

EXECUTIVE POSITION PROFILE

Executive Director



**ASSOCIATION
FOR CREATIVE
INDUSTRIES**

The Association For Creative Industries is managed by SmithBucklin.

SMITHBUCKLIN

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Position Description

Scope of Position

SmithBucklin, a 100 percent employee-owned association management company, is looking for an Executive Director based in our Chicago, IL office to work closely with the board of directors to lead staff and volunteers for our client organization, **Association For Creative Industries (AFCI)**.

The AFCI is the premier trade association for the global creative arts products industries. AFCI is committed to its vision of a healthy, vibrant and innovative community that enriches people's lives through crafting and other creative activities. As an organization, AFCI strives to deliver innovative high value services to support Members in a range of industry segments who provide products and services to educate, entertain, and inspire creative consumers. AFCI Members include the manufacturers, retailers, distributors, designers, educators, digital content providers, professional makers and DIYers, and other creative professionals that comprise the \$36 billion+ creative arts industries around the globe. Known as the Craft & Hobby Association (CHA) through January 2017, AFCI is a new trade association brand, with a deep history. AFCI's vision is to lead a forward-thinking and vibrant business community where creative arts professionals can learn, connect, discover and succeed.



Creativation is AFCI's annual trade show, bringing together manufacturers, distributors, designers and retailers large and small. This signature event features a wide variety of craft segments, drawing attendees from North America and internationally. Experiential education, networking, new product features and segment specific pavilions draw approximately 3,000 attendees for this multi-day B2B experience.



The role of this executive leader is to work with the board, members, service providers and creativity thought-leaders across the industry to shape a vision for the future and to unify, connect, represent and support the growth of the global creative community. In addition to possessing strong business and leadership skills, the Executive Director will be expected to readily identify new opportunities and influence the future of the organization in support of the AFCI's mission. The AFCI board of

directors made the decision to transition the organization to SmithBucklin association management in late 2018. Effective April 1, 2019 AFCI will be headquartered in SmithBucklin's Chicago office.

Specific goals of the AFCI Executive Director include:

- Lead the board to reimagine the future vision of AFCI and to develop an aspirational, growth-oriented multi-year strategy to execute on that vision.
- Grow and diversify membership and be a connector and relationship builder across the membership segments.
- Ensure that Creativation, the AFCI tradeshow, remains the leading event in the creative arts industry and evolves along with the changing industry dynamics and consumer preferences.
- Increase gross revenues through growth in attendance and exhibition at the Creativation and year-round educational program; through growth in membership, sponsorships and in other non-dues revenue programs and activities.

Job Functions

- Advise, guide and influence the board of directors on shaping a 3-5-year strategy, and establish and prioritize annual goals to support achievement of its mission and reimagined vision for the future.
- Provide governance leadership and support to the board of directors, committees and task forces, ensuring a process to identify and recruit future leaders, establish policy and provide overall direction for the business.
- Serve as a true C-Suite generalist: In addition to serving as the association's chief staff officer, the role also entails many of the duties of a COO, CFO, CHRO, CMO and CTO.
- Plan, direct, monitor, analyze and communicate AFCI's finances, including annual budgets, monthly statements (including interpretation and forecasting), and investments.
- Oversee all functional areas of operations: drive membership growth through recruitment, retention, engagement and recognition; lead strategic event management; cultivate sponsorship



and partnerships; drive education, marketing, information technology innovation and implementation.

- Lead staff, both paid and volunteer, to deliver needed programs and services; track their effectiveness, and identify and implement new sources of revenue that align with the organization's mission, goals and objectives.
- Keep abreast of industry developments, trends, changes and opportunities. Monitor the competitive environment, identify and recommend potential industry alliances with other associations and organizations.
- Enhance the visibility and reputation of the organization to ensure increased participation of existing members, attraction of new members and overall sustainability of the organization.

Candidate Characteristics

- A **strategic and visionary leader**, with the ability to envision future possibilities and translate them into breakthrough strategies.
- A **confident networker and influencer** who effectively fosters formal and informal relationships outside the organization by serving as a community builder and networker who works from the outside in, leveraging exceptional interpersonal skills and approaches to deal with a variety of stakeholders.
- **Action-orientated** and someone who comfortably embraces new opportunities and tough challenges with a sense of urgency, high energy and enthusiasm.



- **Highly collaborative**, with a proven record of accomplishment in building partnerships and fostering collaboration with a professional community to meet shared objectives, in addition to sourcing and deploying resources (board, volunteers, partners, staff) effectively and efficiently while anticipating the needs of multiple stakeholders.
- A **strong communicator** who has proven success developing and delivering multi-mode communications and implementing public relations strategies that convey a clear message while promoting the mission of the organization.
- **Financially savvy**, with a keen understanding of key financial indicators and the highest standards of fiscal accounting, controls and best practices to make better business decisions.
- **Someone with vision and purpose** who has a history of painting a compelling picture of the vision and strategy of an organization and motivating others to action.
- **Have the ability to travel**, between 20% - 35%, including some weekend activities.

Qualifications

- A minimum of 10 years of experience in leadership and/or management roles within the not-for-profit sector, preferably with a similar trade association.
- Experience as an Executive Director, CEO or the top P&L leader.
- Tradeshow experience a plus.

- Profit and loss and budgetary experience.
- Demonstrated passion for the mission of his/her organization, his/her professional community and cultivating a continuous learning culture.
- Knowledge and a measurable track record of elevating the profile of an organization through outreach, marketing and public relations.
- Relationship building skills to cultivate and maintain engagement with member organizations and volunteers.
- A track record of driving successful programs and influencing a large unpaid/volunteer workforce is essential.
- History of leading a staff and managing their professional growth and development.
- Effective presentation and public speaking skills are required.
- Proficiency with basic computer programming, including the Microsoft Office Suite (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook).
- An undergraduate degree is required; an advanced degree is preferred.
- CAE (Certified Association Executive) is preferred.

Where Do You Fit?

Working at SmithBucklin will offer you countless opportunities to develop transferable skills, acquire meaningful knowledge and gain rich experiences at an accelerated pace. By working collaboratively with smart, ambitious, multi-talented, genuine and hardworking colleagues, you will build meaningful, deep and enduring relationships that will serve you



well throughout your career, regardless of your chosen path. In addition, as a 100 percent employee-owned company, SmithBucklin offers all of our people — regardless of position or compensation — an equal chance to experience the fulfillment and reap the benefits of ownership. As owners, our employees control the destiny of SmithBucklin and are unified in the goal of building a great, enduring company.

Equal Employment Opportunity

At SmithBucklin, Equal Employment Opportunity is our commitment and goal. All qualified candidates will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, national origin, gender, age, religion, disability, sexual orientation, veteran status, marital status or any other protected status designated by federal, state or local law. Applicants are encouraged to confidentially self-identify when applying. Employment is contingent upon successful



completion of a reference and background investigation based on position. SmithBucklin Statement of Inclusion:

www.smithbucklin.com/about/statement-of-inclusion/

www.smithbucklin.com/about/

www.afci.global

This search is being conducted by:

Vetted Solutions is an executive search firm specializing in association, nonprofit, and hospitality/destination marketing community, recruiting and consulting. We focus on CEO and senior staff positions. For confidential consideration, please email your resume and cover letter to AFCISearch@vettedolutions.com or contact Jim Zaniello below.



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