



Position Specification

National Governors Association

Executive Director

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Ref: Executive Director
National Governors Association

Our Client

Founded in 1908, the National Governors Association (NGA) is the voice of the nation’s governors and one of the most respected bipartisan public policy organizations in the country. The association’s members are the governors of the 55 states, territories and commonwealths. NGA members – the nation’s governors – share best practices on leading and governing states, speak with an informed voice on national policy issues, and develop innovative state policy solutions that improve citizens’ lives and support the principles of federalism.

What NGA Does: Through NGA, governors identify priority issues to address matters of public policy and governance at the state, national, and global levels. NGA’s research arm, NGA Solutions, helps governors and their teams develop and implement innovative, non-partisan solutions to public policy challenges. NGA’s government relations arm, NGA Advocacy, ensures that states are a strong voice in Washington, D.C. NGA’s training arm, NGA Consulting, provides leadership and management best practices to both new and veteran governors and their senior staff.

What NGA Offers: NGA is the premier resource for not only governors, their senior staff and cabinet members, but also the White House, U.S. Congress, private business enterprise and the international community. NGA also offers an array of services to help collaboratively tell the states’ story.

Thanks to decades of broad expertise, NGA is able to serve state leaders in order to help governors identify policy and leadership challenges to stay ahead of the curve as they solve complex problems. NGA’s robust, long-standing programs [NGA Advocacy](#), [NGA Solutions](#), and [NGA Consulting](#) help governors speak with a collective voice on federal policy issues, assist states as they identify answers to state policy challenges, and provide governors with leadership and management best practices. NGA’s new and innovative programs [NGA Global](#) and [NGA Future](#) support governors as they enhance state economies through international trade, and provide governors with insights concerning how technology innovation will impact citizens, business, and government.

NGA Executive Committee:

NGA’s Executive Committee steers the strategic direction of NGA and establishes and monitors NGA priorities. Current Executive Committee members:

Leadership

Chair:

Governor [Steve Bullock](#) (D-MT)

Vice Chair:

Governor [Larry Hogan](#) (R-MD)

Republicans

Governor [Charlie Baker](#) (MA)

Governor [Kim Reynolds](#) (IA)

Governor [Bill Lee](#) (TN)

Governor [Gary Herbert](#) (UT)

Democrats

Governor [John Bel Edwards](#) (LA)

Governor [Roy Cooper](#) (NC)

Governor [Tom Wolf](#) (PA)

*New Executive Committee members will be selected at the 2019 NGA Summer Meeting

The Role

The Executive Director serves the nation's governors and provides strategic leadership for NGA by leading NGA's Senior Management Team. NGA's Executive Director and Senior Management Team establish long-term goals, priorities, and policies – and then translate the goals into operational plans that produce high-quality resources and services to states and the nation's governors. The Executive Director oversees a team of over 100 staff and an annual budget of approximately \$30 million.

The Executive Director's responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

Strategic Planning & Positioning

- Ensuring governors' views are represented in the shaping of federal policy – making certain NGA policy position reflect governors' principles on priority issues; and guiding the association's endeavors to influence federal laws and regulations affecting states and territories.
- Positioning governors as national policy leaders by developing policy information on high priority issues that have both a state and a federal dimension.
- Identifying state best practices across a full range of state policy issues and developing and implementing innovative solutions to public policy challenges.
- Ensuring quality management and leadership consulting services are delivered to governors, governors' spouses and their respective staff throughout the life-cycle of a governor's term from election day through the final year in office to help them lead and manage state government and organize and run their offices effectively.
- Directing the association's communications strategies, media, and public information activities to help convey timely, in-depth analysis and background information on NGA positions and issues of interest to states.
- Promoting the exchange of information between governors and private sector thought leaders to stimulate discussion within the business community on emerging trends and factors affecting business and government.

Organizational & Programmatic Leadership

- Ensuring development of the organization's financial, administrative, technical and human resources capacities to accomplish the organization's mission and goals.
- Ensuring the financial integrity of the organization through sound financial management practices, grant administration, fundraising, investment management and budgeting.
- Ensuring effective NGA Winter Meetings and Summer Meetings where the governors convene to discuss the crucial issues states face, including the state-federal partnership. NGA Winter and Summer Meetings include public plenary sessions and committee meetings, as well as closed-door private meetings for governors only and feature high-profile guest speakers, including the President, cabinet secretaries, congressional leaders, foreign dignitaries, and business and academic leaders.
- Ensuring the effective execution of NGA's Seminar for New Governors (SNG). The SNG is a signature NGA meeting intended to be a collegial and bipartisan atmosphere to assist newly-elected governors in creating personal and profession connections. SNG is also a critical, first opportunity

for NGA to connect with new governors and their staff to forge ongoing working relationships with new governors. The SNG objective is to help governors-elect transition from campaigning to governing – to provide them advice regarding staffing, organizing and operating the governor’s office, leading and managing the state.

- Ensuring successful execution of the annual Chair's initiative by assisting governors to translate their vision into results-oriented operational plans, allocating and managing the organizational processes to accomplish those goals.
- Working effectively with the federal government and foundations to fund major NGA priorities in NGA Solutions.

Candidate Profile

The Executive Director should be both a public policy expert with a national reputation, and a visionary and strategic leader who can work effectively at the intersection of state, federal and local public policy issues. He/she also should have demonstrated ability to work effectively in a bipartisan political environment and be effective leading and inspiring the association's staff to meet the goals of the governors. The successful candidate preferably has a graduate degree in management or public policy or related discipline and at least 10-15 years of senior management experience.

This individual must have experience:

- Working with an organization’s board to establish and execute the vision, mission and goals of a complex organization.
- Developing, communicating and implementing an organization’s strategic plan.
- Ensuring quality customer services are delivered to an organization’s members.
- Effectively leading and managing a highly-skilled staff.
- Establishing the direction for organizational activities, financial planning and fundraising.
- Accomplishing organizational goals through delegated and coordinated responsibility to senior management staff.
- Identifying and developing funding sources that are compatible with political sensitivities and legal parameters.
- Developing innovative public policy responses to state and federal policy challenges.
- Interacting effectively with federal agencies, the Administration, and Congress.
- Working through the legislative process to advance strategic bipartisan advocacy efforts.
- Building coalitions among public and private sector organizations to advance common bipartisan goals.
- Effectively communicating the organizational viewpoints in varied public forums.
- Delivering clear budget and financial analysis concerning varied policy issues.

In terms of the performance and personal competencies required, we would highlight the following:

Setting Strategy

- The ability to create and articulate an inspiring vision for the organization, not only for the areas he/she is directly responsible for, but the enterprise as a whole.

- The inclination to seek and analyze data, facts and information from a variety of sources to effectively make and support decisions and to align others with the organization's overall strategy.
- An entrepreneurial and creative approach to developing new, innovative ideas that will stretch the reach of the organization.
- The ability to effectively balance the desire and need for broad change with an understanding of the effects of change and the ability to establish goals and implementation plans to ensure the organization's success.

Executing for Results

- After establishing clear and challenging goals, committing the organization to improved performance; by being tenacious and accountable in driving results.
- Operating comfortably with ambiguity and uncertainty; the ability to adapt nimbly and lead others through complex situations.
- A risk-taker who seeks data and input from others to foresee possible threats or unintended circumstances from decisions; someone who takes smart risks.
- A leader who is viewed by others as having a high degree of integrity and forethought and good judgement in his/her approach to making decisions; the ability to act in a transparent and consistent manner while always considering what is best for the organization.

Leading Teams

- The ability to attract and recruit top talent, motivate the team, delegate effectively, celebrate diversity within the team, and manage performance; widely viewed as a strong developer of others.
- Creates a sense of purpose and meaning for the team that generates followership and engages others to the greater purpose for the organization.
- Visibly celebrates and supports the success of the team.
- The ability to persevere in the face of challenges and exhibit a steadfast resolve and relentless commitment to higher standards, which commands respect from followers.
- A leader who is self-reflective and aware of his/her strengths and limitations; leads by example and drives the organization's performance with an attitude of continuous improvement.

Relationships and Influence

- Excellent communication skills and the ability to command a room and audience.
- Naturally connects and builds strong working relationships demonstrating strong emotional intelligence and a demonstrated ability to earn and maintain respect and trust.
- A persuasive advocate who connects with a broad range of stakeholders in a meaningful way.
- An enthusiastic leader demonstrating personal integrity and diplomacy.
- Demonstrated firmness in decision-making after carefully assessing the facts and weighing alternatives.
- Possessing the confidence to receive and respond to constructive feedback from membership and staff.

Contact

Letters of interest and CVs for applicants, as well as names for nomination, may be sent to NGA.ED.Search@RussellReynolds.com.