



Position Profile
Executive Director
The Alliance for International Educational and Cultural Exchange
Washington, DC

The Alliance for International Educational and Cultural Exchange seeks a dynamic and politically savvy Executive Director, who is a passionate advocate for educational and cultural exchange. The Alliance's next leader needs to be a seasoned professional who is effective on Capitol Hill and is able to work with senior State Department officials, while leading a small but talented staff. As the voice of international exchange, the Alliance promotes the growth and impact of exchange programs and the effectiveness of its members by engaging in advocacy, providing member development opportunities, and building public awareness of the power of exchange.

The Organization

Founded in 1993, the nonprofit Alliance for International Educational and Cultural Exchange (Alliance) represents a broad swath of the international exchange community including: educational exchanges, cultural exchanges with a work component, and/or exchanges focused on certain parts of the world. The Alliance's 90 members are strong believers in the positive impact of cultural exchanges and the way these exchanges help enhance the world's image of the United States and support American diplomacy.

The Alliance is searching for a new leader because the Alliance's highly respected long-term Executive Director will be retiring at the end of 2015. For additional information please visit the Alliance website at www.alliance-exchange.org.

The Alliance engages in the following activities:

Developing a Common Agenda and formulating public policy recommendations that support the broad common interests of the organizations that are members of the Alliance.

Advocating on behalf of Alliance Interests by organizing an effective program of government relations activities, including direct representation to policy makers on Capitol Hill and in the State Department and marshalling grassroots constituencies in pursuit of a common agenda. In recent years, the Alliance's advocacy agenda has focused on: 1) appropriations supporting exchange programs; 2) fostering an understanding of the public diplomacy value of work-based exchanges and the adverse impact of certain proposed legislation and regulations; and 3) tax deductions for families that host high school exchange students.

Serving as Convener and Thought Leader of the international exchange community in the United States by disseminating information and convening around issues of mutual concern. Through publications, events and social media, the Alliance seeks to furnish comprehensive information about issues affecting the future of international exchange programs and other matters of broad interest to the international exchange community. These activities help the Alliance build on its reputation as a thought leader that drives the dialogue about international exchange.

The Alliance's annual meeting has grown in size and influence. The 2014 meeting had nearly 170 attendees, including more than 50 staff from the State Department's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. The opening luncheon speech was delivered by Evan Ryan, Assistant Secretary of State for Educational and Cultural Affairs. Alliance members view the two day event as an important learning opportunity, providing a forum to interact with State Department colleagues, to share best practices, and to

network with other members of the exchange community.

Strengthening Presence and Support Outside of Washington: Working closely with its members, the Alliance develops constituencies to support international exchange programs both within the exchange community and in other sectors of American society. In recent years, the Alliance has implemented a grassroots initiative to bring Alliance events outside of Washington, D.C. to different regions of the country. This initiative has helped the Alliance develop relationships with and train more junior level staffers, who typically do not attend the annual meeting, and has provided the Alliance with the opportunity to organize events that allow constituents in Congressional Districts to share information with Members of Congress and their staffs about the positive local impact of educational and cultural exchanges. These initiatives are helping the Alliance strengthen its grassroots support throughout the United States.

Building Public Awareness about the critical role of international exchange programs in meeting global, national, and individual needs. The 2015-2019 strategic plan calls for the Alliance to raise its organizational profile so the Alliance can truly become the voice of international exchange.

The Alliance is governed by a 15-member board of directors drawn from the organization's membership and has a staff of 4. Accounting services are provided on a contractual basis. The organization's current budget is approximately \$800,000. Following best practices for nonprofits, the Alliance has reserves totaling more than six months of operating expenses. The vast majority (more than 85%) of Alliance revenue is generated from membership dues. The work environment is highly collaborative.

The Position

Reporting to the board of directors, the Executive Director provides vision, direction and leadership to the organization, represents and speaks on behalf of Alliance members and the international exchange community, and manages the day-to-day operations of the small staff and office. The Executive Director should be passionate about the positive impact of exchanges, self-confident and comfortable having high-level discussions with members of Congress and their staff as well as with senior officials at the State Department.

The next Executive Director will start with an organization that is respected by its members, with an engaged staff, and a solid governing board. The Executive Director is responsible for continuing to lead in a highly collaborative work environment that allows individual staff members to shine. The Executive Director will work with the Board to implement the strategic plan that was adopted in 2014. The position is located in Washington, DC. and international and domestic travel is expected approximately 15% of the time.

Key Responsibilities

Provide visionary leadership to the organization and translate that vision into actions that raise the profile of the Alliance and help create a broader understanding of the positive impact of international exchange.

- Maintain and build new relationships on Capitol Hill, with State Department officials and with other key governmental entities.
- Maintain strong relationships with existing Alliance members and cultivate relationships with organizations that may want to join the Alliance.
- Monitor legislation and regulations that impact the international exchange community and mobilize a strong response to any proposals that threaten international exchange.
- Oversee the day-to-day operations and ensure that the Alliance team remains strong.
- Maintain a complete understanding of the organization's financial position and outlook; ensure fiscal responsibility and security.
- Maintain current funding streams and identify and implement new fundraising strategies that will allow the Alliance to implement activities outlined in the 2014 Strategic Plan.
- Support the board in its governance role and foster its ongoing development; keep the board fully informed of internal conditions and important external developments.

- Support Alliance members in their activities and to promote the use of best practices in international exchange.

Leadership Outlook and Near Term Priorities

- Develop an implementation plan and budget for the 2014 strategic plan.
- Maintain and strengthen close relationships with political appointees and senior career staff at the Department of State and at U.S. embassies overseas, and with key Congressional contacts, including key staff as well as Members of Congress themselves.
- Work with Alliance members to identify new Congressional champions for international exchange. This work is especially important as several long-time Congressional champions are retiring.
- Raise the visibility of the Alliance to solidify the perception of the Alliance as the voice of international exchange.

Experience and Attributes

Ideal candidates for this position will share our commitment to the powerful impact of educational and cultural exchanges and will have immediate credibility with key Alliance stakeholders, including those on Capitol Hill and in the State Department. The next Executive Director must have/be a:

- Highly skilled and diplomatic consensus builder who can help the Alliance anticipate and develop policy positions in a rapidly changing regulatory environment.
- Proven networker with exceptional interpersonal skills and the ability to develop and understand complex relationships that involve a diverse group of stakeholders.
- A sophisticated understanding of the legislative process and advocacy with significant political savvy and understanding of bureaucracy, including knowledge of both Congress and the State Department.
- 10 to 15 years of senior leadership or directly related programmatic experience preferred.
- Working knowledge of, or experience in international relations, with a strong preference for significant experience overseas and knowledge of the issues and regulations impacting international exchange.
- Well-honed leadership skills and style, including diplomatic assertiveness, credibility, and integrity.
- An inspiring, supportive and inclusive leadership style with a successful track record of motivating and supporting staff in a collaborative work environment.
- Excellent and persuasive communication skills including the ability to make frequent public presentations.
- Proven experience with fiscal management, budgeting, and operations.
- Experience working with a knowledgeable and sophisticated board of directors to help govern the organization and arrive at Alliance policy positions.
- Experience building consensus and/or leading membership organizations preferred.
- Bachelor's degree required; Master's preferred.
- Ability to travel domestically and internationally.

Salary will be commensurate with experience.

Application Process

To apply, **e-mail resume, cover letter and salary requirements to: Alliance@raffa.com** (e-mail applications are required and will only be accepted at this email address).

The Alliance has hired [Raffa](#) to assist with the executive search and transition. If you have questions about the search, please contact: Peggy Sand at psand@raffa.com.

The Alliance for International Educational and Cultural Exchange is an equal opportunity employer. Applications from women and persons of color are encouraged. Resume reviews begin immediately.