

# Jon Parsons, PhD

Strategic communications leader

jonparsons.ca | jon.parsons@uwaterloo.ca

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## EXECUTIVE PROFILE

Strategic communications leader with experience advising senior academic and administrative leaders in complex, research-intensive and mission-driven organizations. Proven ability to translate strategy, research, and institutional priorities into clear, credible public narratives; lead communications functions through change and constraint; and align teams, messaging, and governance with leadership objectives. Background in journalism, consulting, and academia brings strong editorial judgment, analytical rigor, and ethical clarity to executive decision-making.

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## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

University of Waterloo

Director, Strategic Communications

*June 2023 – Present*

- Lead strategic communications for the Faculty of Mathematics at a top-ranked research university, advising academic and administrative leadership on narrative, positioning, and reputational risk.
- Direct and develop a multidisciplinary communications and events team; set priorities, clarify decision rights, and align capacity with faculty and institutional strategy.
- Design and oversee integrated communications strategies for research, leadership initiatives, and public-facing priorities in a fast-moving, high-stakes environment.
- Serve as a trusted advisor to senior leaders on media engagement, issues management, and leadership communications, emphasizing judgment, discretion, and credibility.

University of Waterloo

Manager, Integrated Communications

*June 2022 – May 2023*

- Led integrated communications and publications for University Relations, with a focus on research communications and institutional messaging.
- Oversaw planning and execution of multi-channel communications initiatives supporting university-wide priorities and leadership objectives.
- Strengthened editorial standards and coordination across decentralized communications functions.

University of Waterloo

Communications Officer

*June 2021 – May 2022*

- Supported media relations, leadership communications, and internal communications at the institutional level.
- Prepared senior leaders and subject-matter experts for media engagement through briefing, messaging, and strategic counsel.

KeynoteCSR

Communications Consultant (Freelance)

*January 2017 – May 2021*

- Advised organizations on corporate social responsibility communications, stakeholder messaging, and research-informed positioning.
  - Conducted research synthesis and message development to support leadership decision-making during periods of change or public scrutiny.
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## EARLIER CAREER

Freelance Journalist — Published reporting, interviews, and analysis with outlets including *CBC*, *Ricochet*, and *Independent NL*.

Researcher / Instructor — Memorial University; research and undergraduate teaching in literature, ethics, and critical analysis.

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## EDUCATION

Doctor of Philosophy (PhD), Literature  
Memorial University

Master of Arts (MA), Critical Theory  
Brock University

Bachelor of Arts (BA), Political Science and Literature  
Memorial University

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## ADDITIONAL LEADERSHIP AND SERVICE

Board Member & Communications Officer — Social Justice Co-op of Newfoundland and Labrador

Academic and Athletic Coach — Urban Squash Toronto

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Selected leadership and communications work is summarized at [jonparsons.ca/selected-work](http://jonparsons.ca/selected-work).  
Additional details are available upon request.