January 10, 2014

**Cover Letter**

**Re:** Senior Strategic Communications Officer, ACCC  
**Applicant:** Kimberly Lochhead

To Jennifer McCooeye:

It is with great enthusiasm that I apply for the role of Senior Strategic Communications Officer with ACCC. I have a passion for education which is complemented by my strong knowledge of the post-secondary landscape in Canada. I understand your organization’s priority to tell the story that colleges, cégeps, institutes and polytechnics are more than just trade schools – they provide skilled labour Canada needs and are engaged in applied research that supports small and medium enterprises. In communicating this through the ACCC’s new Strategic Plan, I also recognize the importance of raising the profile of these institutions and securing a larger share of NSERC funding on behalf of your members. Additionally, I’m aware of ACCC’s focus on becoming more inclusive and modern as it considers a name change. This is an exciting project that requires the communication skills I posses. With a background in journalism, strategic communications and marketing, I believe I would be well suited to this position for a variety of reasons.

To date, my work experience has revolved entirely around communications, marketing, writing, editing and events and project/production management. Armed with my Carleton journalism degree, I possess the knowledge and skills necessary to grow and thrive in the dynamic, fast-paced and people-oriented field of strategic communications.

Currently I work as a freelance journalist, writing international feature stories for Ottawa Life Magazine, Air Canada’s enRoute magazine and EF Magazine. The range of subjects I have written about is broad, including Tibetan fair trade cashmere, the Arctic’s melting sea ice and education for Ugandan women. Prior to this independent role, I was a Project Manager at Ascribe Marketing Communications Inc. While I was originally hired for my strong writing and editing abilities, I eventually took on more responsibilities, such as managing the company’s production flow and acting as head of client liaison. In this dual role, my range of tasks included creating communications products such as press releases, key messages, brochures, video scripts and digital content strategies. My excellent judgment, creative problem solving and strong analytical skills were key to delivering high-quality products to clients under tight timelines, as well as promoting the Ascribe brand and its work.

Before my time at Ascribe, I was Director of Operations and Associate Editor at Ottawa Life Magazine. Responsible for the ‘heart and soul’ of the publication, I oversaw much of the editorial process as well as the re-launch and re-imagining of its website. As a features writer, I conducted interviews and wrote thoroughly researched articles on a variety of local issues including Ottawa’s waste management system, public and Catholic school boards and municipal elections. For the revamp of its website, I contracted a web infrastructure consultant to streamline the layout and navigation, incorporate SEO and analytics, and build a user-friendly content management system to allow for easy updating and maintenance of the site. Another component of this process included using location-based services and mobile marketing to target website visitors with local events and custom advertising. By leveraging the website’s data using mapping software, we were able to extract valuable usage information, helping us continually improve the new site. Additionally, I used my Photoshop skills to touch up photos and graphics, and assist advertisers in creating ads for the publication. I also managed Ottawa Life’s social media presence, using contests and events to increase followers/likes, drive web traffic, promote greater interaction with readers and attract a host of new advertising clients.

At the outset of my career, I was a Communications Officer at the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA). There I wrote, edited and translated internal and external communications products including news releases, newsletters and feature stories as well as content for CIDA’s website. Responding to multiple media requests on a daily basis, I assisted with organizing news conferences, media events and proactively pitching stories to local and international media. I was also responsible for daily media monitoring, particularly articles concerning the agency’s work in Haiti and Afghanistan.

I firmly believe that my education, experience and passion for learning render me a choice candidate for this Senior Strategic Communications Officer role. I should also note that I am well-versed in Microsoft Office and Apple OS X environments as well as cloud-based services, the iPad and the iPhone. Given the opportunity, I would look forward to speaking with you in person.

Many thanks for your time and consideration,

Kimberly Lochhead

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