Communications Officer
Washington, DC Office

The Position
Under direction of the media manager, the communications officer will develop and implement strategies to maximize visibility for the Union of Concerned Scientists (UCS), UCS issues, experts and products. The position requires rapid adaptation to changing external and internal conditions, and daily flexibility to reprioritize assignments while meeting deadlines and responsibilities. This position will focus primarily on garnering visibility for specific UCS campaigns but must maintain flexibility to jump on media opportunities that may arise for other issue areas.

Responsibilities
• Serve as media point person for one or two UCS programs, focusing media outreach work on priority campaign projects. Work closely with program and communications staff to develop proactive and reactive media strategies that maximize visibility and engagement opportunities across distribution channels.
• In consultation with the media manager, take the lead planning and implementing national and state media efforts.
• Write and distribute press releases, pitch letters, staff bios, backgrounders, LTEs, tweets, blogs, op-eds, and other materials to obtain media coverage in print, radio, online, and television outlets.
• Organize in-person and telephone press conferences.
• Assist with message development and talking points. Monitor press coverage. Research online and offline media outlets to devise effective pitches for both a broad public and specialized audiences.
• Train UCS scientists and activists on successful media techniques and strategies.
• Work with high-level technical experts to help develop them as thought leaders on key issues.
• Represent the communications department in program planning meetings to ensure strategies and tactics are developed with cross-channel promotions in mind and to maximize visibility, engage supporters in our campaigns, and contribute to campaign impact.
• Utilize social media dashboard to develop strategies to cultivate and communicate with reporters, thought leaders, bloggers, and other key audiences.
• Become thoroughly knowledgeable about UCS issues, positions, experts, and products and keep abreast of new developments.
• Keep up-to-date on the latest trends and best practices in media outreach including how to maximize the latest online tools and trends for visibility, engagement and impact.
• Perform other related duties as assigned.

Qualifications and experience
The position requires three to five years of experience in media relations, public relations or journalism. Experience using online and offline methods to generate earned media coverage is required. Candidates must also be proficient in message development and able to write press releases, media advisories and other press materials and identify and exploit media opportunities. Experience in writing effectively for a wide variety of audiences is preferred. Corporate campaign experience a plus. A Bachelor’s degree is required.

At UCS, comparable training and/or experience can be substituted for degrees when appropriate.

The communications officer may spend extended periods at computer terminal. Overnight travel is required a few times a year.

UCS is an equal opportunity employer continually seeking to diversify its staff particularly to broaden opportunities for individuals from demographic groups that are historically underrepresented in the sciences and in environmental advocacy.

Compensation, Hours and Location: This is a full-time position based in UCS’s Washington, DC office. For candidates who meet all position requirements, the salary is in the low $50,000s. UCS offers excellent benefits and a rewarding work environment.

To Apply: Please submit a cover letter, resume, salary requirements, three writing samples and information about how you learned about the position via email to jobs@ucsusa.org and include “Communications Officer” in the subject line. Email materials in Word or PDF format only. No phone calls please. Deadline: September 20, 2015 or until filled.