To Whom It May Concern:

It is with great enthusiasm that I apply for Manager, Communication Services with Industry Canada. My educational background is in business and journalism, and my current position at the National Research Council has given me a strong understanding of your department and its mandate (since the NRC reports to Industry). Throughout my career, I believe I have gained the skills necessary to be an ideal candidate for this role; below, I outline how I meet the experience qualifications for it.

**A degree from a recognized university or an acceptable combination of education, training and/or experience.**

I hold a Bachelor of Journalism (high honours), with a specialization in business journalism and minors in economics and political science from Carleton University.

**Experience in all phases of producing web-based publication.**

In my current role as Communications Officer at NRC’s Institute for Chemical Process and Environmental Technology (ICPET), I am responsible for all web services and web-related activities. Externally, I design, maintain and update our external website, in collaboration with corporate communications and my colleagues at other NRC institutes. This site is updated using Teamsite, a complex content management tool designed for large websites and used extensively within government. As the sole communications professional at my institute, I develop specific content for our website with other employees and stakeholders. I then use Teamsite to publish this content – photos, videos, text, documents and a range of other files – to the web.

Internally, I conceptualized and built our intranet from the ground up, using an open-source content management system (Drupal), while also employing XHTML and CSS to ensure a modern and rich user experience. Not only have I developed the technical knowledge behind web publishing, but I am also responsible for conceptualizing and creating the content for posting. All these web responsibilities have made me extremely familiar with the Government of Canada’s Communications Policy (including Common Look and Feel standards for the web), its entire internet policy and the Federal Identity Program.

Previously, at the Pearson Peacekeeping Centre, an NGO based in Ottawa, I first developed my web skills when I helped perform a complete overhaul of the organization's website ([www.peaceoperations.org](http://www.peaceoperations.org)). I was responsible for everything from developing its design and layout to researching and writing the content on each page. After its creation, I maintained quality control in English and French, while monitoring usage statistics with tools such as Google Analytics.

**Experience in managing various web site projects and publications from concepts design to approval and delivery.**

As I mentioned earlier, I have extensive experience working with internal and external websites using a variety of different tools. Beginning during my journalism education, I was taught how to use a number of (then-emerging) programs such as QuarkXPress, Photoshop, InDesign, Dreamweaver and a host of video and sound editing software. All these tools were taught so we could begin publishing more and richer content to the web, to prepare us students for the rapidly changing media and communications landscape. At the Pearson Centre, my first communications position, I was hired due to my technical expertise and familiarity with the web and HTML; my largest project there was to completely revamp and redesign the website. I became familiar with content management systems and began creating richer web content like videos and a social media presence. I worked to get this project approved through various funding channels, and worked with outside contractors and internal staff in order to deliver this project.

In my current role at ICPET, my largest single project has been a year-long total reinvention of our intranet. After extensive employee presentations and consultations, I conceptualized, designed and built our intranet using Drupal, a content management system/framework written in PHP. Building the site this way saved our organization thousands of dollars in a difficult financial environment. Due to the intranet’s size and scope, its implementation refined and strengthened my HR, organizational and financial management skills. After I took the initiative of conceptualizing it, I was responsible for consulting employees and management on its design and look-and-feel. I then had to seek approval from management, my DG and our ADM-level VP before beginning to implement it. Finally, I worked with staff, outside contractors and management to successfully deliver the project on time. After its completion, the evaluation of the project (the project management wrap-up) has gone extremely well. It is fair to say that the new intranet has revolutionized the institute’s internal communications. For example, in a matter of weeks, my DG went from not knowing what a blog was, to being an active blogger and proponent of using it as a way to engage employees. It’s also become easier for employees to access information, get their NRC and government-wide news from one source (using automated workflows and feeds) and collaborate with each other on projects and presentations. The successful completion of this project has demonstrated my initiative, leadership and creativity – attributes that I believe would be crucial to this management role.

**Experience in developing communication strategies and plans for diverse audiences.**

Throughout my career, I have developed and implemented a wide array of communications strategies and plans in the public, NGO and private sectors. In my current role at NRC, I recently developed a new marketing and communications plan that guides all my institute’s internal and external communications. Internally, the plan addresses the need to improve information sharing across the institute. As a result of that need, I have developed a brand new ICPET intranet, which I designed from the ground up. This project required extensive collaboration with staff (through committees and project teams), and its consistently high usage rate demonstrates the tangible benefits of a solid communications plan. Externally, the plan aimed to raise awareness of our clean energy research to a diverse audience: other NRC institutes, OGDs, the media, and current and prospective clients. To meet this goal, I have spearheaded ICPET’s involvement in a number of cross-NRC advertising/promotion activities, large national programs and events such as trade shows and conferences. For these, I have designed creative posters, promotional materials, multimedia presentations, fact sheets and news releases, while also coordinating travel and logistics.

Earlier in my career, while at the Pearson Centre, I helped develop and implement a new marketing and communications strategy to attract outside funding for our overseas peacekeeping programs. As part of this strategy, I re-designed and re-wrote the entire website, crafted online and newspaper ads, wrote op-eds and created large promotional displays (print and digital). I also scheduled and hosted a series of events, featuring public figures and journalists as guests and moderators. These events required strong event management and logistical expertise, in addition to well-designed and creative promotional materials for display and distribution.

**Experience in advising senior management and employees on information-management issues**

As the sole communications professional at ICPET – and as part of its management team – I advise my DG, directors and various staff members on all communications and information management issues. Specifically, I recommend which information should be published on our website, fact sheets, brochures, electronic displays and promotional materials at conferences/trade shows. Internally, I recommend what information should be shared at staff meetings, in top-down emails, in my DG’s blog postings and on our intranet. As NRC is in the midst of a fundamental transformation, managing the flow of information is critical to maintaining employee morale and keeping our work aligned with evolving strategic objectives. Further, since NRC is being tasked with attracting more and more outside funding, we rely heavily on presentations, speeches, reports and business plans to highlight our research and accomplishments. It is crucial that these tools strategically communicate our work, and that the content and tone are targeted to the right audience(s). In this capacity, I manage the information by extensively editing and tailoring the work of my staff and directors to the appropriate demographic(s).

Outside of my institute, I sit on the NRC-wide advertising committee, comprised of a small group of managers and communicators from across the Council. This committee provides all advertising-related advice to NRC’s Senior Executive Committee (made up of the President and its six VPs), who then act on our advice when developing and placing ads. Or, in other words, managing the information that NRC wishes to disseminate to the public.

**Experience in client services**

In my current role at ICPET, I have gained significant experience providing client service to OGDs, large multinationals and small businesses alike. Dealing with my 120-person institute’s clients requires strong negotiation and communication skills (to develop MOUs, set deadlines, work out funding, explain mutual benefits, draw up contracts, etc.). Since these clients provide us with funding to conduct research, it is important that I provide excellent client service to keep them happy (and the money flowing). Some of our clients include OGDs like Transport Canada, NRCan and PWGSC, in addition to industrial clients such as auto parts giant Magna and local battery producer Electrovaya. Dealing with this range of clients (who have a range of motives and goals) has honed my ability to provide excellent service in a timely, friendly and effective way. I should also note that in my role at NRC, I often become the client when contracting out communications products such as posters and displays. With this experience, I have learned from the best practices of those who provide client service to me.

**Experience in managing human resources.**

The creation of a new ICPET intranet has required significant amounts of coaching, supervision and direction of staff. I created this tool from the ground up, leading a team comprised of our IT department, outside consultants, management, and various employees from across the institute and the broader NRC. With this team’s expertise, I have developed a modern intranet designed for ease of use and high functionality. Since this project has required large amounts of time, resources and cooperation, coaching this team has significantly refined my human resource management skills. Specifically, it has refined my ability to plan projects, delegate tasks, coordinate timing and schedules, set deadlines and measure results. I have also become well versed in approving the time recording of those working for me.

At the Pearson Centre, I was often tasked with leading teams to coordinate on projects and goals. One such example was a funding announcement with DFAIT, who had recently awarded us a multi-million dollar contract. For this announcement, I worked with the communications department at DFAIT to schedule a speech by the Hon. Peter MacKay, put out complimentary news releases and attract media attention to the event. This project required strong leadership and inter-agency cooperation at a politically sensitive time (a federal election was thought likely). In the end, thanks in part to my human resource management skills, the announcement was smoothly executed and earned positive press coverage for the Pearson Centre and DFAIT alike.

**Experience in the development of a variety of communications products such as media lines, briefing notes and decks.**

Throughout my career, I have consistently been responsible for managing, writing and editing communications products for a large number of internal and external audiences. First, working as an editor and journalist, I had to ensure that my stories and editing were aligned with the publication’s demographic and mandate. This required strong research and communication skills – skills that formed the basis for the rest of my career. Next, as Communications Officer at the Pearson Centre, I was responsible for writing and editing a large variety of communications products and conducting the majority of the organization’s media relations. Internally, I crafted briefing notes, business reports and strategic plans for our funders that highlighted our work. Externally, I created advertisements, posters, displays, news releases, newsletters, web content, documentaries and events to showcase our work to the general public. Finally, at NRC I am responsible for managing my institute’s entire suite of communications products and publications. These include the external website, the intranet, briefing notes, fact sheets, videos, a blog, posters, displays, photographs, brochures and numerous PowerPoint decks and multimedia presentations. I also conduct media relations for my institute, which includes: answering reporters’ calls, providing my directors and staff with media lines, and coordinating our media relations with corporate communications, Industry Canada and the PCO. Finally, I should mention that because of this work with communications products, I have become very well-versed in the Government of Canada’s Communications/Internet Policy and Federal Identity Program.

Many thanks for your time and consideration,  
Jonathan Ward