PATHWAYS
EXECUTIVE SEARCH

Director, Communications & Engagement

COAST FUNDS

Coast Funds – an Indigenous-led conservation finance organization serving First Nations in the Great Bear Rainforest, Haida Gwaii, and other coastal communities – is seeking a new **Director, Communications & Engagement**. With a focus on external engagement and communications, the Director leads the establishment and implementation of community engagement initiatives, as well as a government relations program that supports connection with communities and crown governments. The role further provides oversight of the communications function to ensure alignment with organizational goals.

Head Office Location: Vancouver, BC
Work Arrangement: Hybrid, onsite 3 days per week. Accommodations may be made for experienced candidates with lived experience in coastal communities.
Position Type: Full-time, salaried
Reporting Relationship: CEO
Team: 3-4 direct reports
Travel: Occasional and intermittent travel required (coastal BC region)
Compensation: $110,000 – $135,000

The Organization

Coast Funds is an Indigenous-led conservation finance organization that supports participating First Nations to invest in sustainable economic development and ecological stewardship within their traditional territories. The organization was created in 2007 as an outcome of the **Great Bear Rainforest** agreements to manage funds for First Nations' stewardship and economic priorities in the Great Bear Rainforest and Haida Gwaii. In 2024, First Nations worked with Coast Funds and other partners to secure new funding, through the **Great Bear Sea PFP**, for marine stewardship and community development. Today, the organization manages conservation endowments and economic funds, which are allocated between participating First Nations, and provides financial administration services to First Nations and their partners.

To date, First Nations have accessed over $120 million and invested in more than 450 Indigenous-led conservation, economic development, and sustainable energy **projects**. With these investments, First Nations are strengthening coastal communities, diversifying local economies, and stewarding lands, waters, and life.

Vision

First Nations exercise their inherent rights to self-determination, ensuring healthy and thriving communities and ecosystems.

Mission

To serve First Nations in achieving their goals for community well-being, conservation, stewardship, and economic development centred in the Great Bear Rainforest, Haida Gwaii, and surrounding seas.

Values

Our Board has adopted the following core values to guide Coast Funds' operations:

The Organization continued

Values continued

Respect and Good Relations
We show up with humility and respect at work and in the communities we serve. We recognize that Indigenous values of reciprocity and care are foundational to building strong relationships, fostering effective collaboration, and sustaining meaningful impact.

Integrity and Accountability
We act with honesty and transparency, holding ourselves responsible for our actions and impacts. We build and maintain high-trust relationships by demonstrating accountability for the funds and commitments entrusted to us.

Collaboration and Adaptability
We work as collaborators and partners, adapting our practices to respond to challenges and opportunities. We work together with the communities we serve to find solutions and deliver reliable, flexible services.

Strategic Plan And Annual Reporting

Coast Funds 2026 - 2028 Strategic Plan outlines four goals:

Goal #1: Support First Nations in advancing their goals for stewardship, conservation, and healthy and resilient economies.

Goal #2: Deepen engagement with First Nations and develop robust knowledge management systems to share learning, support First Nations' decision-making, and amplify their impact.

Goal #3: Reinforce strong financial stewardship, governance, and organizational practices.

Goal #4: Support First Nations in the successful implementation of the Great Bear Sea project finance for permanence initiative.

Read the **2025 Annual Report** and previous annual reports **here**.

The Organization continued

Structure of the Funds

Today, Coast Funds includes two organizations that serve First Nations in the Great Bear Rainforest, Haida Gwaii, and other coastal regions:

Coast Conservation Endowment Fund Foundation (CCEFF) is a registered Canadian charity that manages conservation endowment funds for First Nations in the Great Bear Rainforest and Haida Gwaii (est. 2007), the Great Bear Sea (est. 2024), and Clayoquot Sound (est. 2024). The Foundation also holds First Nations' own endowment contributions and an operating fund for the Marine Plan Partnership (MaPP). Income generated from the endowment funds provides ongoing support for First Nations to develop and strengthen stewardship and Guardian programs, invest in conservation initiatives, and sustain regional planning efforts. Investment returns are allocated between participating First Nations on an annual basis. As of June 30, 2026, Coast Funds has approved $58 million in conservation funding toward 269 projects.

Coastal Indigenous Prosperity Society (CIPS) is a not-for-profit society that manages an economic and community prosperity fund for First Nations participating in the Great Bear Sea project finance for permanence initiative (est. 2024). First Nations will access this fund to invest in community-led economic development, infrastructure, training, and cultural programs. As of June 30, 2026, Coast Funds has approved $30 million in economic development and infrastructure funding toward 27 projects.

The Role

The **Director, Communications & Engagement** is a key member of the Coast Funds' leadership team, responsible for strategy, oversight, and guidance. Reporting to the CEO, and with a focus on external engagement and communications, the Director leads the establishment and implementation of community engagement initiatives, as well as a government relations program that supports connection and reconnection with communities and crown governments. The role further provides oversight of the communications function, including several direct reports, to ensure alignment with organizational goals.

By integrating communications, government relations, and engagement efforts, the Director ensures strategies are coordinated, strengthens relationships, builds trust, and amplifies Coast Funds' impact. This role plays a critical part in supporting the organization's long-term growth by fostering external partnerships, maintaining a strong foundation of communication and engagement, and positioning the organization for future success.

Responsibilities

Strategic Leadership & Oversight

- Provide strategic direction and oversight for communications, government relations, and community engagement to ensure alignment with Coast Funds' mission and goals.
- Work closely with the CEO, senior leadership, and department staff to ensure organizational messaging and engagement reflect shared values, priorities, and community needs.
- Foster collaboration across departments so that communications and engagement strategies are informed by, and responsive to, the work of the entire team.
- Anticipate challenges and opportunities in communications and engagement, advising leadership on strategies to mitigate risk and maximize impact.
- Support strategic engagements and communications with philanthropy, outcomes and organizational impact.

Responsibilities continued

Communications

- Provide leadership and oversight to ensure smooth operations and the integration of internal and external communications.
- Supervise and support communications, including strategy, branding, publications, media relations, fundraising support, and content development.
- Provide oversight and monitor communications activities to ensure alignment with strategy, policies, tone, and organizational values.

Government Relations

- Establish, implement, and lead a government relations program to strengthen relationships with federal and provincial governments, including elected officials and senior staff.
- Monitor political, policy, and legislative developments relevant to Coast Funds and advise leadership on potential impacts and opportunities.
- Develop and maintain networks with government officials, agencies, and partners to advance the Coast Funds' interests and influence.
- Provide strategic advice to the CEO and senior leadership on engagement strategy, priorities and approaches.

Community Engagement

- Develop, implement, and lead a community engagement program that fosters meaningful, reciprocal relationships with First Nations communities.
- Create opportunities for connection and re-connection with First Nations communities, ensuring their voices and perspectives inform Coast Funds' work.
- Support staff in engaging effectively and respectfully with community, drawing on trauma-informed, culturally grounded, and relationship-centred approaches.
- Participate in representing Coast Funds at community events, forums, and meetings to build trust, visibility, and shared understanding.
- Gather and share community insights with the leadership team to inform organizational decision-making and strategy.

Responsibilities continued

General

- Engage with the entire team in a meaningful and inclusive way, ensuring staff are informed, supported, and aligned with engagement strategies.
- Carry out other related duties as required for the role.

Key Measures of Success

- Communications, engagement, and government relations functions are operating cohesively, effectively, and efficiently, with clear coordination across the organization.
- A government relations program and a community engagement program are established, well-defined, and actively implemented, with clear goals, related outcomes, timelines, and accountability.
- Communities are meaningfully engaged, with stronger connections, improved trust, and visible evidence of two-way communication and collaboration.
- The organizational strategic plan is operationalized with respect to communications and engagement, with milestones achieved, ownership across teams, and measurable progress toward goals.
- Government relations efforts lead to positive policy influence, stronger partnerships with government, and increased or sustained government funding to support the Coast Funds mandate.
- Staff and senior leadership regularly engage with communities (e.g., attending events, supporting initiatives, maintaining ongoing dialogue), demonstrating increased awareness and stronger long-term relationships.
- The CEO receives timely, transparent updates on communications, engagement, and government relations efforts and expresses confidence in the strategies, outcomes, and leadership of the role.
- Staff across departments feel informed, supported, and engaged in communications and engagement efforts, contributing to a culture of respect, collaboration, and accountability.

The Candidate

Experience, Knowledge, Education and Technical Skills

The competencies for this position would typically be acquired through participation in a post-secondary field related to Public Affairs/Public Relations, Government/Cabinet Relations, Communications, or a related field and/or an equivalent combination of the following training, experience, and competencies:

- Demonstrated experience setting strategic direction in public affairs, government relations, and/or community engagement at an organizational level.
- Advanced communications expertise with a track record of leading an organization's overall communications strategy, brand and reputation, including advising executive leadership and/or board on communications and public affairs.
- Proven senior people-leadership experience, with full accountability for managing staff, contractors, and projects.
- Demonstrated ability to develop, manage, and monitor departmental budgets and reporting to senior leadership.
- Experience working with First Nations, Indigenous organizations, or government in partnership with Indigenous communities.
- Lived experience as an Indigenous person and/or a deep understanding of and respect for the cultures, values, governance structures, and priorities of the Nations served.
- Demonstrated cultural agility with knowledge and understanding of Indigenous people, their culture, history and traditions, in addition to an awareness of the impact of generational trauma and the need for equity-seeking action.
- Proven people-leadership skills with the ability to build trust, mentor staff, and foster a positive and high-performing team.
- Strong digital literacy with appropriate fluency to direct, brief and evaluate work produced by staff and vendors using key tools such as Hootsuite, Adobe Creative Design, Microsoft Office 365 tools, and Adobe Acrobat.
- Strong business written and verbal communication skills, including demonstrated experience communicating with executive leadership, boards, senior government officials, First Nation citizens, elders, and youth.

The Candidate continued

General Competencies

In addition to the experience and qualifications outlined above, this position requires the ability to:

- Set strategic direction for the communications and engagement functions while ensuring operational excellence and accountability in its execution.
- Build and sustain strong relationships grounded in respect and reciprocity.
- Lead with a solutions-oriented mindset, bringing calm, clarity, and creativity to team and departmental challenges.
- Make collaborative decisions that balance organizational priorities.
- Demonstrate ownership, integrity, and accountability, consistently leading by example and taking responsibility for results.
- Navigate complexity with cultural humility, emotional intelligence, and a systems-thinking approach.
- Listen with empathy and compassion to understand expectations, resolve challenges, and build trust across stakeholders.
- Act with integrity and neutrality to cultivate and sustain high-trust, respectful relationships.
- Model positivity and adaptability in the face of evolving circumstances.
- Apply critical thinking and problem-solving skills to drive informed and effective decisions.
- Mentor, coach, and support team members, contributing to a strong, values-aligned culture.
- Uphold confidentiality and exercise sound judgment with sensitive information.
- Demonstrate attention to detail, organization, and initiative in managing projects to completion.
- Embrace, lead, and support change, encouraging adaptability and resilience within the team.
- Work autonomously and efficiently while balancing competing priorities and delivering tangible results.
- Thrive in a high-growth, high-functioning, complex organization.

The Candidate continued

Beneficial Experience and Knowledge

While not essential for the role, the following would bring additional value to the role:

- Master's degree in Public Affairs or similar post-graduate education.
- Experience in the fields of Indigenous-led conservation and economic development.
- Experience engaging with the province of British Columbia and/or the Canadian federal government.
- Experience with philanthropic engagement, communicating impact and knowledge exchange.

Salary, Benefits, & Working Conditions

- The approximate annual salary for this position is in the range of CAD$110,000–135,000, complemented by a strong benefit package that includes four weeks of vacation to start, health and dental coverage, life insurance, paid sick leave, RRSP contributions, a mobile phone plan, budget and leave for professional development, and opportunities for continued learning and professional growth.
- This position is primarily based in the Vancouver office (at least three days per week in the office), with semi-frequent in-person meetings and workshops requiring short-notice attendance.
- Regular in-office hours (Pacific Standard Time) for coordination and team meetings are expected.
- Occasional compensated travel outside Vancouver (up to once per quarter) may be required.
- Intermittent travel within the Great Bear Rainforest and Haida Gwaii for meetings or project site visits is necessary, up to six overnight trips annually.

The Application Process

Coast Funds encourages applications from members of groups that have been marginalized on any grounds enumerated under the B.C. Human Rights Code, including sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, racialization, disability, political belief, religion, marital or family status, age, and/or status as a First Nation, Métis, Inuit, or Indigenous person.

All qualified candidates are encouraged to apply. Given the nature of the organization's work, Coast Funds will give priority to Indigenous candidates, followed by candidates who have worked with Indigenous organizations and possess a solid understanding of Indigenous practices, traditions, and worldviews.

In the latter stages of the selection process, the following additional steps may be required for individuals who are invited to an interview with the selection committee:

- Declaration of Indigenous heritage.
- Information and/or correspondence that supports their self-declaration. Items supporting the self-declaration may include:
  - Letters of support from your Indigenous Community.
  - Reference letters from Indigenous members of your community.
  - Documentation supporting your confirmed citizenship as a member of a recognized First Nations, Inuit, and/or Métis group.

To apply, please submit a Cover Letter and Resume directly to Pathways Executive Search outlining your interest, qualifications, and experience at: **Applications@PathwaysExecutiveSearch.com.** Please include **Coast Funds – Director** in the subject line.

We encourage applications before **October 18th, 2026**; however, we will continue to accept applications until the position is filled.

For more details or to further explore this important leadership opportunity, please contact:

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