacy efforts.
- Serve as a spokesperson to key external audiences and position the CEO and other Cortex leaders to interface with the media and other key influencers and other key stakeholders.

*Civic & Government Engagement. Together with your team, you will:*

- Create and implement a culturally competent engagement strategy for building meaningful and authentic relationships with regional political leaders, regulatory bodies, and tech economy thought leaders. Implementation will include regular oversight and evaluation.
- Establish an advocacy agenda that guides the organization's efforts to educate and inform government officials and the public on issues that impact equitable economic growth.

*Cortex Strategic Convening Strategy. Together with your team, you will:*

- Establish a "convener strategy" to actively engage key stakeholders, to include creating the environment necessary for stakeholders to come together around inclusive economic growth.
- Solidify Cortex's role as a regional and national thought leader. This includes participation in key forums and gatherings around shared goals that position Cortex's ideas and expertise in regional inclusive economic growth through the awareness and use of Cortex resources, partnerships, and programs.
- Create and manage a solid network of strategic partnerships and alliances in support of Cortex's key cluster and business development priorities including the Global Center for Cyber Security, Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients Innovation Center, and more.

*Operational Excellence. Together with your team, you will:*

- Use data, analytics, and insights to determine program and initiative success. Understand and track the effectiveness of key marketing and brand initiatives, research, programs/events, and overall enhancement of stakeholder and community experience.
- Design and execute metric-based short- and long-term plans and budgets to achieve departmental goals, support the success of Cortex's overall strategic and financial objectives, and establish key performance metrics connecting all areas.
- Display a mindset of continuous quality improvement, learning and commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion.
- Follow Cortex policies and code of conduct, ensuring the appropriate handling and use of equipment, tools, and sensitive information.
- Facilitate and attend relevant staff meetings to promote communication and execution of goals and objectives.
- Complete special projects specific to the function of the department or as needed for the department.
- Other duties as assigned within the scope of position expectations.

## **PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE AND QUALIFICATIONS**

The position requires a highly strategic, innovative and action-focused leader who has a passion for Cortex's mission and a commitment to build and position the organization as the regional leader in accelerating inclusive economic growth in St. Louis.

The successful candidate will have deep experience engaging a wide diversity of stakeholders, building and running effective marketing and communication programs, and building brands. They will have a measurable track record that exhibits the ability to define and build strategic partnerships/relationships, influence ideas, and manage relationships with external stakeholders in complex environments. They will be skilled at affecting change and building strong, sustainable, and actionable relationships that deliver results with key external partners.

The SVP, Public Affairs will have a strong ability to coordinate across departments and understand the implications of decisions on areas throughout the organization. The right person will be a proactive builder and internal innovator with the ability to set priorities decisively, delegate responsibilities, assure accountability, and allocate resources to ensure results.

The successful candidate will exhibit intellectual curiosity, including the ability to listen to, collate and learn from multiple voices. They will have a motivating approach to building strong working relationships and collaboration from stakeholders and internal teams and be able to establish rapport and open communication with all constituents. An engaging and supportive expert, the SVP, External Affairs will offer credibility both internally and externally.

## **REQUIRED SKILLS, ABILITIES AND ATTITUDE**

- Deep knowledge of, and experience working in, the economic development sector, with nonprofit or government affairs experience preferred.
- At least 10 years of a combination of marketing, communication, external affairs (government, alliances, partnerships etc.,) brand management, digital and corporate communication experience, including significant senior management experience.
- Mission-driven and self-directed individual with experience building, developing, and managing agile and results-oriented teams.
- Exceptional oral and written communications skills. Dynamic public speaker possessing the ability to communicate with and gain the confidence of people from a variety of sectors and settings.
- Strong interpersonal skills and ability to work collaboratively across the organization with a high-performing management team of senior professionals.
- Strong analytical skills and experience with data analysis and the use of metrics to drive decisions and achieve strategic objectives.

- Strong organizational and process management skills.
- Capability to execute vision and strategy across the organization to influence key stakeholders (including senior leaders) on the design and implementation of programs, partnerships, and marketing strategies.
- A relationship builder who is trusted, creative, collaborative, persuasive, dependable and possesses high ethical standards.
- Familiarity with Microsoft Office.
- An eagerness to learn and a commitment to continuous quality improvements.
- Ability to follow-up and follow-through with strong attention to detail.
- Ability to lead large teams and inspire other staff members to think creatively.
- Experience working with and managing outside vendors.
- Possesses strong interpersonal skills as demonstrated by compassionate, courteous, cordial, cooperative, and professional interaction with diverse groups of co-workers, external business partners, and the community.
- A passion for Cortex's mission.

## **DIVERSITY, INCLUSION AND EQUITY**

Cortex actively seeks to increase diversity of its workforce. Cortex is an Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) employer and does not discriminate based on race, color, national origin, religion, gender, age, veteran status, political affiliation, sexual orientation, marital status or disability (in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act) with respect to employment opportunities.

## **COMPENSATION**

The hiring salary range for this position is \$150,000-160,000 a year. Cortex employees also receive a benefits package that includes health insurance, 9 holidays, 20 days of PTO a year, 10% 401K matching after 6 months, and others. Work location will be primarily in the office with the option to work remote up to two days a week.

## **APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS**

To apply, please email cover letter and resume to [resumes@cortexstl.org](mailto:resumes@cortexstl.org) with Senior Vice President, Public Affairs in the subject line. No phone calls. Application materials must be received by 5:00 p.m. on Friday, October 21, 2022.