



Research and solutions for a stronger Appalachia

Senior Communications Strategist Job Opportunity

Marietta Ohio River Valley. Photo by Mike Tewkesbury.

“The truth, well told” can speed progress toward change

The Ohio River Valley institute (ORVI) – an independent nonprofit providing research and solutions for a more sustainable, equitable, democratic, and prosperous Appalachia – is hiring for the newly created position of Senior Communications Strategist.

This is not a traditional communications role

Words, images, and metaphors help us stake out areas of common ground, connect policy to people’s lives, and can even shape the underlying cultural mythologies that define a region’s choices. This belief is at the heart of this new position.

Along with our team of regionally-focused experts producing substantive research on the most pressing issues facing our communities, the Senior Communications Strategist will take an empirical, research-driven approach to communications that will boost the outreach and communication efforts of the Ohio River Valley’s entire progressive community.

Seeking unconventional strategists

Alongside sharing our mission to build a more prosperous, sustainable, and equitable Appalachia, we seek an unconventional communications strategist, a persuasive relationship builder, and a curious, self-directed, and entrepreneurial professional. If you believe this is a role that you’ll be excited to work in each day, read on and please apply!

Join us in building a more prosperous, sustainable, and equitable Appalachia!

POSTING DATE

March 28, 2024

SALARY

\$85,000 - \$100,000 DOE; includes generous benefits package

LOCATION

Remote, ideally from within the Ohio River Valley region (Western Pennsylvania, West Virginia, Eastern Kentucky and Eastern Ohio)

TO APPLY

This position is open until filled, with applications submitted by April 23 given full consideration. Applications will be reviewed as soon as they are received; initial screening calls are anticipated to begin in mid-April. Early applications are strongly encouraged.

[Apply Now](#)

[Refer A Friend](#)

[Schedule a Call](#)

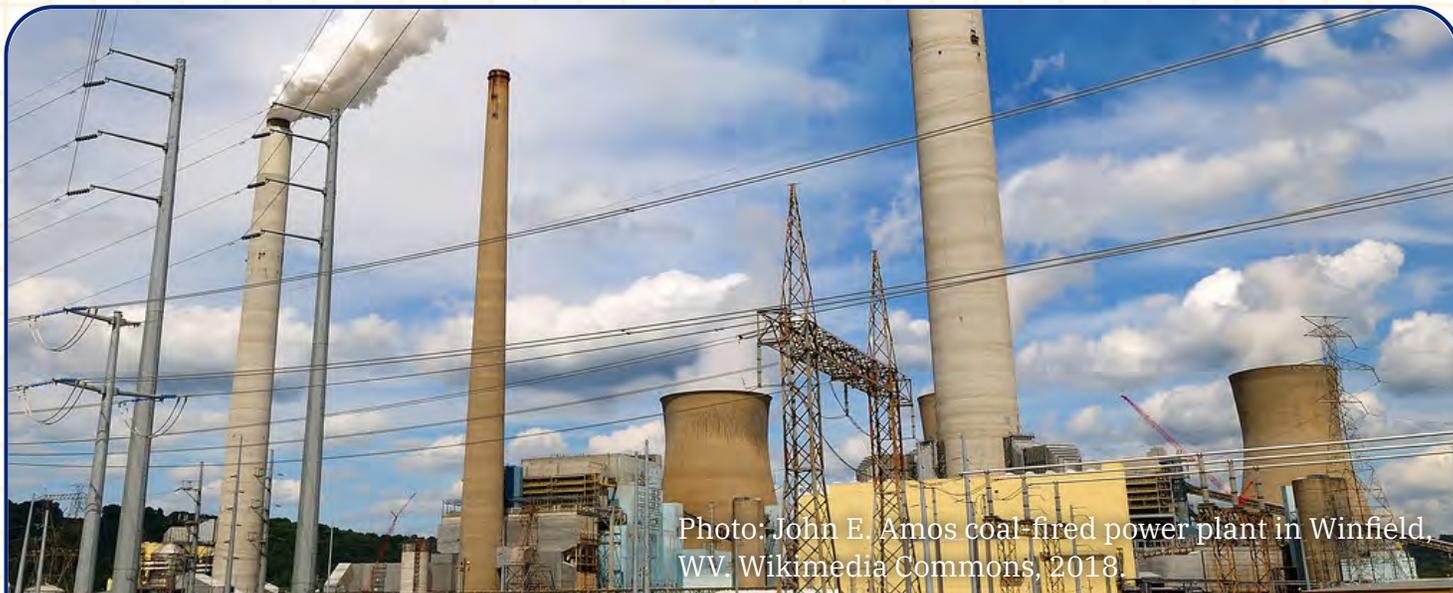


Photo: John E. Amos coal-fired power plant in Winfield, WV. Wikimedia Commons, 2018

About the Ohio River Valley Institute

Founded in 2020, the [Ohio River Valley Institute](#) (ORVI) supports communities in the region working to advance a more prosperous, sustainable, and equitable Appalachia. The Institute produces data-driven research and proposes policies to improve the economic performance and standards of living for the greater Ohio River Valley, with a focus on shared prosperity, clean energy, and equitable democracy.

With ten staff members, our organization is fully remote and operates as a program of the [Community Foundation for the Alleghenies](#). Our work covers the Appalachian states of Pennsylvania, Ohio, West Virginia, and Kentucky, and after nearly four years in operation our team has already made a significant impact, bringing the challenges and opportunities facing our region to national audiences. Our work has been featured in the media hundreds of times, including high-

profile stories at NPR's [StateImpact](#), [Forbes](#), [ProPublica](#), [The New Republic](#), and [CNN](#).

ORVI is engaged in boundary-pushing, cutting-edge work in some of the most challenging and exciting sectors in our region, including: [building shared prosperity and clean energy](#); uncovering the false promises of [hydrogen and carbon capture](#); [natural gas](#); [petrochemicals and plastics](#); and [repairing legacy damage from the fossil fuel industry](#). Our research portfolio includes long-form [reports](#) and informative [blog posts](#), and our communications team ensures that this work reaches the audiences who need it most through traditional and [social media](#) channels.

Our organizational culture is one of collaboration and excellence, with deep respect for one another and an openness to new perspectives.

Organizational Commitment to Equity

As an independent research center, the Ohio River Valley Institute is committed to ensuring that our work accurately incorporates learnings from, and contemplates the potential impact on, people with a broad range of backgrounds and experiences in the region. We recognize that where equity is absent, there are no strong communities, thriving economies, or healthy environments.

The Ohio River Valley Institute has contributed to equity in our communities in two key ways: shining a light on the false economic promises made by the fossil fuel industry and examining the cost to working families in the region if we do nothing to shift our policy landscape and economic development strategy to better support community wellbeing.

About the Senior Communications Strategist Role

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Along with our team of regionally-focused experts producing substantive research on the most pressing issues facing our communities, the Senior Communications Strategist will take an empirical, research-driven approach to communications that will boost the outreach and communication efforts of the Ohio River Valley’s entire progressive community.



Photo: Ted Auch, FracTracker Alliance, 2022.

Reporting to the Executive Director, the Senior Communications Strategist will focus on the following bodies of work:

Opinion research and message development

Develop original opinion research (such as public opinion polling and focus group message testing) and identify the best available communications research found in academic studies, distilling it into easily understandable messages to share with ORVI staff and allies. Publish results in accessible forms, such as toolkits, talking points, or messaging guidance documents that showcase tested ways to communicate about complex topics. Analyze and write about public opinion research, voter attitudes, and issue campaigns that help audiences make sense of policy developments, especially those related to ORVI’s core program areas. Support ORVI’s inter-organizational communications network, supplying allied regional organizations with public opinion research and data, unified narrative guidance, educational opportunities and skills development, and additional comms capacity.

Research-driven communications strategy development

Identify needs and opportunities and develop empirically-driven strategies and tactics that reframe the public debate around jobs, the economy, and the environment, with a focus on quality of work and quality of life for working class Appalachians. This includes creating multi-faceted impact communications strategies to educate and engage residents, allies, decision-makers, and other key audiences and amplify the evidence-based research being produced by ORVI researchers.

Content creation

Coordinate with ORVI’s research and communications teams to identify needs and proactively conceptualize, script, direct, and produce content that provides our allies with a reserve of empirical knowledge about public opinion and what shifts it. Assertively engage the media to correct and improve coverage that uses unhelpful framing, inaccurate statements about public opinion or outdated narratives about the region. Lead responses to breaking news events with both proactive and reactive tactics to advance ORVI’s narrative.

Ideal Candidate Qualifications

Alongside sharing our mission to building a more prosperous, sustainable, and equitable Appalachia, we seek candidates with the following qualifications, expertise, and approach:

An Unconventional Communications Strategist

A seasoned communications strategist who brings experience approaching communications and message development as a field for rigorous study and improvement, rather than relying on intuition or “best practice”. We seek someone who has taken unconventional approaches to shifting long-term sector-wide narrative goals for a region or community. Prior experience and content knowledge in climate, clean energy, sustainable economic development, labor, public policy, and/or the fossil fuel industries is desirable, as is experience in analytics, measurement, and evidence-based evaluation of communications campaigns.

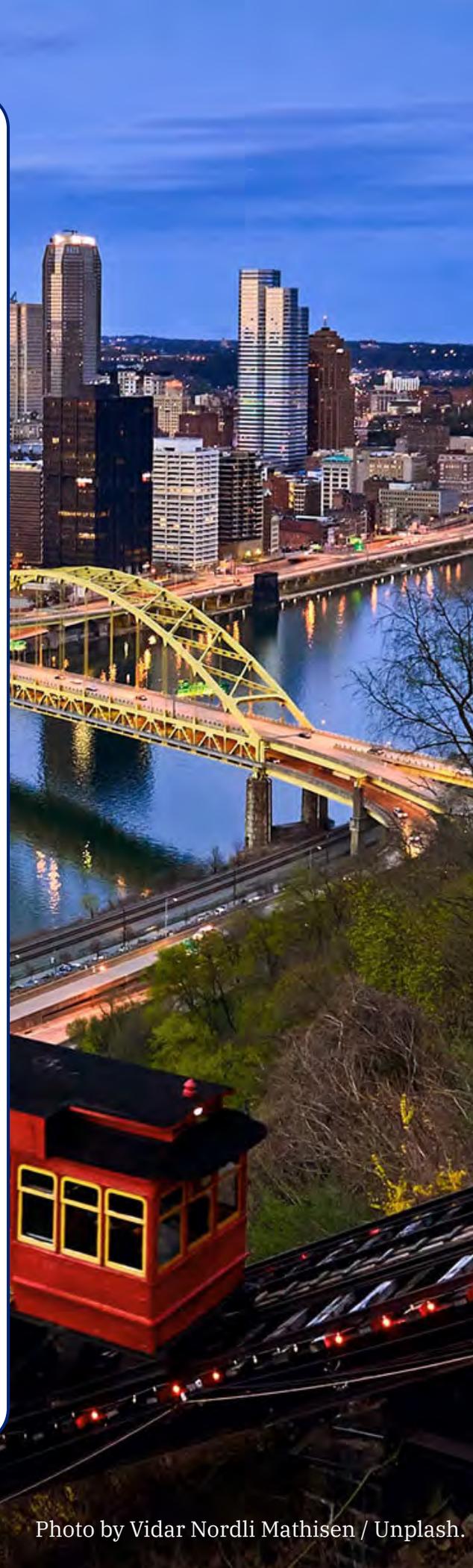
A Persuasive Relationship Builder

An outstanding written and oral communicator that demonstrates an ability to translate complex data and research into persuasive narratives across different types of media and audiences, including those that do not already share ORVI’s beliefs. Experience bridging divides and collaborating with a wide range of diverse constituencies, including experience working across lines of race, class, gender, and geography.

A Curious, Self-Directed, and Entrepreneurial Professional

A teammate who desires continuous learning, who asks questions and self-corrects, and is able to prioritize projects effectively. We seek someone who demonstrates resourcefulness, meets deadlines, and responds flexibly to changing work priorities.

Current or past lived and/or work experience in the Ohio River Valley region, especially with the regional media landscape, is a plus.



Compensation and Benefits

This is a full-time salaried remote position, requiring a willingness to work some evenings and weekends and does include occasional travel throughout the Ohio River Valley region as well as the country. The annual salary range is between **\$85,000 - \$100,000** depending on qualifications and experience.

Through our program host, the Community Foundation for the Alleghenies, the Institute offers generous benefits including health, vision, and dental care coverage as well as paid holidays and vacation time and a match toward your 401K retirement plan.

Equity-Based Hiring

The Ohio River Valley Institute, a program of the Community Foundation for the Alleghenies, is an equal employment opportunity employer. People of color, queer and trans people, and women are strongly encouraged to apply. We believe that a diverse workforce and inclusive workplace culture enhance our ability to fulfill our mission. Employment and promotional opportunities are based upon individual capabilities and qualifications without regard to race, color, religion, gender identity or expression, pregnancy, sexual orientation, age, national origin, marital status, citizenship, disability, veteran status, or any other protected characteristic as established under law.

How to Apply

<https://cloversearchworks.hire.trakstar.com/jobs/fk0viif>

Online applications only, please no email or paper submissions. You will be asked to upload a cover letter and resume.

In your cover letter, please describe as specifically as you can:

- Your interest in and connection to the goals, mission, and vision of ORVI
- How your experience aligns with the job responsibilities and ideal qualifications described in this announcement.

This position is open until filled, with applications submitted by April 23 given full consideration; early applications are strongly encouraged! All applications will be acknowledged via an email receipt. Consideration will be given to applications as soon as they are received; initial screening calls are anticipated to begin in mid-April.

Questions regarding this opportunity are welcomed and can be directed to:

Julie Edsforth, Lead Search Consultant, Clover Search Works

✉ **Email Julie** with questions about the position

📞 **Schedule a call** with Julie to learn more about the position



Clover Search Works is honored to be partnering with the Ohio River Valley Institute in this search.