Engagement and Knowledge Mobilization Specialist

Are you looking for an opportunity to support the public health community in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic and other public health risks? Do you have a talent for bringing busy people together to share knowledge and expertise? Are you skilled at synthesizing information from various sources and communicating in a way anyone can understand? Do you have a knack for staying organized and keeping on top of multiple priorities?

Canadian Water Network (CWN) is seeking a qualified Engagement and Knowledge Mobilization (KM) Specialist to support a new program that will help public health authorities interpret the meaning of wastewater-based surveillance (WBS) data for their communities and effectively communicate these results to the public. This role is a 12-month contract position that runs from April 1, 2023 to March 31, 2024.

Consider joining us if you are motivated by:

- Playing a central role in the daily operation of a new program that connects people to share knowledge and build collaborative capacity.

- Working with a diverse team to engage a pan-Canadian network of leaders in the public health and wastewater sectors.

- A strong desire to continuously learn while supporting the learning and collaboration of others.

- Working in a dynamic, fast-paced and agile environment.

About Canadian Water Network

CWN is a national nonprofit with a 20-year track record as a trusted broker and accelerator of research knowledge into practice and policy. Our strategic plan charts a course for CWN as a catalyst for progress to help communities achieve a resilient, equitable and healthy future through water. CWN convenes cross-sector decision-makers who would not otherwise come together, brings research to the table to inform strategic dialogue on complex challenges, and fosters collaborations within and beyond the water sector to move Canada forward. Learn more about CWN at www.cwn-rce.ca.

About the WBS program

Early in the pandemic, CWN established the COVID-19 Wastewater Coalition (https://cwn-rce.ca/covid-19-wastewater-coalition/) to catalyze knowledge sharing, collaboration and

coordinated action to assess how WBS could be applied to inform public health decisions in communities across Canada. Building on this work, CWN and the National Collaborating Centre for Infectious Diseases (NCCID) have formed a strategic partnership to offer a peer learning program for public health practitioners and officials who are working with — or are interested in working with — WBS data. The program's goal is to support public health officials and practitioners to effectively understand and interpret WBS data for SARS-CoV-2 and other pathogens and agents, and to communicate with policy makers and the public.

Program participants will include local public health practitioners from several provinces and Indigenous communities where WBS programs are developing or underway. Through a series of virtual meetings and two in-person events, the program will facilitate knowledge sharing and peer learning, assess needs and develop pilot materials to support data interpretation and communication of WBS findings and the ethical implementation of WBS with Indigenous communities. This program fills a critical gap by enabling effective collaboration and communication across all levels of the WBS ecosystem to support the expanding scope, application and uptake of WBS, where desired, to achieve public health benefits for Canadians.

Job description

The Engagement and Knowledge Mobilization (KM) Specialist reports to CWN's WBS Program Manager, and is provided with additional engagement and KM guidance from CWN's Director of Program Development and strategic partners, including NCCID and Public Health Agency of Canada, to support the implementation of the WBS Program.

The Engagement and KM Specialist brings a flexible and adaptable skillset to support the effective engagement of program participants and invited experts, knowledge mobilization and peer learning within the program, and the development and communication of program outputs to broader audiences.

Key responsibilities

- Support the development of materials for peer-sharing groups, including meeting agendas and backgrounders, syntheses of learnings from group discussions, presentation slides, and other materials as assigned.

- Lead the administration and scheduling of virtual peer-sharing group meetings, peer-sharing triad discussions, expert advisory group meetings, and presentations by external experts.

- Assist with planning and onsite administration for in-person events, including the WBS Summit in May 2023 (Winnipeg, MB) and the WBS program stream at CWN's Blue Cities conference (Toronto, ON).

- Assist in the preparation and dissemination of program-related communications, including social media, website content and presentation slides for external conferences, in collaboration with CWN's Communications Manager and NCCID staff, to ensure that appropriate stakeholders are engaged, aware and informed about the program.

- Conduct background research and assist the WBS Program Manager in the development of briefs and plain language reports by synthesizing information collected from sources such as surveys, interviews, peer-sharing groups and triads, input from expert advisors, workshops discussions, databases, peer-reviewed literature, and policy or regulatory documents.

- Support the development and implementation of an end-user needs assessment based on learnings from peer-sharing group discussions and the WBS Summit, and assist in developing a needs assessment report.

- Working closely with the WBS Program Manager and NCCID staff, assist in developing pilot materials (frameworks, training, or other resources to be determined based on the end-user needs assessment) that facilitate WBS data interpretation and communication for public health practitioners. Compile participant feedback during pilot testing, support revisions as needed, and assist in making final materials publicly available.

- Support the collection of evaluation data through surveys and other mechanisms throughout the program. Assist in the interpretation and communication of evaluation data for the program team to inform program activities and direction. Provide data to support an external third-party program evaluation.

- Support the development of a final project report to program funders and participants.

Knowledge and skills

- Demonstrated ability to engage and build rapport with program participants, strategic partners and colleagues.

- Strong organizational skills, with an ability to schedule and manage multiple priorities.

- Prior knowledge of agenda and background material development for workshops, meetings and conferences.

Canadian Water Network
Réseau canadien de l'eau

National Collaborating Centre
for Infectious Diseases

Centre de collaboration nationale
des maladies infectieuses

- Demonstrated ability to communicate with, seek and receive guidance from program participants, experts and knowledge-holders who are volunteers. Tact, good judgement and strong interpersonal skills are essential. Active listening skills are critical.

- Superior research and writing skills, with a demonstrated ability to digest complex concepts, examine and incorporate diverse perspectives, and summarize key insights effectively for a range of expert and non-expert audiences.

- Ability to prepare and deliver effective presentations, and to develop and tailor external communications products and key messages for informed but non-expert audiences.

- Solid understanding of program evaluation and knowledge mobilization theory or practice.

- A strong sense of self-motivation and an ability to work independently and collaboratively within a cross-functional team structure while managing tight project timelines.

- Strong technology skills, including MS Office 365 Suite, Dropbox, SharePoint and various videoconferencing platforms.

- Fluency in written and spoken French is an asset.

Education and experience

- A master's degree in social science, environmental science, public health or a related field.

- 2-3 years of professional experience related to knowledge mobilization, communications, stakeholder engagement, program coordination and/or program evaluation.

- Prior experience working to support and/or implement programs within Indigenous communities is an asset.

- Prior experience working in or with public health agencies, particularly in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic response, is an asset.

- Professional training or certification in knowledge mobilization, project management or program evaluation is an asset.

Why Canadian Water Network

- Canada has a wealth of water knowledge in our municipalities, utilities, academic institutions and governments. In this role, you will join a well-respected nonprofit to connect knowledge with current and emerging water leaders across Canada to advance, accelerate and improve decision-making in the water and water-adjacent space.

- Our flexible work policy – we recognize the importance of balance in our lives and encourage you to prioritize the balance in yours. We will support you on and off the job so you can be fully present in both your work and home lives.

- We have a collaborative culture filled with genuinely good people.

Work environment

Although our home base is in Waterloo, Ontario, our team has been working remotely since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. We are looking ahead and are committed to maintaining a flexible, hybrid work environment. Consequently, CWN will consider candidates from anywhere in Canada in support of our pan-Canadian network.

Terms of employment

The Engagement and KM Specialist is a full-time, fixed-term contract position beginning April 1, 2023 and ending March 31, 2024. You must be based, and have the legal right to work, in Canada.

All employees of Canadian Water Network Inc. are required to provide proof of being fully vaccinated against COVID-19 or have an approved accommodation.

This position requires some domestic travel, including the ability to travel to Winnipeg for an in-person workshop in May 2023 and the Greater Toronto Area for an in-person meeting in October 2023.

Application instructions

Please send your resume and cover letter sharing your interest in this position to careers@cwn-rce.ca as soon as possible; we will begin interviewing candidates in early to mid-February. Our commitment is to support a diverse, equitable, and inclusive work environment and hire the best candidate. To eliminate any bias in our applications review process, please withhold all identifying information from your application's attachments (including your name, address, personal social media accounts, etc.). Your name and contact information should be included in the body of your email so we can contact interview candidates. The position will be posted until we have found the ideal candidate.