



## Position Specification

**Society for Science**  
Chief Advancement Officer

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## **The Organization**

The Society for Science (Society) is a champion for science, dedicated to expanding scientific literacy, effective STEM education, and scientific research. Founded in 1921 by publishing magnate, E. W. Scripps and zoologist, William Ritter, the Society is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) membership organization focused on promoting the understanding and appreciation of science and the vital role it plays in human advancement: to inform, educate and inspire. The Society is best known for its award-winning magazine, *Science News*, world class science research competitions, and a suite of outreach and equity STEM programs.

The Society has an operating budget of \$38 million in 2023 and extensive global reach. It has a staff of around 100 people across eight departments: Science News Media Group, Science Education Programs, Advancement, Communications and Marketing, Design, Events and Operations, and Finance and Technology. It is governed by a distinguished Board of Trustees with engaged committees including Finance, Audit, Advancement and Governance. The Society also has a distinguished Honorary Board and a National Leadership Council.

The Society has a community of more than 75,000 alumni of our competitions who are globally recognized scientists, engineers, entrepreneurs and innovators across all industries, and who have won major accolades including 15 Nobel Laureates and 26 MacArthur Fellows. The National Leadership Council is entirely comprised Society alumni.

The Society has a diversified revenue stream that is generated from membership, subscriptions, individuals, title sponsorships, corporate, foundation and government support as well as advertising and licensing. The Society has nearly 10,000 individual donors and a growing major gifts program. The incoming CAO will be joining an organization with stable revenues and a robust balance sheet with ample cash reserves.

## **Programs**

The Society is best known for its award-winning magazine, *Science News*, world class science research competitions, and a suite of outreach and equity STEM programs.

Science News Media Group: *Science News* is one of the world's leading consumer science magazines. Our staff of beat reporters, many with Ph.D.s, are dedicated to identifying and reporting on the latest and most important published research across all fields of science, allowing a depth of coverage found in few other outlets. From climate change to the coronavirus to quantum physics, *Science News* gives readers a comprehensive view of the ever-shifting scientific landscape, putting individual discoveries in context, and revealing connections between fields. In the past five years, we have undertaken multiple major growth initiatives, including redesigning and relaunching our websites on a WordPress platform and introducing a new print magazine, *Science News Explores*, for the middle school market.

Today, *Science News* has more than 127,000 print subscribers, an average of 20.5 million unique website visitors each year, 4.5 million Twitter followers and 2.7 million Facebook fans.

Science Research Competitions: Since 1942, the Society has offered many of the most revered science research competitions in the world: Regeneron Science Talent Search, Regeneron International Science and Engineering Fair and Thermo Fisher Scientific Junior Innovators Challenge. The Society provides nearly \$10 million in awards annually through these three competitions. The Society's Affiliated Fair Network of nearly 420 science fairs globally is a pipeline for higher education and STEM careers for millions of students worldwide each year.

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Outreach and Equity STEM Programs: In 2015, the Society founded a suite of outreach and equity programs with the aim of increasing access to authentic and high-quality STEM experiences for underserved students. The Society's outreach and equity programs include Science News Learning, the Advocate Program, High School and Middle School Research Teachers Conferences, STEM Research Grants and STEM Action Grants. These programs reach millions of students, educators and community members in all 50 states, the District of Columbia and the U.S. territories.

## Revenue Sources

The primary responsibilities of the Chief Advancement Officer (CAO) comprise all philanthropic activities, including raising funds from individuals, foundations and corporations for each program area and for general operations. The Society launched a \$250 million comprehensive capital campaign in the context of its centennial celebration and is nearly six years into the campaign. Campaign revenues are ahead of goals-to-date and are expected to surpass the total goal in the coming months, prior to the official end of the campaign in 2024. The CAO is responsible for launching the public phase in 2023 and bringing the Campaign to a close.

Fundraising efforts also include securing multi-year contracts for competition title sponsorships, and the CAO is part of the team that develops these multi-year contracts and stewards the sponsors. Current title sponsors are Regeneron, for our Science Talent Search and International Science and Engineering Fair, and Thermo Fisher Scientific, for our Junior Innovators Challenge. The competitions receive additional corporate, government, and foundation support, and these efforts are the CAO's responsibility to secure, renew and steward.

Science News Media Group secures earned revenues through print and digital subscriptions, advertising, and licensing; the marketing efforts for these activities are the responsibility of the Publisher. The CAO, Publisher and Editor-in-Chief work collectively to secure philanthropic capital for *Science News* from foundations and individual donors.

## The Role

Working closely with the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), the CAO coordinates the Society's fundraising activities and provides the strategic vision and leadership necessary to support the organization's aggressive program growth priorities and long-term strategic objectives. The CAO is responsible for ensuring the stability and growth of revenue streams that include Individual Giving (major gifts, planned giving, special events) and Institutional Giving (title sponsor, corporate, foundation and government fundraising) as well as any capital, endowment and programmatic campaigns. The CAO also leads the Society's alumni program.

The CAO reports to the CEO and works closely with the Advancement Committee of the Board. The CAO will lead a team of 11, including seven Director-level reports: Director of Philanthropic Partnerships, Director of Annual Giving and Membership, Director of Major Gifts, Director of Strategic Partnerships, Director of Grants Administration, Director of Advancement Operations and Director of Alumni Relations.

Specific duties and responsibilities of the Chief Advancement Officer include:

### Fundraising Strategy

- Lead efforts to increase annual operating revenue from major donors, planned giving, direct mail and online campaigns, special events, foundations, corporate partners and government agencies.
- Serve as a key strategist for development, both for overall goals and objectives for specific opportunities.
- Assign and monitor prospect portfolios for the CEO, staff and board.
- Devise strategies and tactics designed to maximize relationships with current donors and cultivate new, diverse and untapped pockets of support.

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- Craft compelling, highly-tailored cases for support for unrestricted funding as well as for designated projects and programs.
- Conduct rigorous, data-driven reviews of all fundraising vehicles to discern which strategies yield the best return on investment. Using this data, partner with the CEO and Advancement Committee to inform and focus long-term advancement strategy and efforts.
- In partnership with the CEO, develop goals for the alumni program and create vehicles to activate the large base of alumni that encourage continued engagement and support.
- Conduct market research to better understand peers' and competitors' fundraising goals and achievements and how the Society is positioned within those groups.

## Fundraising Execution

- Serve as a front-line cultivator, solicitor, and steward; make significant requests for support from major donors, board members, foundations, and corporations.
- Provide leadership for a mature comprehensive capital campaign entering its final stages and approaching its goal, as well as any anticipated campaigns in the future.
- Lead the effort to significantly expand the organization's major donor program and further develop the planned giving program by building an effective and inclusive ladder for donors to participate in the Society.
- Collaborate with Membership to achieve growth in major gifts through data-mining of the membership population and acquisition of new major gift donors.
- Provide leadership for corporate and foundation fundraising efforts.
- Ensure comprehensive, timely and innovative stewardship of all gifts.
- Leverage technology to analyze progress against plans, monitor expenses and cost per dollar raised, and to ensure security and accuracy of all donor records.

## Trustee Relationships

- Serve as lead staff liaison to the Advancement Committee of the Board of Trustees.
- Participate in preparing strategy for the Advancement Committee.
- Develop monthly and quarterly Board reports, present to the Board of Trustees at full Board meetings, provide fundraising and alumni data analysis to the Board.
- Provide support to Board members in the identification, cultivation and solicitation of prospective major donors.

## Team Leadership

- Lead a diverse and high-quality staff that is well-prepared to meet the ongoing challenges and opportunities of a first-rate institution.
- Establish goals in a collaborative manner to ensure that team members have responsibility and ownership for the successful outcomes in their own specialty areas, the department, and the overall organization.
- Effectively manage and organize the department's day-to-day operations and budgets; streamline processes and procedures.
- Partner with the Finance department to ensure accurate reporting, stewardship, and relevant revenue goals.
- Help to lead an inclusive workplace characterized by mutual respect and open discussion in which all strive for excellence and innovation.
- Partner with programming colleagues to build funding opportunities for special and ongoing projects.
- Foster an environment of cohesiveness and collaboration with colleagues across all Society departments.
- Serve as a collegial and participatory member of the organization's senior management team.

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## Candidate Profile

In terms of the performance and personal competencies required for the position, we would highlight the following: The Society seeks an exceptional, results-oriented Chief Advancement Officer to build on the momentum of the organization's current base of contributed income in order to take the advancement program to new levels of success. The CAO's primary aim is to lead a team to increase philanthropic support from all sources, with a particular focus on building a sustainable, robust major gift program. The Society is keen to consider candidates with experience in raising funds from a diversity of sources, both individual and institutional, as well as experience in sectors related to the Society's, including education, public media, science, the arts, federated organizations, and the social impact sector more broadly.

The successful candidate will be an inclusive leader that is dynamic and accomplished with excellent communication skills and the ability to work effectively and collaboratively with senior leadership to produce superior results. They will possess proven leadership skills, strategic thinking abilities, strong management experience, demonstrated success in major gift fundraising, a collaborative approach and the personal energy, enthusiasm, and drive necessary to motivate others and to mentor and rally a team to consistently surpass goals.

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

## Setting Strategy

- Strategic experience across all areas of development, including capital campaigns, major and planned giving, foundation and corporate fundraising, event planning, prospect research and stewardship.
- The ability to develop strategic and creative approaches to increase private philanthropy to the Society.
- Proven analytical and strategic skills, with experience creating strategic fundraising plans and objectives, and the detail orientation and follow-through to implement those plans and to achieve or exceed goals.
- A strong analytical mindset, using data to support thinking and decision-making.
- The flexibility to create nuanced plans and objectives that adapt to the situation and/or partners at hand, while bringing to life an inspirational vision of the future for the organization as a whole.

## Executing for Results

- Experience completing a successful capital campaign.
- Strong track record of success building a successful major gift enterprise.
- Specific experience identifying, cultivating, and soliciting major donors.
- Proven ability to cultivate, solicit and steward major gifts.
- Capacity to set priorities and achieve goals, individually and for teams, while balancing financial wisdom and prudence with innovation and calculated risk-taking.
- Demonstrated ability to strategically partner with supporters in the development of transformative gift ideas while also managing a development program designed to build lifelong donor relationships at every gift band.
- The ability to empower and inspire others to think creatively about opportunities.

## Leading and Managing Teams

- A proven ability to recruit, mentor, lead, and develop a diverse staff and a track record of building inclusive, high-performing, and loyal teams.
- Excellent organizational, interpersonal, supervisory, research, writing, and communication skills.
- Ability to inspire staff, responsibly delegate tasks, and ensure a collaborative working environment.
- Excellent communicator, a strong manager, and a team player.
- A flexible, inclusive approach to leadership, which adjusts to different audiences and gives focus to colleagues' work.
- The personal inclination and professional ability to be a positive and unifying figure who can lead by influence and example in order to create an integrated development culture across the organization.

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## Relationships and Influence

- The intellectual depth, maturity, self-confidence, interpersonal skills, and warmth to work effectively with the CEO, senior leadership team members, trustees, staff, and donors and to provide motivation at all levels of the organization.
- A demonstrated track record of working effectively with trustees, building strong relationships, inspiring them to action, providing detailed and effective support for fundraising activities while making the experience both satisfying and fun.
- Excellent communication skills—both oral and written—with an impressive reputation for building and maintaining relationships with people at all levels of an organization, across a diverse range of educational and social backgrounds; sophisticated writing and editing skills are highly valued.
- Strong organizational skills combined with the ability to handle multiple tasks with agility, thoroughness, and a sense of humor.

## Interpersonal Acumen and Character

- A deep appreciation of and passion for the mission and aspirations of the Society.
- High energy, entrepreneurial drive, creativity, flexibility, and results-orientation.
- A self-starter and problem-solver.
- A quick-study—able to thrive in a fast-paced environment.
- Culturally sensitive and astute with a generosity of spirit.
- Strong work ethic and willingness to lead by example.
- Willingness to embrace the Washington, DC community professionally and personally, enjoying the opportunity to live in the city and the region.
- 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 her/his own limitations, leads by example and drives the organization's performance with an attitude of continuous improvement by being open to feedback and self-improvement.

## Work Environment

While performing the duties of this job, the employee usually works in an office setting. Our office is in Washington, D.C. near the Dupont Circle and Farragut North Metro stations. Due to the pandemic, the Society is operating on a hybrid work schedule until June 30, 2023. A candidate in this role will be required to work in-person in the office two days per week.

## Position Type and Expected Hours

This is a full-time, exempt position. Days and hours of work are Monday through Friday during normal office hours of the Society. Travel for some of the organization's events is necessary in this position.

## Additional Information

Society for Science has mandated the COVID-19 vaccine for employees coming into the office and attending Society events. Exceptions to the vaccine requirement may be provided to individuals for religious beliefs or medical reasons.

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## Other Duties

Please note this job description is not designed to cover every duty, responsibility and activity that are required of the employee for this job. Duties, responsibilities, and activities may change at any time with or without notice.

## How to Apply

Submit a professional resume and cover letter to be considered for this position.

Please apply through Applicant Pro

<https://www.applicantpro.com/openings/societyforscience/jobs/2721595-769612>

## EEO Statement

The Society is an Equal Employment Opportunity Employer.

Society for Science is committed to equal employment opportunity. In order to provide equal employment and advancement opportunities to all individuals, the Society does not discriminate against employees or applicants for employment on any legally recognized basis, including but not limited to: veteran status, race, color, religion, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identify or expression, ancestry, national origin, disability, personal appearance, family responsibilities, matriculation, political affiliation, age and/or any other categories protected by the laws of the United States or the District of Columbia.