

## EXECUTIVE SEARCH



## Executive Director

SEARCH CONDUCTED BY

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

# The Opportunity

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The Executive Director is the key management leader of [ACTFL](#), responsible for growing the reputation, influence, and membership of the organization, as well as overseeing the implementation of all policies and actions approved by the ACTFL Board of Directors. Serving as ACTFL's chief staff leader, the Executive Director is also responsible for the execution and administration of services, programs, products, and operations of the association. The Executive Director reports directly to the Board of Directors, serves as an ex officio, non-voting Board member, and leads a team of nine direct reports and a total staff of 40.

## About ACTFL

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ACTFL is a 501(c)(3) professional association with annual revenues of over \$10M and net assets of over \$19M. The organization serves over 11,000 language educators, researchers, and supporters who are passionate about language learning. Founded in 1967 as the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages, in 2020, ACTFL leaders determined that adding the tag line "Language Connects" would be in keeping with the organization's mission to provide vision, leadership, and support for quality teaching and learning of languages. Leaders decided to deemphasize the word "foreign" while keeping the respected ACTFL acronym and brand. "Language Connects" reflects ACTFL's vision of an interconnected world where everyone benefits from a multilingual and multicultural education as well as ACTFL's values of collaboration, inclusivity, innovation, integrity, passion, and quality.

ACTFL has continued to grow and thrive as a resource and a haven for language educators. It is the organization that sets industry standards, establishes proficiency guidelines, and advocates for language education funding, and it provides scholarships and grants, including research grants. ACTFL provides services to US federal and state government agencies to guide and support language learning, training, and testing. It offers members a variety of online and in-person educational opportunities and publications. The ACTFL Annual Convention provides language educators a means of connecting with each other in addition to continuing their education. ACTFL and the Executive Director (ED) position are based in Alexandria, VA. It is expected that the ED will reside in (either currently or through relocation) the greater Washington, DC, metropolitan area.

## The Executive Director Role

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### Essential Duties and Responsibilities

#### Leadership/Governance

- Responsible for leading ACTFL in a manner that supports and guides the organization's mission as defined by the Board of Directors.
- Responsible for communicating effectively with the Board and providing, in a timely and accurate manner, all information necessary for the Board to function properly and to make informed decisions.
- Broadly engages members as volunteers in ACTFL.

### **Strategy & Planning**

- In collaboration with the Board of Directors, develops, plans, and implements the Strategic Plan, which includes strategies, objectives, programs, and initiatives that deliver on ACTFL's mission, goals, priorities, and national and international outreach.
- Regularly reviews and reports progress on the Strategic Plan, to ensure that priorities and resources align.

### **Outreach & Advocacy**

- Promotes ACTFL's efforts to raise public awareness on the benefits of and critical need for language learning to influence U.S. education policy.
- Works with key stakeholders and coalitions to advance ACTFL's mission, vision, and values.
- Supports the fundraising and outreach goals of the Language Connects Foundation.

### **Communications, Public Relations & Partnerships**

- Serves as a key internal and external spokesperson for ACTFL, speaking to the media and the public about the benefits and critical importance of language education; represents ACTFL as a presenter in a variety of public forums.
- Responsible for regular and ongoing communications with the Board and membership.
- Leads efforts to enhance organizational visibility and awareness, including further developing relationships with relevant partner organizations.
- Empowers volunteers at state, regional, and national levels to promote initiatives.

### **Contribute to Member and Organizational Success**

- Develops and oversees membership and engagement models that respond to the needs of a diverse and multi-generational profession, including pre-K, elementary, secondary, and postsecondary educators in the US and internationally to promote K-16 collaboration and articulation across all levels.
- Works with staff to develop member recruitment and retention initiatives.

### **Management/Administration**

- Actively seeks resources to ensure the financial health of ACTFL.
- Responsible for the fiscal integrity of ACTFL including working with staff to submit to the Board of a proposed annual budget and regular financial statements, which accurately reflect the financial condition of the organization.
- Working closely with Director of Finance and Operations, responsible for fiscal management that generally anticipates operating within the approved budget, ensures maximum resource utilization, and maintenance of the organization in a positive financial position.
- Ensures maximum resource utilization and maintenance of ACTFL in a positive financial position.
- Responsible for effective administration of ACTFL's operations.
- Responsible for the hiring and retention of competent, qualified staff.
- Responsible for signing all notes, agreements, and other contracts made and entered into and on behalf of the organization.

### **Required Skills, Experience, and Desired Qualifications**

- Proven leader with 10+ years of experience in an Executive Director, COO, or senior-level position within an organization of comparable complexity.
- Minimum of master's degree or the equivalent.

- Experience leading a nonprofit/association organization and CAE preferred.
- Experience in education and/or teaching languages preferred.
- Solid, hands-on, budget management skills, including budget preparation, analysis, decision-making, and reporting.
- Strong organizational abilities including planning, delegating, program development, and task facilitation.
- Charismatic, visionary leader who can set goals and rally internal and external stakeholders and partners to move forward towards achieving them.
- Strong written and oral communication skills.
- Strong public speaking ability.
- Demonstrated ability to oversee and collaborate with staff.
- Ability to integrate diversity, equity, accessibility, inclusion, and belonging throughout an organization's vision, mission, strategy, culture, operations, and messaging.
- Ability to handle crises with equanimity, including finding practical solutions and avoiding reoccurrences.

### Personal Qualities and Competencies

- Transparent and high integrity leadership.
- Open-minded problem solver and consensus builder with the skills to collaborate with board members, members of the language community and other volunteers.
- High emotional intelligence — the ability to understand, use, and manage emotions in positive ways to relieve stress, communicate effectively, empathize with others, overcome challenges, and defuse conflict.
- Candidates from historically underrepresented and marginalized communities are encouraged to apply.

## 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 resume (Microsoft Word® format preferred) [here](#). 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.

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*status as a protected veteran, status as an individual with a disability, or other applicable legally protected characteristics. All employment is decided on the basis of qualifications, merit, and business need.*

## Additional Information

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