

LEADERSHIP PROFILE



Good for you. Good for our forests.™

Vice President of Communications & Marketing Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) Washington, DC

**“The decisions we make, and the actions we take today,
can have a real influence on the future of our forests and,
in turn, on our collective future.”**

Kathy Abusow, President & CEO, Sustainable Forestry Initiative

THE OPPORTUNITY

Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) is one of the largest forest certification organizations in the world. Dedicated to conserving working forests in North America, SFI manages the largest single certification standard, recognized by organizations and governments globally.

Close to 200 million acres of forest—about the combined acreage of New York and Texas—has been certified to the SFI standard. The number of SFI certified program participants rose 30% in 2011, to 205, and has since grown to 248. SFI works directly with 2,000 organizations, and over 200,000 individuals support the work of SFI in various capacities.



This is a time of excitement and promise at SFI. The organization’s impact and programs are growing exponentially, and SFI is poised to increase awareness, influence and credibility as the foremost voice of responsible forestry. The Vice President of Communications & Marketing will play a central, mission-critical role in SFI’s next stage.

SFI is synonymous with responsible forestry, and a credible advisor and partner to companies, governments, conservation organizations, academia and the public. Through certification, chain-of-custody and research grant programs, and major projects with partners like Habitat for Humanity, SFI seeks to make a significant, sustainable difference and be recognized as the go-to organization in its field.

The VP will be an experienced strategist and hands-on leader of the communications and marketing disciplines. She or he will report to the CEO and join the SFI senior management team.

The Vice President has the exciting mandate to:

- Provide leadership, vision and strategy to position the SFI brand and drive visibility.
- Creatively market SFI to its various constituents, including corporations and consumers of wood and paper products.
- Drive strategic issues management, including proactive and defensive responses to competitive challenges.
- Leverage SFI's extensive networks to create compelling content, news, and endorsements.
- Be a compelling external representative.
- Inspire and manage a high-performing team, including financial oversight and business administration.



THE ORGANIZATION



Voluntary third-party forest certification began in the 1990s in response to market concerns about forest management and illegal logging, primarily in developing countries.

Since 2007, SFI has been an independent 501(c)(3) charitable organization. SFI maintains, oversees and improves a certification program that is

internationally recognized and the largest single forest standard in the world.



The SFI 2010-2014 Standard promotes sustainable forest management and considers all forest values. It includes unique fiber sourcing requirements and promotes responsible forest management on all forest lands in North America.

From its origins as a standards organization, SFI has evolved, leading a 37-Committee grassroots implementation network at the state and provincial level, offering research grants that have generated over \$4 million in impact and

launching the Forest Partners Program, whose founding partners include publishers such as Time Inc. and National Geographic Society.

SFI works on sustainability through economic, social and environmental approaches.

At this time of growth and promise, SFI is poised to elevate visibility, reach and impact by applying both proven and fresh approaches. The management team is visionary and collaborative, and staff views SFI as a great place to work. The new VP's opportunity--to define the leading edge of communications and marketing for SFI-- is rare and compelling.

THE RESPONSIBILITIES

The Vice President of Communications & Marketing will lead and elevate SFI positioning, messaging, visibility and impact. Through strategy, innovation and execution, the VP will position SFI as the credible, go-to voice of responsible forestry.

The VP will be a seasoned professional with a broad, multi-faceted background, track record of success and a passion for SFI's mission. The VP will be strategic and hands-on, personally credible and compelling. The VP will:



- 1. Provide strategic communications vision and leadership.** The VP will be a thoughtful, experienced and broad-gauge communications professional capable of building SFI's recognition and credibility as the voice of sustainable forestry. She or he will be skilled at designing long-range strategies and delivering on immediate priorities. The VP will understand all aspects and initiatives of SFI, and will deliver timely, compelling and

targeted messaging. He or she will be skilled at communicating with diverse audiences—corporations, nonprofit partners, legislators, academics and the public. The VP will be a hands-on practitioner as well as a superb strategist, and will relish both the frontline and managing roles.

2. Bring significant marketing expertise. At the consumer and customer levels, the VP will have experience with product marketing and positioning, and will be creative in finding ways to market SFI in ways that resonate with both audiences. The VP will readily understand the priorities of SFI corporate program participants and able to partner effectively with them to promote the brand and accreditation.

3. Drive strategic issues management, including response to competitive challenges. The VP will be experienced at managing issues, deflecting competitive challenges and proactively presenting positive SFI messages that break through. The VP will be skillful at communicating data and stories that drive interest in SFI. Through innovation, proactive media relations, on-line and other strategies, the VP will utilize proven and new approaches to keep SFI relevant, top of mind and strongly positioned.



4. Leverage SFI's extensive networks to create compelling content, news and endorsements. The VP will work effectively with SFI program participants, forestry partners and other constituencies to develop endorsements, compelling stories and generative partnerships. In particular, the VP will develop collaborative relationships with the 37 Implementation Committees and Conservation grant recipients. The result will be timely, cohesive and compelling SFI messaging, materials and media opportunities relevant to key audiences and objectives.

5. Be a compelling external representative. The VP will be an impressive speaker and presenter who is comfortable representing SFI with external audiences including the news media, conservationists, legislators, business and nonprofit leaders, donors, partners and other audiences.

6. Inspire and manage a high-performing team. As the senior SFI leader based in the DC office, the VP will both lead a small staff and provide overall office management including financial oversight. The VP will develop in-house talent and collaboration, while effectively leveraging external partners.





PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS

The VP of Communications & Marketing will have a significant track record of success. She or he will bring experience, high standards and authentic expertise across the spectrum of communications and marketing disciplines, as well as passion for the mission of Sustainable Forestry Initiative.

The ideal candidate will bring:

- A positive attitude and high energy—a person who sees opportunities rather than problems, enjoys work and working with others
- A compelling, competent, strategic leader with financial and business acumen
- Active curiosity and engagement in ongoing learning—having and seeking depth of content knowledge and understanding
- An inclusive, open and flexible style
- Ability to understand and work well with complexity and nuances
- A collaborative, collegial team approach that prioritizes the mission over individual agendas
- Outstanding interpersonal skills, emotional intelligence—a good listener and relationship builder
- Superior written and verbal communications skills
- Ability to manage multiple complex projects with diplomacy, tenacity, patience and a drive for results
- Personal and professional confidence born of authentic ability



THE RELATIONSHIPS

The Vice President of Communications & Marketing reports to the CEO and directly manages a team of up to four professionals. Other important relationships are with the Senior Directors in charge of Finance, Standard Setting, Government Outreach, Conservation, and Market Access, as well as other members of the SFI staff, corporate program participants, members of the 37 Implementation Committees, partners of all kinds, Board members, key donors and volunteers.



THE LOCATION

The Vice President of Communications & Marketing is based at SFI's headquarters in Washington, DC.

For potential consideration or to suggest a prospect, please email
SFI@BoardWalkConsulting.com
or call
Kathy Bremer or Joan Schlachter at 404-BoardWalk (404-262-7392).
For the current status of this and other searches, please visit
www.BoardWalkConsulting.com

