

POSITION SPECIFICATION

About the American Society for Cell Biology

The American Society for Cell Biology (ASCB) is a nonprofit membership organization of biologists studying the cell, the fundamental unit of life. ASCB's mission is to: *advance scientific discovery, advocate for sound research policies, improve education, promote professional development, and increase diversity in the scientific workforce.*

Since its founding in 1960, the ASCB has grown to approximately 9,000 members in the United States and more than 65 countries around the world. Current members come from universities, colleges, professional schools, government, industry, and public and private research institutions; 25% of them are from outside the United States.

Membership in the ASCB is open and evolving, welcoming all research scientists, students, educators (high school, undergraduate, and graduate level), and technicians who have education or research experience in cell biology or an allied field.

Through the efforts of its dedicated staff and nine active volunteer committees, the ASCB advances the importance of and excellence in cell biology from K-12 science education through professional careers. It highlights news of interest to basic scientists, identifies grant and award opportunities for members, and offers a number of publications, including *Molecular Biology of the Cell*, a twice-monthly online original and scholarly research report on new advances in the scientific understanding of the molecular basis of the cell, and *CBE—Life Sciences Education*, a free, online quarterly journal highlighting peer-reviewed articles on life science education at the K-12, undergraduate, and graduate levels.

In addition to the Annual Meeting, which draws over 7,500 attendees, the Society provides career resources for all members and seeks to significantly support both women and minority cell biologists at all stages of education and careers. The ASCB also recognizes worthy scientists at various levels with a variety of prestigious awards.

As an important voice for the cell biology community, the ASCB regularly educates Congress and the Administration about the importance of basic biomedical funding and policy. In addition, the Society promotes awareness amongst the lay public and the media of the latest advances in cell biology and the crucial importance of basic research for human health.

With the Society already in its 52nd year, the next Executive Director will support members in a vibrant scientific field and continue to advance the importance of the cell biology community both in the U.S. and abroad.

For more information, please visit www.ascb.org.

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Position Summary

The Executive Director is responsible for ensuring that the ASCB serves the needs and interests of the membership in accordance with the Society's mission and vision statements and the Bylaws.

The successful candidate will be an accomplished professional who has the stature, presence, passion and professional credentials to work in partnership with the volunteer Executive Committee and Council and other society leaders. S/he will manage a collaborative environment where the efforts of professional staff and volunteers are maximized and appropriately employed.

Specifically, the Executive Director will work with the Council to create a vision and chart a strategic course for the Society, then translate that vision into goals and objectives for the professional staff. S/he will be a strong leader for the staff, providing inspiration and guidance while delegating responsibilities effectively, combined with best-in-class operating processes and disciplines.

The Society is based in Bethesda, Maryland and currently has a professional staff of 21 with an annual budget of approximately \$7 million.

Key Relationships

The Executive Director reports to the President, who heads a five-person Executive Committee. S/he also serves as an ex-officio member of that committee. The Executive Director reports through the Executive Committee to a 17-member Council.

Direct reports:

Senior Director, Finance and Administration
Director, Communications and Education
Director, Meetings
Director, Publications
Director, Public Policy
Senior Manager, Minorities Affairs
Manager, Image Library
Science Writer

Other key relationships:

Members and Constituent Organizations
Coalition for the Life Sciences
The science policy community: governmental, industry and advocacy

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Major Responsibilities

- Collaborate with the Council in an ongoing way to articulate and implement the strategic vision, direction and goals of the ASCB as determined by the Council.
- Foster a culture of member service and mutual respect and continuously seek opportunities to provide current, relevant and valuable programs, products and resources that serve the needs and interests of the Society's members.
- Serve as an effective, engaging and approachable spokesperson for the ASCB, clearly articulating the vision and value of the organization.
- Strengthen, coordinate and leverage relationships with members, other constituents and partner organizations.
- Oversee the overall operations of the ASCB, demonstrating best practices of leadership.
- Empower a strong and effective senior management team and work with them to establish strategic operating plans to carry out the vision based on transparency, a thorough assessment of quality outcomes and accountability.

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CANDIDATE SPECIFICATION: KEY SELECTION CRITERIA

Ideal Experience

- Significant leadership, management and decision-making experience with direct accountability for results at an organization of comparable size and/or complexity.
- Experience working collaboratively and effectively with highly accomplished and engaged volunteers in a professional membership organization.
- A successful track record of building, motivating and mentoring high-performing teams.
- Proven experience growing membership and non-dues programs to further enhance the membership value proposition.
- Understanding of grants and the importance of the scientific funding world.
- Experience serving as an industry or organization spokesperson.
- Informed understanding of and passion for science and research policy and the people who impact it; specific knowledge of cell biology is a plus but not required.
- An advanced degree in a relevant (scientific) field is preferred but not required.

Critical Competencies for Success

Inspirational Leadership and Management: The new Executive Director will be supported by a high-performing and collegial team. They, like the Society's members, are poised to engage a collaborative, inspirational and passionate leader who will work with them to set a clear direction for the organization and drive effective execution against short-and long-term goals, with specific attention to stopping the decline in membership and increasing meeting attendance. S/he will:

- Facilitate a strategic planning process that clarifies and enhances the ASCB's value and relevance to current and future members;
- Establish clear, realistic and measurable goals for employees that tie into the strategic vision; and, inspire and encourage an entrepreneurial, nimble and collegial approach to achieving those goals.
- Attract, retain, motivate and empower the best team to advance the ASCB members' goals and objectives, promoting operational excellence, managing according to best business practices and cultivating a culture of creativity, member service, urgency and accountability.

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Resource Development: By assessing the ASCB's membership proposition, as well as the programs, products and services that support it, the Executive Director will enhance the Society's suite of offerings, compelling increased commitment to and involvement in the Society by current and future generations, at home and abroad. S/he will:

- Review the current and evolving portfolio of programs, products and services that the ASCB could and should be positioned to deliver; make appropriate enhancements to provide both additional resources and longer-term value to members.
- Take a creative and expansive view on membership benefits and pricing strategies and drive a revenue development function that enhances current and creates new sources of revenue and funding to support the Society's core mission.

Communications/Advocacy: the Executive Director will serve as a persuasive, credible, and passionate spokesperson for the ASCB in relevant internal and external circles. S/he will:

- Have or quickly develop an informed point of view about existing and potential issues of importance to the cell biology and scientific community more broadly, and lead the ASCB's responses to those issues.
- Have and cultivate new strategic relationships among relevant policy makers, potential funders, thought leaders, coalitions, industry groups and the media in order to raise the Society's profile and ensure that the ASCB has a "seat at the table" on key issues.
- Lead a review of all of the Society's communications and marketing tools – from the website to the Journals, incorporating social media strategies where appropriate, so that the Society is well positioned to interact with all levels and generations of members in the most timely and attractive fashion.

Other Personal Characteristics

- Exceptional communication and interpersonal skills and listening ability.
- Strong executive presence.
- Excellent judgment.
- Customer service-orientation and ability to adapt quickly.