



ASSOCIATION OF
SCIENCE-TECHNOLOGY
CENTERS
INCORPORATED

POSITION SPECIFICATION

POSITION TITLE: Chief Executive Officer

REPORTING TO: ASTC Board of Directors

LOCATION: Washington, DC

THE ORGANIZATION: *Association of Science-Technology Centers*
www.astc.org

The Association of Science-Technology Centers (ASTC) is an international organization of science centers and museums dedicated to furthering public engagement with science among increasingly diverse audiences. ASTC encourages excellence and innovation in informal science learning for children, youth, and adults, and helps science centers become more successful, valued by the public, and considered essential to their communities. ASTC promotes best practices, provides professional development for the science center field, leads efforts to address the field's major challenges and opportunities, fosters the creation of successful partnerships and collaborations, and strengthens the position of science centers in society at large and in their local communities.

Founded in 1973, ASTC has nearly 600 members including 445 science centers and museums in 43 countries. Science Center and Museum Members include not only science-technology centers and science museums, but also nature centers, aquariums, planetariums, zoos, botanical gardens, space theaters, and natural history and children's museums. Sustaining Members are companies that offer products and services to science museums, as well as other organizations that have an interest in informal science education.

ASTC is headquartered in Washington, D.C. where it has a staff of 21. The annual core operating budget is \$2.5 million with additional project related funding of \$2.8 million. The Board of Directors includes 16 CEOs from governing member institutions, nationally and internationally. ASTC is a 501 (c) 3 – a tax exempt nonprofit educational corporation.

Over the past year the ASTC Board and Governing Members have engaged in a transformative strategic planning process that resulted in the development of new strategic direction, key priorities, and discussion of the realignment of Board committees and the staff around these priorities.

The new strategy for ASTC and its members is to address critical societal issues locally and globally where science understanding and public engagement are essential to expanding the reach, relevancy, impact and sustainability of science museums.

The Board is focused and unanimous about the importance of recruiting an organizational and community leader to advance this plan within the Association's membership and the field.

SCOPE AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of ASTC will be a strong leader who can articulate a clear vision for the overall direction, strategy and success of the organization. He or she will be an outstanding communicator at all levels (staff, Board, peers, general public), as well as a passionate spokesperson for ASTC and the importance of science education, informal learning environments, lifelong learning and intellectual inquiry. At this pivotal time in ASTC's history, the new CEO will be a bold change agent with a track record for driving progress via collaboration, collegial management, and inspiring consensus and enthusiasm.

**Position Specification
Chief Executive Officer
Page 2 of 5**

The CEO is responsible for broad areas: Vision & Leadership, External Communications & Partnerships, Programs & Membership, and Fundraising.

Vision & Leadership:

- Advance ASTC's new strategic direction, develop a realistic yet forward-thinking plan for implementing that vision, and provide on-going communication of progress and realignments when necessary.
- Provide inspiring and thoughtful leadership to ASTC, its Board and members during a time of organizational change.
- Develop organizational objectives for approval by the Board and execute these under broad guidelines.
- Ensure that the Board is well-informed and work to build consensus around programs and policies. Engage the Board in policy and, when appropriate, inspire the Board to think differently.
- Marshal the varied resources and diverse talents of ASTC's Board, staff, partners and program participants, and provide inspired, strategic leadership to this group in order to achieve the organization's goals.
- Use effective management and clear communication to ensure that the day-to-day operations of ASTC are held to the highest levels of accountability, consistency and integrity.
- Supervise, motivate, evaluate and enrich the skills of the staff. Delegate responsibility and authority, and inspire staff as individuals and as a team. Foster the support and confidence of all levels of staff in the organization.
- Evaluate current capacity and develop an internal infrastructure that supports ASTC's new strategic framework and long-term goals.

External Communications & Partnerships:

- Serve as a public spokesperson and advocate for the importance of ASTC's mission and goals. Become the proactive representative of ASTC at national and international conferences and related gatherings.
- Through the design and management of a strategic communications program, including branding, public relations, website and related areas, build and optimize the public image of ASTC and overall awareness of ASTC's mission and the critical role of science and technology centers globally.
- Position ASTC such that it is considered the voice of science and technology museums and informal science learning and education.
- Represent ASTC to the national and international media, legislators, educators and scientific community. Seek out and participate in media events and similarly public opportunities to increase awareness of ASTC and its members' efforts.
- Manage governmental relations and advocate for policies that are aligned with the beliefs of the field.

Position Specification
Chief Executive Officer
Page 3 of 5

- Strengthen partnerships with regional science center networks in Europe, the Asia-Pacific region, Africa, India, and North and South America.
- Deepen and extend ASTC's important working relationships with the National Science Foundation, Noyce Foundation, UNESCO, and related organizations such as AAAS, ACM, AAM and others.
- Develop strategic relationships with international organizations with a view that such relationships would serve and benefit the global nature of ASTC's membership base.
- Initiate and develop opportunities to work closely with other leaders in the field of informal science education as well as foundations, universities and research centers, government agencies/programs and for-profit companies.

Membership & Programs:

- Seek out opportunities to meet member institutions and become familiar with their operations, programs, challenges and priorities.
- Strive to gain trust and buy-in from ASTC member institutions, which vary greatly in size, focus, location, etc. Ensure that members recognize ASTC's continued relevance, that it is working to make all members successful, and that it is keeping up with the times and the technology.
- In keeping with the new strategic framework, evaluate ASTC's programmatic effectiveness and efficiency within the context of industry needs, resources, impact, quality and leveraging resources to the fullest. Work with staff as appropriate to evaluate existing programs and implement new initiatives, ensuring that both existing and new programs are financially sustainable.
- Keep current on issues affecting the sector and trends in informal learning. Together with staff and the Board, monitor trends and key issues in the field, communicate their implications, and recommend appropriate actions by ASTC. Ensure that ASTC is meeting the changing needs of its constituency without straying from its mission, vision and values.

Fundraising:

- Oversee the fundraising efforts of ASTC and achieve financial goals as set by the Board of an international fundraising campaign, creating corporate sponsorships and similar relationships with for-profit entities, building long-term relationships with foundations, and enhancing other sources of revenue.

EXPERIENCE AND SKILLS REQUIRED:

The ideal candidate will have a clear record of achievement in a complex, mission-driven organization. He/she will be an experienced manager with a high degree of energy, integrity and creativity as well as the analytical, organizational, and interpersonal qualities to earn respect and cooperation from ASTC's members and partners. He/she will be comfortable working and communicating with a wide range of audiences, such as governmental leaders, key funders and partners, the scientific and research communities, the press and the public. Specific qualities and attributes will include:

Position Specification
Chief Executive Officer
Page 4 of 5

- Visionary and bold leadership qualities tempered with an inclusive and collegial management style
 - Demonstrates self-confidence, passion and enthusiasm; ability to inspire and motivate others around a common goal
 - Entrepreneurial and driven, with experience motivating and organizing with limited resources
 - Strong people skills; diplomatic, approachable and accessible; not driven by ego
 - Able to build consensus, find common ground and manage/resolve conflict
 - Demonstrated commitment to diversity and inclusivity; the ability to invite and include diverse perspectives and ideas
- Successful senior management experience, including leading organizational change
 - Strong organizational and planning skills and an orientation to detail
 - Demonstrated ability to develop and implement a clear strategy and to work at both a strategic and tactical level
 - Proven ability to establish, and require adherence to, clear organizational priorities
 - Capacity for financial management and oversight
 - Ability to listen, build consensus, delegate, and motivate
- Outstanding communication skills
 - Superior writing and communication skills that are effective with a range of audiences
 - Confident in dealing with press/media
 - Comfortable working with multiple stakeholders nationally and globally
- National and International stature
 - Extensive international experience and sophisticated world view
 - Current on global political and economic factors affecting ASTC's mission
 - Shows a keen sensitivity to the international and multi-cultural environment in which ASTC carries on its work
- Demonstrated passion for science education, intellectual inquiry and lifelong learning
- Skilled in the development of effective partnerships (public and private) and advocacy
- Clear commitment to ASTC's success and the success of its members. Demonstrates values, goals and aspirations commensurate with the mission of ASTC.
- A track record raising financial support from foundations, corporations, and individuals
- Past experience working with a governing board is highly desirable
- An understanding of the issues facing the science center/ science museum industry is highly desirable but will be weighed against other skills

EDUCATION:

Bachelor's degree is required; a Master's or Doctoral degree is preferred

**Position Specification
Chief Executive Officer
Page 5 of 5**

CONTACT INFORMATION:

ASTC has exclusively retained the services of DHR International to lead the search for a new Chief Executive Officer. The DHR team is being led by **James Abruzzo, Managing Director of DHR's Nonprofit Practice.**

All inquiries should be directed to:

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All applications and communications will be considered confidential. There is no deadline for submissions, but the position will be filled as soon as the ideal candidate is identified. Compensation is competitive.

ASTC is an equal opportunity employer and values diversity.

This is a worldwide search. ASTC welcomes applications and inquiries from international candidates.

