POSITION DESCRIPTION

POSITION TITLE  Chief of Staff
REPORTING TO  President and CEO
ORGANIZATION  Association of Science and Technology Centers
www.astc.org
LOCATION  Washington, DC
POSITION TYPE  Full time, 40 hours per week, exempt
SALARY RANGE  $85,000–$110,000 per year

The Association of Science and Technology Centers (ASTC) is a professional membership organization with a vision of increased understanding of—and engagement with—science and technology among all people and a mission to champion and support science and technology centers and museums.

Founded in 1973, ASTC champions and supports more than 500 science centers, technology museums, natural history museums, children’s museums, and other STEM-rich, place-based institutions, such as nature centers, aquariums, planetariums, zoos, and botanical gardens throughout North America and in nearly 50 countries—as well as nearly 200 other organizations that share an interest in science learning and engagement. ASTC is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt nonprofit educational organization.

ASTC is engaged in a transformative process to implement a new strategic direction for the association to better support its members. Grounded in a commitment to work inclusively, collaboratively, humbly, and effectively with members and partners, ASTC is building capacity across three strategic pillars:

- **Champion and support science engagement**, by elevating the work of science and technology centers and museums, forging new collaborations across the science-engagement ecosystem, and investing in communications and advocacy.
- **Set course together for new frontiers**, by supporting ASTC members to prepare and lead with their communities, act on market and societal trends, and embrace effective approaches that advance equitable engagement in science and technology.
- **Support and connect ASTC members**, by facilitating learning, catalyzing shared efforts, sharing data, and cultivating leadership and skills across the science-center workforce.

ASTC’s Chief of Staff supports ASTC leadership in ASTC’s core business, staff-management, and board-relations processes in the context of this strategic direction. The Chief of Staff reports to ASTC’s President and CEO (CEO) as a member of ASTC’s leadership team.

**SCOPE AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Chief of Staff supports the functioning of core organization-wide business and governance functions, working closely with ASTC’s CEO, Board of Directors, various Board committees, the Finance and Administration team, and all ASTC staff. The role requires an experienced people and project manager who brings operational excellence to bear in designing and implementing processes that support the CEO, ASTC staff, and the Board of Directors in executing ASTC’s mission and priorities effectively and efficiently. In addition to being a confident, enthusiastic, and collegial leader with an eye for detail and strong problem-solving instincts, the Chief of Staff should be passionate about ASTC’s mission, committed to delivering exceptional value to ASTC’s members, and
motivated by the importance of science engagement, informal learning environments, and the role of science in society.

The Chief of Staff will function as an advisor and thought partner to the CEO and will lead work in each of the areas described below, among other work as assigned. The Chief of Staff is a member of the ASTC Leadership Team and has the signature authority and benefits associated with other Director-level positions.

Organization-Wide Staff and Project Management (30%)
- Work with all staff, in collaboration with the leadership team, to ensure that projects are moving forward, communication across teams is clear and frequent, and communication with the CEO is targeted, intentional, and useful for all parties
- Serve as primary resource and lead for supporting team members in their own prioritization and triaging for projects and cross-team collaborations
- Support the leadership team in their own effective team management, leadership, and approach to projects
- Manage the annual performance planning process for the whole organization
- Work with the Conference Team to ensure that effectively harnesses the contributions of all ASTC staff members to implement a successful Annual Conference. Also work with the CEO to invite plenary speakers and organize plenary sessions
- Attend and convene internal and external meetings as a proxy for the CEO, as appropriate.
- At the direction of the President and CEO, manage special projects and programs that support ASTC’s strategic focus, in close coordination with the Impact and Inclusion Team and the Member Engagement, Communications, and Advocacy Team, as appropriate.
- Help coordinate ASTC’s participation in a growing network of science-engagement network leaders, including working with the network manager to implement ASTC’s role as a backbone organization for this network.
- With members of ASTC’s leadership team, work to implement ASTC’s internal, organization-wide diversity, accessibility, inclusion, and equity efforts.

Organizational Operations (20%)
- Support the CEO, and ASTC’s finance and operations team on the design, adoption, and regular review of various business processes, policies, and procedures, including updates to the Employee Handbook and Operations Manual.
- With support of a Coordinator of Operations, establish and maintain a filing and records system for the Office of the CEO, the Operations team, and general office processes.
- Provide logistical support in organizing occasional events, workshops, and convenings that are led by the CEO or the Board of Directors, with support of a Coordinator of Operations and the Member Engagement, Communications, and Advocacy team.
- Partner with the Member Engagement, Communications, and Advocacy team in developing and maintaining the organization’s overall calendar of activities and scheduling processes in the context of the CEO’s schedule, travel, and priorities.
- Organize regular staff activities and retreats, and work with ASTC staff to coordinate periodic recognition and appreciation events for colleagues.
- Collaborate with Director of Finance and Administration and CEO to support the annual budgeting and reforecasting process; this can include working with project teams to build out their project budgets
• Work with the Director of Finance and Administration—and seek input from ASTC leadership and staff—for new or updated coordination tools, collaboration software, staff interactions, and other processes and approaches for improving staff coordination, teamwork, and internal communications.

Support for the CEO (20%)
• Support the CEO in the strategic prioritization and policy-setting for the work of the association as a whole; this includes anticipating problems, navigating sensitive situations, and pointing out potential blind-spots to the CEO.
• With support from a Coordinator of Operations—who handles the immediate scheduling tasks of the CEO—manage the CEO’s calendar to ensure strategic time allocation. Field issues and requests from ASTC staff for CEO’s time, attention, or decision, working to ensure urgent matters receive a timely response.
• Prepare CEO for meetings and events and implement a process across ASTC staff for the production and review of briefing materials.
• With support from the Coordinator of Operations, arrange detailed domestic and international travel plans, itineraries, and agendas on behalf of the CEO. Occasionally accompany the CEO on this travel to provide staff support.
• Compose and prepare outgoing correspondence on behalf of the CEO.
• Prepare agendas, coordinate preparatory materials, facilitate, and record outcomes and action items from various meetings on behalf of the CEO, including regular discussions among ASTC’s leadership team and staff.

Board Relations (15%)
• Manage the calendar of ASTC’s Board of Directors and committee meetings, in coordination with staff liaisons to committees and with Board members and their scheduling staff.
• For the Board of Directors, Executive Committee, Finance and Audit Committee, Nominating Committee, and, if convened, other short-term task forces, organize and attend meetings (in-person and via teleconference or videoconference), prepare agendas, coordinate and assemble briefing materials, record minutes, and maintain filing system of Board and committee materials and actions.
• Work with the staff liaisons for each of ASTC’s ad hoc committees to ensure consistency and coordination of process, charters, agendas, and work plans across the committees and between committees and the Board.
• Track board and committee membership to support the CEO and Board Chair in engaging participation reflective of the diversity of ASTC’s members. Update internal and public-facing membership and contact lists for Board of Directors and all committees, with support from a Coordinator of Operations and members of the Member Engagement, Communications, and Advocacy Team.
• Liaise with the CEO, Board Chair, and Nominating Committee on new board member research, recruitment, orientation, and retention. With the Nominating Committee, lead the annual election of officers and members of the Board of Directors and Executive Committee.
• Liaise with Board Chair’s staff to prepare Chair’s itinerary and briefing materials for activities with ASTC.
• Develop positive relationships with members of the Board of Directors—a diverse and international group of senior executives in the science-center field—and their staff; answer or field incoming questions and correspondence from board members and their staff; and
coordinate opportunities for the CEO and the ASTC leadership team to engage personally with board members on a regular basis.

- Support annual board self-assessment process and annual conflict of interest declaration process; and assist the CEO and Board Chair in setting and tracking an updated Board Pledge and Commitment Checklist and individual action plans for each member of ASTC's Board of Directors, as appropriate.

Manage a Coordinator of Operations and Other Temporary Staff (10%)

The Chief of Staff will manage a Coordinator of Operations, as well as, occasionally, other temporary staff such as fellows or interns. Specifically, the Chief of Staff will:

- Supervise, motivate, evaluate, and enrich the skills of their direct reports, in part by: delegating responsibility and authority; inspiring staff as individuals and as a team; and identifying relevant professional growth and development opportunities.
- Work with Coordinator of Operations and other temporary staff to build and maintain relationships with the full and varied range of ASTC members, ensuring relevancy and reach of field-building programs and initiatives.
- Manage operations team and project budgets associated with their team’s work, including by participating in annual operations planning and budgeting process and engaging in a monthly review of financial position and performance against revenue and expense targets.
- As directed by the CEO, manage temporary staff who are hired to priority projects that are led by the CEO.

Responsibilities Shared by All ASTC Leadership-Team Members (5%)

As a member of ASTC’s leadership team, the Chief of Staff will:

- Advance ASTC’s new strategic direction by working as part of ASTC’s leadership team to implement and refine a realistic and forward-thinking plan for implementing that vision and working with ASTC staff to help make that vision a reality.
- Contribute to the development and use of efficient processes, effective management practices, and clear communications across the organization to ensure that day-to-day operations are performed with the highest levels of accountability, productivity, consistency, and integrity.
- Share responsibility and accountability for member engagement, satisfaction, and retention.
- Attend, provide staff support for, and contribute to the success of ASTC’s Annual Conference.
- Attend professional meetings and conferences as assigned to promote ASTC collaborations, programs, and activities.
- Other duties as assigned.

EXPERIENCE AND SKILLS REQUIRED

The Chief of Staff will have a clear record of achievement in operations and administration, and will be driven by ASTC’s mission, values, and a commitment to leading positive social change. This candidate will be an experienced administrator or operations professional with a high degree of energy, attention to detail, integrity, and trustworthiness, as well as the analytical, organizational, and interpersonal qualities to earn respect and cooperation from ASTC’s staff, board, members, partners, vendors, and contractors. The ideal candidate will thrive when working and communicating with a diverse team and a wide range of external stakeholders—and will excel at making teams more effective, efficient, and collaborative.
Desired experience and attributes include:

- Established record of success in providing excellent administrative, operational, and advisory support for one or more senior executives through calendar management, preparation of briefing materials, prioritization of incoming requests, correspondence, complex travel arrangements, strategic and tactical advice, process facilitation, and relationship management
- Effective orchestration of the logistical aspects of executive-level meetings and larger convenings, development of agendas, and coordination of informative briefing materials and meeting collateral
- Experience designing and implementing internal communication and collaboration processes and tools that support efficient and effective teamwork and ongoing organizational development
- Empathy & Humility: You care deeply about helping others and putting your team first, and you are motivated to improve your own leadership by doing so.
- Outcomes Orientation: When faced with a new problem, you have a bias for action. You enjoy getting to an initial hypothesis quickly with limited data and building a plan to test and improve hypotheses with a path to quickly running experiments to gather more information
- Intellectual Curiosity: You are a fast learner who enjoys taking on new problems that you haven’t yet encountered and are able to drive to initial hypotheses quickly. You are resourceful in getting data and enjoy working with others to identify where to go to gather data and propose initial recommendations
- Analytical Rigor: You take a fact-based, hypothesis-driven approach to new problems and are able to add structure to a previously open-ended problem, then drive to a solution by leveraging facts and numbers as evidence
- Strong Communication: You are adept at communicating across and collecting information from different parts of the organization. You are comfortable presenting recommendations / a solution and next steps to a management team. Strong writing and communication skills that are effective with a range of audiences and stakeholder groups nationally and globally
- Candidates for the role will benefit from, but not be required to have, experience liaising with a governing board, executive-level stakeholders, and experts, such as in the context of a membership organization or similar large organization with diverse stakeholder interests

**HOW WE APPROACH OUR WORK AT ASTC**

We expect new members of the ASTC team will join us in aiming to:

- Make a positive impact in service of our members, their communities, and the global good
- Set course for the future boldly
- Be curious and eager to learn
- Foster healthy and productive relationships and teams
- Practice empathy and gratitude

Additional desired qualities and attributes for this role include:

- Demonstrated self-confidence, passion, curiosity, and ability to inspire and motivate others around a common goal
- Excellent interpersonal skills and emotional intelligence; approachable and not driven by ego
• Able to build consensus, find common ground, and manage and resolve conflict
• Sound judgment and ability to quickly and calmly resolve problems
• Robust work ethic, and effective time management and organizational skills, including the ability to manage multiple projects
• A commitment to diversity and inclusion, demonstrated by inviting, including, valuing, and supporting diverse perspectives and ideas, as further described below
• An interest in, and experience with, issues associated with science and technology, including informal science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) learning, science communication, and public engagement in science, or with museum practice
• Commitment to continual learning and professional development

**ASTC COMMITMENT TO DIVERSITY, ACCESSIBILITY, INCLUSION, AND EQUITY**

The Association of Science-Technology Centers (ASTC) values and celebrates the rich diversity that makes up the teams and organizations we serve and the broader communities we engage around the world. At the root of science, technology, and innovation are fundamental values that ASTC embraces: a commitment to seek out and engage a diversity of ideas, perspectives, backgrounds, disciplines, knowledge systems, and approaches; and an evolving practice of accepting, valuing, and celebrating contributions, discoveries, and novel solutions regardless of their source. We commit to bring these values to bear across our work, and we seek teammates, board and committee members, and partners who hold diversity, accessibility, inclusion, and equity as foundational and essential values. If all people are welcomed, respected, and included in our work, if everyone has access to opportunity to pursue their aspirations, and if all people can participate fully and actively in creating and building the future, our association, our members, and our global society will be more equitable, prosperous, just, and resilient.

ASTC is proud to be an equal opportunity employer. We are committed to fostering an inclusive environment free of discrimination and harassment. All employment is decided on the basis of qualifications, merit, and business need. All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, creed, sex, pregnancy (including childbirth, lactation, and related medical conditions), gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, national origin, political affiliation, age, disability status, marital status, parental status, military service, veteran status, or any applicable legally protected characteristics.

**APPLICATION PROCESS**

Interested candidates should submit a resume and cover letter outlining qualifications and interest in the position to jobs@astc.org by June 28, 2021. If it is determined that you might be a good fit for the role, ASTC will contact you with next steps.

If you need assistance or accommodation in the application process due to a disability, you may call us at (202) 783-7200 ext. 112 or email us at info@astc.org.