



Executive Director

MISSION STATEMENT

The Executive Director champions the American Cheese Society's (ACS) vision, mission, and core values by leading the association and stewarding the industry it serves. The Executive Director distills and communicates a compelling message, fosters innovation, strengthens community, represents constituents, and motivates others to envision and achieve an exciting future for the industry.

ABOUT ACS

The American Cheese Society (ACS) is the leader in promoting and supporting American cheese. ACS achieves this vision by providing state-of-the-art educational programming for the cheese industry; establishing industry standards; assessing, advocating, and serving the evolving needs of cheesemakers through membership benefits and other programming; supporting, connecting, and representing cheesemakers to the broader community and industry; encouraging the highest standards of cheesemaking; and focusing on safety and sustainability to ensure our members survive and thrive over the long term. The ACS management team is based in Denver, CO.

POSITION SUMMARY

The Executive Director (ED) has executive oversight over all aspects of ACS operations, including administration, programs, finances, human resources, membership, marketing, communications, and development. The ED serves as the principle resource to the Board of Directors (BOD) in defining their agenda and priorities and in developing strategy and policy. The ED executes the Strategic Plan by translating it into short- and long-term goals, work outcomes, and milestones.

The ED serves as an Ex-Officio Member of the Board of Directors, Executive Committee, Finance Committee, and Nominating Committee.

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS/PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES

Financial, Tax, Risk, and Facilities Management

- Ensures financial health of association, compliance with all legal, tax, and reporting requirements, integrity of data, and good standing with Secretaries of State.
- Forecasts, monitors, and recommends annual budget to Finance Committee for Board approval and prudently manages the organization's resources within those budget guidelines according to current laws, regulations, and Board policies.
- Leads staff in setting and meeting revenue goals.
- Works with the Finance Committee to manage the business, identify trends, and meet obligations.
- Ensures compliance with legal Bylaws and recommends potential changes as

needed.

- Secures and maintains Trademarks and copyrights to protect association value and market position.
- Assures cross-training of all staff to ensure continuity of processes, procedures, and compliance as part of Succession Plan.

Human Resources

- Attracts and retains the best talent for ACS by offering compelling positions, competitive benefits, and developing culture supportive of making ACS a great place to work.
- Models and develops behavior that establishes a culture that values partnership and is consistent with the values, goals, and objectives of ACS to create an atmosphere of trust, cooperation, accountability, empowerment, and dedication to the mission.
- Fosters a high-performance culture that motivates and empowers staff at all levels to learn and grow.
- Holds staff accountable for integrity, performance, meeting or exceeding expectations, and compliance with all applicable ethical and legal standards.
- Responsible for the management and supervision of direct reports, providing direction, setting goals, giving feedback and coaching, and ensuring professional development and training.
- Ensures Deputy Director is empowered to handle day-to-day HR functions and staff team building including on-boarding, schedules, benefits assessment, professional development, and maintenance of HR files as appropriate.

Board Leadership

- Leads and supports the Board of Directors in defining their agenda and setting the strategic priorities for ACS;
- Proactively advises and keeps the Board informed of all pertinent operational, program, and financial information.
- Provides information and advice to the Board in its deliberations and decisions, administering regular Board calls and meetings.
- Works with Board and consultant(s) (as appropriate) to build board capacity, and message to relevant audiences on Board's behalf.
- Develops board orientation program, working with consultant(s) (as appropriate)

Industry Leadership

- Serves as primary spokesperson for the American artisan cheese industry by representing stakeholders through media efforts, public relations, crisis preparedness, and as a credible liaison with regulators and elected officials.
- Positions American cheeses positively through engagement with strategic partners, allied organizations, participation in industry groups, and through written and verbal communications with the broader specialty food industry.

Strategic Planning

- Leads and supports the Board of Directors in defining their agenda and setting strategic priorities for ACS.
- Directs and collaborates with the Deputy Director and the Marketing & Development Director to implement the Strategic Plan through all association avenues including the design, development, and delivery of state-of-the-art programming, products, messaging, and services to meet the evolving needs of members and stakeholders.

Annual Conference and Events

- Positions and promotes the Annual Conference as the premier event for the cheese industry. Directs the Meetings & Events Manager, in coordination with the contracted Conference Planner, to plan, organize, promote, and execute a successful Annual Conference.
- Takes a strategic view to guide logistics, monitor budget, review proposals in response to RFPs, assess educational content, and develop onsite materials, merchandise and experiences to ensure a quality experience for members.

Judging & Competition

- Builds and promotes the quality of the Judging & Competition as a core service of ACS, and as the leading event of its type in North America.
- Ensures the Deputy Director has the direction and tools needed to plan and execute a successful annual event, including logistics, solicitation and processing of entries, receiving and handling cheeses for judging, festival, and sale.

Marketing & Development

- Oversees the Marketing & Development Director to ensure the ACS mission, programs, products, services, brand image, and messaging are consistent with organizational goals across all platforms.
- In collaboration with Marketing & Development Director, accountable for achievement of revenue performance targets in support of comprehensive Marketing & Development plan.
- Acts as relationship manager for assigned portfolio of prospective sponsors and donors, working in collaboration with Marketing & Development Director to identify moves management plan.
- Ensures effective stewardship of key sponsor and donor relationships, supporting established best practices in gift acknowledgement.
- Champions ACS membership program as external representative for broader ACS membership base via public speaking, media relations, and member outreach opportunities as appropriate.
- Supports identification of key industry issues for content creation to support establishing ACS as a knowledge leader for cheesemakers and the greater ACS community.

Programs & Operations

- Oversees the integrity and ethics of ACS Certification programs and grows them to ensure long-term viability and continue industry-perceived value.
- Assesses opportunities for additional programs, new delivery methods, and value-added programs and services to benefit and retain certificate holders.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

- Bachelor's Degree with at least five years' experience as Executive Director or CEO of a nonprofit organization with a budget of at least \$1.5 million
- Significant and proven leadership skills developed through several years in senior management positions
- Passion for the mission of ACS
- Ability to build collaborative ventures with diverse constituents, being equally comfortable working with farmstead, artisan, and specialty cheesemakers, academics, retailers, distributors, media, regulators, etc.

- Excellent organizational, problem solving, administration, and personnel management skills.
- Proven ability to create and foster a healthy organizational culture and to encourage teamwork and collaboration
- Strong interpersonal skills that include the ability to inspire and motivate; effective in conflict management
- Excellent communication skills, both written and verbal
- Strong presentation skills and public speaking; media training a plus
- Experience managing a complex budget and balancing priorities to achieve financial goals
- Capable of increasing operational budget of the ACS in a sustainable way
- Visionary; trusting and trustworthy; mature and diplomatic; effective collaborator and team member; creative and independent thinker; innovative; takes initiative; high-energy with a strong, professional presence
- An understanding of not-for profits and experience working with and developing effective Board teams (and teams made up of volunteers)
- Demonstrated ability to raise the visibility of an organization through successful marketing, including expansion of the membership base
- Excellent analytical and computer skills
- Able to travel to attend meetings, conferences, training, and other events as required to represent ACS and the cheese industry
- Ability to work extended and/or non-traditional hours as needed to fulfill job functions

PREFERRED QUALIFICATIONS

- Advanced degree or relevant certificate in nonprofit management or business preferred
- Proven ability to identify, steward, and solicit individual, corporate, and foundation major donors, building relationships in support of ACS goals.
- Strong understanding of fundraising, association membership programs, and/or annual giving.
- Specialty food/cheese production, distribution, retail or marketing experience

MEASURES OF SUCCESS

1. Deliverables meet timelines and deadlines
2. Budget parameters are met
3. Board of Directors assessment and feedback
4. Direct Reports receive:
 - a. Training, direction and support in performing their jobs
 - b. Goal-setting
 - c. Frequent feedback and appropriate coaching
 - d. Annual performance evaluation
 - e. Professional development support

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

American Cheese Society provides equal employment opportunities (EEO) to all employees and qualified applicants for employment without regard to race, color, religion (all aspects of religious beliefs, observance or practice, including religious dress or grooming practices), creed, gender(including gender identity and gender expression), sex, pregnancy (including childbirth, medical conditions related to pregnancy, breast

feeding and related medical conditions), national origin, ancestry, age, marital status, physical disability, mental disability, medical condition (including cancer or a history or record of cancer and genetic characteristics), genetic information, sexual orientation, , military or veteran status or any other characteristic protected by federal, state or local law. It also prohibits unlawful discrimination based on a perception that anyone has any of those characteristics or is associated with a person who has or is perceived as having any of those characteristics. Discrimination can also include failing to reasonably accommodate religious practices or qualified individuals with disabilities where the accommodation does not pose an undue hardship. All such discrimination is unlawful.

American Cheese Society provides equal pay for substantially equal work regardless of gender, race or ethnicity, in conformance with the law. Prior salary shall not, by itself, justify any disparity in compensation between employees of another gender, race or ethnicity who perform substantially similar work by relying without more, on differences in the employees' compensation history, such as the fact that one of them was paid more in a prior job.

This policy applies to all terms and conditions of employment, including, but not limited to, recruitment, hiring, placement, promotion, training, termination, layoff, recall, transfer, leaves of absence and compensation.