



February 26, 2019

Position Description:
Executive Director, American Institute for Avalanche Research and Education

Background

Founded to save lives through avalanche education, AIARE (American Institute for Avalanche Research and Education) has become the leading provider of avalanche training courses in the United States. AIARE serves professionals working to protect public safety as well as backcountry recreationists, both mechanized and self-propelled.

Since 1999, AIARE has trained more than 1,000 instructors who have taught more than 50,000 students worldwide. Today, 450 qualified AIARE instructors offer courses to more than 10,000 students each year. AIARE course providers supply backcountry users at all levels of experience with the knowledge and tools necessary to assess and manage the risks inherent in backcountry travel. To this end, AIARE pursues partnerships and alliances that promote winter recreation and public safety.

AIARE's goals are to:

- Provide high quality education regarding the risks of work, travel, and recreation in avalanche terrain.
- Produce the curriculum, training, and tools with which to educate students about the knowledge, methods, and decision-making skills necessary to travel in avalanche terrain.
- Cultivate an international network of professional avalanche educators by providing instructor training and continuing professional education.

Position Description

The Executive Director works with the Board of Directors to develop and execute AIARE's strategic vision and direction. The Executive Director is chiefly responsible for the overall success of AIARE. Success is achieved through skillful navigation and management of the complex relationships among and between AIARE's partners, including AIARE course Providers and Instructors, professional avalanche training providers, researchers, public safety professionals, and the outdoor recreation industry. In addition to stakeholders, the Executive Director places significant, sustained focus on fundraising and development. Additionally, she or he is responsible for all aspects of day-to-day operations including, but not limited to: financial management, administrative operations, improving AIARE's public and industry profile, and ongoing communication with internal team members and the Board of Directors.

The ideal candidate will be a dynamic, strategic, and self-directed leader with exceptional collaboration, listening, and communication skills. She or he will have a proven track record in initiating and driving efforts to achieve goals, engaging a broad spectrum of stakeholders in pursuit of strategic objectives, and in developing and implementing strategies that are responsive to the needs of the field in which she or he operates. The successful candidate will be highly flexible, adaptable, adept at anticipating and resolving obstacles, and able to collaboratively bring people along in a shared vision. Additional critical assets for this position include the ability to prioritize limited resources and an entrepreneurial spirit.

AIARE's operations are currently dispersed with staff located throughout the western United States. The Executive Director reports to the Board of Directors. Specific responsibilities include:

Execution of Strategic Vision and Direction

- Collaborate with the Board of Directors to develop a long-range, mission-driven strategy and be accountable for implementing Board-authorized plans and policies.
- Lead, coach, and retain high-performing, mission-driven teams of staff and technical advisors that support the continued growth of AIARE's work and that deliver excellence throughout AIARE programs and operations.
- Responsible for the fiscal integrity of AIARE, including development of a proposed annual budget for the Board's consideration and approval, and submission of monthly financial statements that accurately reflect the organization's financial condition.
- Develop and manage an effective budgeting process, in coordination with staff and Board Treasurer (i.e., work with staff to prepare annual operating budget and ensure that the organization operates within budget parameters at all times).
- Develop and maintain sound financial policies, practices, and internal controls.
- Support staff and advisors in the development of educational, training, and e-learning programs.
- Maintain a working knowledge of significant developments and trends in the field.

Stewardship of Stakeholder Relations

- Strengthen partnerships with key industry allies, including the American Avalanche Association, Pro course providers, and training venue partners. Negotiate contracts, rates, and other partnership agreements to facilitate effective working relationships.
- Inspire, model, and promote collaboration and respect with all stakeholders including, but not limited to, course providers, instructors, industry allies, staff, advisors, volunteers, and Board members.
- Be the public face of AIARE. Represent AIARE's programs and perspective to partners, providers, relevant public and private stakeholders, and the media.
- Forge effective working relationships and cooperative arrangements with allied organizations, industry partners, community groups, the media, and other key stakeholders. Liaise with industry trade groups and other stakeholders including SnowSports Industries America, Outdoor Retailer, National Ski Area Association, The International Snowmobile Manufacturers Association, the American Council of Snowmobile Associations, and other allied organizations.
- Build capacity for, oversee, and support the development and implementation of high-impact outreach, marketing, and content development strategies to expand the base of AIARE Course Providers and Instructors and cultivate affinity and loyalty among student alumni.
- Support staff in building technology and infrastructure to expand outreach and marketing.
- Strengthen AIARE's brand profile by identifying and executing on opportunities to publicize AIARE's mission, goals, and programmatic activities.

Development and Fundraising

- Create and implement fund development strategy with specific benchmarks and metrics for success.
- Identify areas for growth in collaboration with staff by expanding existing and identifying new revenue centers for AIARE including cultivation of new partnerships, corporate sponsorships, and individual donors.
- Ensure that sufficient funds are available to permit the organization to meet the growing education demands of the backcountry safety and recreation industries through strategic fundraising.

Organizational leadership, human resources management and operations oversight

- "Hold" and execute upon AIARE's vision and strategic direction.

- Conduct official business of the organization and execute legal, financial and tax compliance matters in coordination with the Board Chair, Secretary and Treasurer as necessary and appropriate.
- Maintain effective communications with staff and the Board,
- Establish sound human resource policies and practices, including systems for annual performance evaluations and maintaining accurate job descriptions.
- Encourage staff and volunteer development and education. Assist program staff in relating their specialized work to AIARE's mission and goals.
- Create and maintain a culture that attracts, retains, and motivates a diverse and highly talented staff, by providing opportunities for fun, humor, recognition, advancement, and succession.
- Develop, implement, and oversee comprehensive administrative and data management policies, procedures, and systems. This function includes maintenance of official records and documents for optimal operations and compliance with federal, state, and local regulations.

Qualifications

The ideal candidate will have a proven track record of success leading a nonprofit organization or a small business enterprise. She or he will possess extensive experience managing all aspects of a small, nimble operation, including partner and stakeholder engagement, successful execution of fundraising, financial management, and program oversight. Additionally, she or he will have experience in working effectively with a Board of Directors. Excellent written and verbal communications skills and proficiency with MS Office, G-suite, and cloud-based project management platforms are required. Direct experience leading and managing a dispersed team highly desired. A graduate or undergraduate degree in nonprofit management, public administration or business is preferred as well as familiarity with avalanche education and the outdoor recreation industry.

The seasonal nature of this work and the need for travel to relevant industry events and conferences requires flexibility and sometimes entails an irregular work schedule. Consent for a pre-employment background check will be required.

Compensation

Salary for this position will be \$80,000+ depending on experience.

How to apply

Interested applicants may send a cover letter describing your interest and qualifications, resume, and three references with contact information via email to executive-search@avtraining.org. AIARE values diversity, equity and inclusion. Candidates of all backgrounds are encouraged to apply. Applications will be accepted through April 1, 2019.