

## MIT Position Description

<b>Job Title:</b> Comms & Mktg Administrator 3, SRS	<b>Position Title:</b> MKI Public Engagement Officer
<b>Pay Grade:</b> 8	<b>% Effort or Wkly Hrs:</b> 100%
<b>Department:</b> Kavli Institute	<b>Reports to:</b> MKI Director
<b>Prepared by:</b> Simcoe/McGinnes	<b>Date:</b> 5/16/24

### Who We Are:

The MIT Kavli Institute for Astrophysics and Space Research (MKI) is a world-leading institution for research in astrophysics. First established in 1963 as the MIT Center for Space Research (CSR), MKI has cultivated a half-century of expertise deploying advanced technologies across the globe and in space to support the scholarly inquiry of MIT’s faculty, research and technical staff, and student body. We have led or contributed to multiple operating NASA missions including TESS, Chandra, NICER (on the International Space Station), and Voyager. On the ground, MKI manages MIT’s participation in the LIGO gravitational wave observatory, the 6.5-meter Magellan Telescopes in Chile, and the CHIME and HERA radio telescopes. MKI supports a staff of 150 scientists including 37 resident faculty members.

### Position Overview:

MKI seeks a highly independent professional to lead an experimental initiative in Public Engagement with Science. The successful candidate will define and execute a program to foster connections between our research/education community and the broader public. Sufficient funding has been allocated for a minimum period of 5 years for these efforts, in addition to a support budget for execution and structured external evaluation.

MKI participates in a number of public outreach programs, currently conducted individually by faculty, staff, postdocs, and students. We aim to centralize the organization of these programs and professionalize their design and communication efforts. In parallel, we wish to expand outreach conducted for Institute interests in recruiting, outreach to professional societies, mentoring, and community interaction.

The MKI Public Engagement Officer will be required to interact with the full range of MKI staff – academic, research, administrative, and technical – and partner organizations. While work is supervised by the MKI Director, the role of Public Engagement Officer requires substantial independence of action and decision making commensurate with a program lead role. Common interfaces will include administrative managers, human resources, and staff involved in outreach activities.

The goals of this position include:

- To increase public engagement with the MIT Kavli Institute’s mission in basic science, astrophysics, and space exploration
- To practice Inclusive Science Engagement, building connections with traditionally underserved communities
- To support MKI researchers who are developing engagement / mentorship programs as part of their funding proposals to external sponsors
- To train MKI scientists to be effective and inclusive communicators of their research
- To measure impact of engagement efforts on all platforms (digital and face-to-face)
- To support recruitment efforts of MKI and MIT Physics at all levels



**Principal Duties and Responsibilities (Essential Functions\*\*):**

- Act as the organizational lead for MKI’s external engagement programs, increasing public contact with basic science, astrophysics, and space exploration
- Train MKI scientists in effective communication techniques, to become more effective and inclusive ambassadors of their research
- Cultivate an external network of museums, schools, libraries, maker spaces, or other forums interested in partnering with MKI scientists to advance common goals
- Develop/execute mentorship programs to satisfy sponsor requirements on associated research programs
- Collect periodic impact metrics on all platforms (digital and face-to-face) and disseminate assessments to MKI leadership and relevant sponsors
- Engage through Inclusive Science Communication with under-served communities and organizations
- Participate in student and staff recruitment for MKI and the MIT Department of Physics at all levels, including undergraduate and graduate admissions, and post-graduate hiring
- Identify and pursue funding opportunities to grow or sustain future public engagement activities at MKI. The successful candidate will have privileges to act as Principal Investigator or Co-Investigator on related sponsored programs
- Other duties as needed or required

**Supervision Received:**

Minimal supervision from the MKI Director.

**Supervision Exercised:**

No direct reports.

**Qualifications & Skills:**

Bachelor's degree in a field of physical sciences, science-focused communication or related field. Minimum 5 years of relevant experience, which may include teaching science in a classroom, museum, or other professional setting. Strong speaking and writing skills. Ability to create and edit web-based and social media content. Experience with creating and/or leading evidence-based public engagement activities. Ability to work independently, formulate programs to advance strategic goals, and initiate collaborations with faculty, research staff, students and postdocs.

PREFERRED: Masters or PhD in a field relating to Physical Sciences. Training in evidence-based practices to build an inclusive community through mentoring. Professional experience in Inclusive Science Communication and diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEIA) work.

Hybrid position with a target of 4 days in the office per week. Travel may be required as a part of recruiting and engagement efforts.

\*\* To comply with regulations by the American with Disabilities Act (ADA), the principal duties in position descriptions must be essential to the job. To identify essential functions, focus on the purpose and the result of the duties rather than the manner in which they are performed. The following definition applies: a job function is essential if removal of that function would fundamentally change the job.