

# EXECUTIVE SEARCH



# CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

SEARCH CONDUCTED BY

**STERLING** | **MARTIN**  
a s s o c i a t e s

## THE OPPORTUNITY

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The American String Teachers Association (ASTA), celebrating its 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary, is a nonprofit 501(c)3 membership organization for string and orchestra teachers and players that aims to help them develop and refine their careers. With a vision of enriching lives through universal access to fine string playing and teaching, ASTA serves more than 7,500 members who range from budding student teachers to artist-status performers. ASTA's CEO will report to the Board of Directors and will implement the association's strategic plan while ensuring the effective day-to-day delivery of programs. ASTA is exploring opportunities for international expansion, as well as how it can use new technologies to better engage with its members.

## ASTA: AN OVERVIEW

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ASTA's mission is to provide professional development, career building and support, and a community of peers for all teachers of stringed instruments. It has a budget in the \$2M range and a staff of 5.

### About ASTA's Members

The association welcomes individual members, business/corporate members, and institutional/school members. All of its more than 7,500 members are part of an active network of string teachers, performers, orchestra directors, and other string enthusiasts.

### About ASTA's Work

The organization provides a vast array of services, including an annual national conference, an annual national orchestra festival for high school and middle school orchestras, an award-winning scholarly journal, discounts on publications and resources, eLearning opportunities, an online community, and access to a collegial network of colleagues throughout the string profession.

### Structure of ASTA

ASTA is governed by a 10-member Board of Directors, which meets three times a year. ASTA's national activities are complemented by activities organized by its state chapters, as well as student chapters at colleges and universities across the country.

# THE CEO ROLE

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The CEO will oversee the execution of all internal and external activities, such as Board meetings, the national conference, and chapter programs. The CEO will manage the implementation of the organization's Strategic Plan and will ensure that activities and initiatives set by the Board of Directors are effectively carried out.

## Critical Competencies for Success

### Strategy and Leadership

- Working with the Executive Board, Board of Directors, and staff, execute the ASTA Strategic Plan and ensure the necessary financial resources are in place to achieve its goals.
- Implementing diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) goals and initiatives approved the Board of Directors as part of the overall Strategic Plan.
- Focusing on data-driven decision making and sustainability to ensure ASTA's financial health, growth, resource management, and alignment with Strategic Plan goals.
- Serving as principal liaison between the ASTA staff and the Board.

### Administration, Operations, and Financial Management

- Providing day-to-day oversight for the business and programs of ASTA.
- Overseeing administrative and personnel policies.
- Presenting (along with the Finance Committee) an annual budget for the Board's approval.
- Overseeing all accounting functions, including those necessary for auditing, budgeting, financial analysis, capital asset and property management, and payroll in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles.

### Staff Leadership

- Fostering an inclusive, collaborative team environment.
- Inspiring and mentoring the staff.
- Directing human resources activities, which include:
  - Recruiting employees.
  - Conducting performance management and assessment activities.
  - Maintaining competitive compensation practices.
  - Applying Board-approved employee policies and benefits in accordance with federal and state requirements.
  - Motivating, inspiring, and leading the staff in achieving position-appropriate objectives related to the Strategic Plan.

### Communications and Outreach

- Serving as the "face" of ASTA at conventions, in formal and informal collaboration with other organizations, and in related activities.
- Generating publicity for string and music education issues.

- Serving as an advocate for strings and string education.
- Developing and enhancing strategic collaborative relationships with other organizations and the media, which includes:
  - Continuing collaboration with NAFME, IAJE, Chamber Music America, ISB, Americans for the Arts, and others, including list exchanges, ad exchanges, and other partnerships.
  - Developing new collaborations with other organizations that influence the quality and funding available to support string education in the school systems, e.g., the National School Boards Association, the National PTA, the National Education Association, the National Governors Association, and the National Association of State Legislators.
  - Serving as association representative to the Music Education Policy Roundtable and Americans for the Arts and working with Roundtable members to promote effective music education policy.
- Working with the Board President to enhance ASTA's visibility with other education arenas.
- Collaborating with the Communications team to develop promotional strategies for ASTA programs and events.
- Ensuring that ASTA's printed materials and website are consistent with its image and mission.
- Responding to requests from the trade and national media.

### Program Management

- Building member value and engagement opportunities to drive membership and growth.
- In collaboration with the ASTA staff, continuing to build the ASTA membership base and enhancing member services; this includes:
  - Working with the Director, Meetings & Membership, to develop annual marketing objectives and campaigns to meet those objectives.
  - Conducting ongoing reviews and analysis of member benefits.
  - Motivating enthusiastic allegiance and cooperative programming between ASTA and its state chapters.
- Working with state chapter leaders to build engagement opportunities and increase member value. Providing operational and governance support for state chapters.
- In collaboration with the ASTA staff, continuing to build eLearning opportunities to maximize engagement, collaboration, and learning in the string community.
- In collaboration with staff, Board members, and committees, ensuring that strategic, long-term goals for the annual conference and annual festival continue to be met; this includes:
  - Overseeing the conference site selection process.
  - Working in collaboration with the Director, Meetings & Membership, to ensure that favorable contracts are negotiated and reviewed for all major partners and vendors.
  - Ensuring that each event has a clear and detailed marketing plan.
  - Working with the Director, Meetings & Membership, to ensure that the conference and other events contribute to the financial health of the association. Ensuring that full cost-accounting is done on every major program and that business plans (with threshold targets of profitability and bailout options if those targets are not met) are created.
- Evaluating and monitoring all programs to ensure that they meet the needs of members.

# CANDIDATE PROFILE

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## Professional Qualifications

- At least 5 years of experience leading a team within an association or nonprofit setting. Leadership experience as either a Board or committee member may also be considered. Certified Association Executive (CAE) designation highly desired.
- Experience in the field of music or education a plus.
- Knowledge of nonprofit governance, operations, and financial management practices. Experience implementing strategic plan initiatives and goals.
- Experience serving as an organization's spokesperson. Proven success with developing and maintaining strategic partnerships.
- Demonstrated experience administering national conferences and virtual learning programs.
- Proven success in leading, inspiring, motivating, and managing a professional staff and working with a diverse Board in a geographically dispersed organization.
- Bachelor's degree is required. Advanced degree or equivalent education is preferred.

## Personal Qualities

### Leadership

- Demonstrates personal creativity and strategic vision, coupled with an ability to listen to others and learn from their ideas.

### Management Skills

- Generates trust, organizes people into effective teams, and motivates them.
- Includes staff in planning, decision-making, and process improvement discussions.
- Motivates and inspires staff dedication and independent, informed decision making.

### Delegation

- Delegates work assignments and gives authority to work independently.
- Sets expectations and monitors outcomes.

### Communications

- Communicates clearly and persuasively, both orally and in writing, in all situations.
- Possesses sophisticated presentation skills and conducts productive meetings.

### Problem Solving

- Identifies and resolves problems in a timely manner.
- Gathers, analyzes, and synthesizes complex and diverse information skillfully.

### Judgment

- Makes timely decisions and exhibits sound judgment.

## Planning/Organizing

- Prioritizes and plans work activities.
- Uses time efficiently and develops realistic action plans.
- Devotes a high level of attention to planning, execution, and details.

## COMPENSATION

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A competitive compensation package will be offered to attract an outstanding candidate.

## TO APPLY

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To apply, please send a cover letter and current résumé (Microsoft Word® format preferred) to [asta@smartinsearch.com](mailto:asta@smartinsearch.com). The cover letter should outline how your experience fits the requirements of the position as this will be an important factor in considering your candidacy.

*ASTA is an equal opportunity / affirmative action employer committed to inclusion and cultural diversity in the workplace. Employment selection and related decisions are made without regard to sex, race, color, age, disability, religion, national origin, sexual preference, genetic information, or any other protected class.*

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

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For more information, contact:

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