

**Position Description**  
**Public Affairs Specialist GS 1035 GG 13**

**Job Title:** Public Affairs Specialist  
**Agency:** Advisory council on Historic Preservation

**Job Announcement Number:**

**SALARY RANGE:**

**OPEN PERIOD:**

**SERIES & GRADE:**

FF 1035 GG 13

**POSITION INFORMATION:**

Full Time - Permanent

**DUTY LOCATIONS:**

1 vacancy, District of Columbia

**WHO MAY APPLY:**

United States Citizens

**SECURITY CLEARANCE:**

**SUPERVISORY STATUS:**

**JOB SUMMARY:**

The Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP) is an independent federal agency that provides a public forum to influence federal policy, programs, and activities that affect historic resources nationwide.

With 42 full-time staff, the ACHP promotes the preservation, enhancement, and productive use of our nation's historic resources, and advises the President and Congress on national historic preservation policy. The ACHP was established by the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), which entrusts to the ACHP the unique mission of advancing historic preservation within the federal government and the national historic preservation program.

**Position Description: Public Affairs Specialist GG 1035 – GG 13**

**JOB SUMMARY:**

This position is located in the Office of Communications, Education, and Outreach (OCEO) in the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation. The Office of Communications, Education, and Outreach is responsible for communications with outreach to federal agencies; Congress; and national, state, and local organizations; officials and organizations and associations that represent the historic preservation community; as well as to the press and other media outlets; and the general public. The office's primary function is to communicate information about the ACHP's initiatives, policies, and programs. Communications services include speechwriting and other writing, and outreach via social and traditional media. Incumbent is an expert writer and has excellent organizational skills to manage multiple assignments and coordinate time sensitive projects.

The public affairs specialist conducts the public affairs program for the agency with the responsibility for planning, developing, and communicating the organization's program, policies, and activities to the public.

The ideal candidate has proven media relations experience and has served as a spokesperson for a governmental agency, corporation or industry association, or worked for a public relations firm.

He/she is a self-starter, is motivated, uses sound judgment, is able to work under tight deadlines and multi-task, and is a skilled writer who can understand and explain complex information to the public.

This is a staff position located in OCEO of the ACHP. The incumbent contributes substantially to the development of the ACHP's communication and information programs, both online and offline, which foster understanding nationwide by federal and state agencies, state and local officials, and the general public of the ACHP's regulatory mission.

**DUTIES:**

Develops and transmits informational material to a variety of publics with diverse understanding of historic preservation, to enhance the understanding of historic preservation and the work of the ACHP.

- a. Serves as the delegated spokesperson for the agency.
- b. Remains abreast of complex agency program issues, case reviews, and developments.
- c. Analyzes incoming press inquiries, and manages and prepares responses for agency leadership.
- d. Provide media relations advice to agency officials about newsworthy, sensitive, and controversial issues.
- e. Coordinates broadcast and print media interviews and coordinates press releases and media advisories.
- f. Participates in improving the effectiveness of communication tactics, assists with conducting assessments and evaluations to ensure objectives are met, and suggests quality improvements to leadership.
- g. Participates in the development and strategic planning of communications policies, goals, procedures, and media.
- h. Develops, writes, and edits news releases, talking points, scripts, op-ed articles, features, and original articles for public dissemination and publication.
- i. Evaluates program needs to advise the OCEO director and other management of the information that should be made available to the public or approaches to convey information.
- j. Establishes and maintains effective working relationships with editors and other members of the media, and specialized audiences interested in the ACHP's work.
- k. Determines opportunities for and executes proactive press releases and media outreach.
- l. Uses a variety of methods and techniques to achieve communication goals such as new releases, social media, radio and media interviews, feature articles, conferences, etc.
- m. Keeps agency management aware of comments, negative publicity, and criticisms.

**KNOWLEDGE REQUIRED BY THE POSITION:**

The Public Affairs Specialist must exhibit knowledge of the principles, methods, practices, and techniques of communications that enable the employee to function as the ACHP's technical authority on communications issues. The employee directs a national program conveying complex information on the agency's activities and the preservation movement that affect the general population and target audiences. The communications plan increases the level of understanding of the ACHP's mission, goals, and accomplishments and goals of the historic preservation community.

**Knowledge must include:**

- Demonstrated 6+ years in communications, marketing, and public relations
- Understanding of historic preservation and the National Historic Preservation Act, especially as it relates to the ACHP

- Understanding and experience in using traditional and social media to communicate programs, policies, and activities
- Skill in developing written materials to convey information concerning agency programs having diverse levels of understanding of the organization's programs and activities
- Skill in making oral presentations or training others to conduct meetings designed to obtain public input on program issues and develop a consensus position from among divergent viewpoints.

### **SUPERVISORY CONTROLS:**

The supervisor provides administrative direction in terms of broad policy statements and general objectives to be achieved through the public affairs program.

With limited oversight, the public affairs specialist is responsible for developing and preparing plans and programs for determining methods to be used in communicating information.

Recommendations developed are accepted as technically sound. A general review of the work is made in terms of attainment of program objectives.

### **GUIDELINES:**

The public affairs specialist uses seasoned judgement in modifying standard communication methods in developing approaches of strategies that more appropriately match the requirements of unique situations encountered.

### **COMPLEXITY:**

Assignments include working with directors and staff to accomplish planning, implementing, and evaluating the national public affairs program. This work involves development of written materials to encourage enhanced communications efforts, making oral presentations to organizations (state, local, and federal) to convey support of policies to their constituents and developing recommendations on a wide variety of program and policy issues.

Decisions regarding what needs to be done include determining the type of approach to use in gaining understanding from various publics.

Skill in evaluating the effectiveness of a communications program, analyzing feedback from the media and the public, and developing recommendations to improve ACHP communications and enhance the overall communications program.

Skill in establishing and maintaining effective working relationships with individuals and groups interested in or affected by ACHP programs and creating meaningful communication interchanges between them and the ACHP.

### **HOW YOU WILL BE EVALUATED:**

#### **Knowledge of Public Affairs**

Media Relations

**Written Communication** - Ability to present ideas in writing in order to increase understanding among publics with varying levels of comprehension of agency programs and policies.

**Interpersonal Communication** – Ability to establish and maintain effective working relationships with

major stakeholders and individuals with opposing points of view and conflicting interests.

**Oral Communication** - Ability to communicate effectively and efficiently orally in order to make on-the-spot presentations to audiences.

**Technical Knowledge (Historic Preservation)** – The ability to apply new approaches to difficult and complex public affairs problems.