Position Description:

World Affairs Council of Pittsburgh

President and CEO

May 2015
Organizational Overview:

Established in 1931, the World Affairs Council of Pittsburgh is an independent, non-profit, non-partisan organization dedicated to promoting a deeper understanding of key global issues throughout Western Pennsylvania in order to increase the region’s global competence so that it can better compete, collaborate, and make informed decisions in the 21st century global environment.

The World Affairs Council of Pittsburgh is a leader in the national network of other World Affairs Councils across the country. The following elements further define the Council’s role in elevating global competency throughout Western Pennsylvania.

In order to promote international understanding and engagement throughout the community, the Council:

- Is committed to informing the Pittsburgh community about key global trends and events around the world as they unfold – and to educating them about the relevance of such developments to the region.

- Has a special focus on working with students and teachers at middle schools and high schools throughout the region to give them a deeper understanding of the key global issues of our time.

- Fosters informed, independent, and critical thinking about important global issues as they affect the nation, the region, and the city.

- Prepares the current and future generations of opinion-leaders and decision-makers to thrive and succeed in the global marketplace.
Educational outreach and community engagement lie at the heart of our effort. The two programmatic pillars of the World Affairs Council – our Global Education Program and the Global Engagement and Leadership Program – build upon and address the limitations of the region’s international capacity while leveraging its strengths in order to better position Western Pennsylvania in a 21st century global environment. Partnerships are integral to carrying out the Council’s mission in an integrative, cross-sector fashion.

Through our innovative and award-winning Global Education Program, the Council works annually with 10,000 secondary school students and teachers from 250 area schools through approximately 100 events focused on the foreign policy challenges which lie ahead for the successor generation. Program models include the World Affairs Institute, which is a major policy conference for student leaders that has been held in partnership with Rotary International for 44 years. Our transformative Global Travel Scholarship Program has sent 108 underserved students abroad during the summer over the past decade. Newer program formats include the International Youth Forum series, through which area students have discussions with their international peers from as far away as Iran, China, Pakistan, Brazil, Italy, the Republic of Georgia, South Africa, and Taiwan. Our recently-launched Global Leadership Certificate program for area high school students aims to build global competency and strengthen key leadership skills needed for a 21st century workforce. Teacher engagement continues to be a key focus at the Council, with teacher seminars dating back 30 years.

Under our Global Engagement and Leadership Program, the World Affairs Council offers a range of events designed to educate and inform opinion leaders, decision-makers, professionals, and the community at large about pressing economic, political, and social developments around the world – and their relevance to our region. Breakfasts and luncheons are the most common format, but the Council also holds events after work in non-traditional spaces in different parts of town. In addition, the Council organizes various special events—such as its annual trivia competition, WorldQuest. The Council reaches across generations to provide attendees of all ages with the opportunity to engage substantive speakers in a dialogue about important international issues. Past speakers have included former Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, The New York Times columnist Thomas Friedman, Turkish Ambassador Namik Tan, and former Prime Minister of South Korea, Ambassador Han Duk-Soo.

The Council hosts a weekly radio program, The Pittsburgh Global Press Conference, which reaches 46,000 listeners each week. On this program, the Council has hosted numerous international luminaries, including former Secretary of State Madeleine Albright. The Council also uses a range of social media (blog, Facebook, Twitter) to reach a broader audience.

The World Affairs Council of Pittsburgh has been recognized as a local and national leader in educational outreach and has received several awards including: The President’s Award for
Outstanding Achievement as the Most Dynamic Mid-Size World Affairs Council in the United States; the World Affairs Councils of America's Carol Marquis Award Recognizing National Excellence in International Education at the High School Level; the International Bridge Award (Community) from the Pittsburgh Council for International Visitors and the Allegheny Conference on Community Development; and the Merit Award for Outstanding Contributions to World Languages and Cultures from the Pennsylvania State Modern Language Association.

Role Summary and Profile:

The Board of Directors of the World Affairs Council of Pittsburgh seeks candidates who have passion for the mission, a desire to operate the Council like an entrepreneurial, creative and value adding business, and with a tempo that captures the energy of the issues which the Council brings to the community. Partnerships need to be built and monetized; the revenue base needs to expand and diversify; and, the Council needs to be positioned with a compelling value proposition that resonates with multiple audiences and contributes meaningfully to the community. In short, the President and CEO will have vision and deliver results.

The new President and CEO will manage the overall financial performance of the organization to ensure its future sustainability. This includes aligning revenue and expense, balancing current program management with longer-range investments, and fundraising at the corporate, foundation and individual levels utilizing proven strategies. The President and CEO is responsible for the top line of the organization. Articulating a compelling and strategic vision to solidify and strengthen the relevance of the Council within Southwestern Pennsylvania, the new President and CEO will build on the elements of an existing strategic plan. This relies upon international affairs expertise – both experientially and through study – and includes execution of the plan to support that vision, in both near-term and long-term cycles. Not only will the successful candidate rise to a level of leadership within the community, but this individual will also lead the organization using principles of entrepreneurship and innovation, collaboration, transparency and workplace flexibility. The President and CEO will enable the development of the staff as individuals and its performance as a team.
Specific Responsibilities and Expectations

- Develop, articulate, and sustain the vision and mission of the Council in partnership with the Board of Directors and enhance the organization’s contribution to the region.

- Lead and manage the business affairs of the Council, including administrative and financial management. Included within this responsibility, the President and CEO shall prepare and submit to the Board of Directors proposed annual operating and capital budgets, statements of revenues and operating expenses, and statement of changes in the financial position from the previous year.

- Lead the Council’s membership and resource development efforts, as well as marketing and public relations, and—in partnership with the Board of Directors—conduct fund-raising, which is necessary to sustain the work of the Council.

- Lead and manage all programs for Council members, community groups, teachers and students, and the general public.

- Represent the Council in a range of public speaking forums, either in making presentations or in serving as moderator at major school and community programs, and serve as the principal media spokesperson for the Council, including host for the Council’s weekly radio program, Pittsburgh Global Press Conference. Included within this realm, the President and CEO is responsible to develop and sustain critical partnerships, the robustness of which will be part of the CEO’s measure of success.

- Lead and manage all Council personnel affairs, including the engagement of consultants, as needed, within a culture of empowerment and creativity that respects the diverse skills of each employee, recognizes initiative and excellence, and maintains accountability for their professional behavior.

- Promote the Council’s work throughout the region and, as appropriate, nationally and internationally.
Must Have Requirements:

- **Developing and Communicating A Vision:** Demonstrated success developing both a thoughtful strategic planning process and a vision with an ability to articulate a clear and unique value proposition internally and externally. An understanding and enthusiasm for the vision and mission of the Council is required.

- **Revenue, Resources, and Business Acumen:** Proven track record of growing and diversifying revenue sources that includes individual, corporate, and foundation fundraising and fee-for-service programs.

- **Entrepreneurial Thinking and Agility:** Evidence of an ability to develop new ideas, programs, and revenue streams nimbly.

- **Interpersonal Savvy and Communication Skills:** A clear ability to develop relationships and to build bridges with a myriad set of stakeholders is critical. The ability to build bridges within the international community in Pittsburgh, as demonstrated by previous accomplishments, is vital. An ability to engage with, and work effectively with a motivated and distinguished Board of Directors so that each has a valuable role to play in securing the Council’s objectives.

- **International Credibility and Competence:** Proven and significant international experience, preferably including having lived and worked internationally and cross-culturally, is critical. Demonstrated understanding of the international and global affairs issues that invariably impact economic and workforce development issues and trends, secondary and higher education, and business growth.

- **People Management and Operational Abilities:** The ability to work with and motivate a diverse group of professionals through empowerment, creative leadership and team-building. Experience and success in managing operating budgets and finances to approved plans.

Other Qualifications and Experience:

- Previous connections to, or experience with, Pittsburgh are considered a distinct plus.

- An understanding that programs and revenues need to aligned, and that subsidies for programs or activities should clearly reflect the strategic plan and future direction of the Council.
- A desire and ability to engage effectively and empathically with individuals from diverse backgrounds, professionals, and nationalities, whether they are visitors to the region, guests of the Council, or colleagues. A capacity for bridge-building among disparate groups and individuals with varying backgrounds, perspectives, and points of view.

- Strength of character, integrity, and the highest ethical standards.

- The ability to address global issues in a public setting, including the ability to conduct media interviews as well as to make public presentations.

- An inclination for active civic engagement, comfortable in promoting partnerships with business, not-for-profit, philanthropic, secondary school and higher education, and broader civic communities.

The World Affairs Council of Pittsburgh is an equal opportunity employer.

The Board is conducting a fluid and rapid search for the President and CEO and is targeting to make an appointment as soon as possible.

Search Team:

Andrew C. Wheeler
Practice Leader, Education and Not-for-Profit Practice and Managing Director

To apply, please email your resume and cover letter to:
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Appendix I: Additional Information about the World Affairs Council

Overview of Resources

The World Affairs Council of Pittsburgh is a non-profit 501(c)(3) charitable organization with an annual budget of approximately $1 million and net assets (as of December 31, 2014 audit) of $1.954 million. Approximately $1.7 million of that amount was in the Council’s Education Fund, withdrawals from which are used to supplement the Council’s operating budget for its educational programs.

The Council’s external revenue sources are principally from grants, contributions, sponsorships, and membership dues from foundations, corporations, and individuals. Program fees are largely offsets to program costs such as food and venue. The Council has been developing earned revenue models for some of its educational programming.

Approximately 60 percent of the Council’s budget goes for personnel costs, reflecting the staff-intensive nature of the program work. The Council currently employs six full-time personnel, plus two part-time individuals, and contracts with two individuals for accounting and web-based communications.

Principal Opportunities and Challenges

Over the years, the World Affairs Council of Pittsburgh has come to occupy a respected place within the civic fabric of the city and region, not only for the quality of its programs, but also for the unique service it offers both to professional communities and to students and teachers, and for a habit of partnership in strengthening understanding of the region’s global connections.

It is also true that the Council’s work has become increasingly important—in promoting in this and the next generation a better and more critically-minded understanding of the complex world around us; in instilling a greater appreciation that global issues increasingly affect our own lives and livelihoods; and in stressing the importance of and pathways to global competitiveness on the part of students, teachers, business professionals, and the region as a whole.

That said, the Council must continue to adapt to changing circumstances, lest it find itself out of touch with the issues that shape our lives, with those who would otherwise look to the Council for insight, and with those who would provide the necessary resources to continue its unique and important work.

To realize fully its promise and potential, therefore, the Council will need to continue to address core challenges relating to the organization’s underlying capacity and its ability to adapt to a rapidly changing environment, summarized below:
With respect to school programs

Schools and teachers face growing budgetary and scheduling restrictions, which challenge traditional student and teacher delivery models.

Programs need to be cost-effective in delivery while not compromising the substantive balance of their content. The use of technology – especially video conferencing – has enabled the Council to connect local students with their peers abroad to discuss global challenges.

The Council also needs to ensure that students and teachers have access to experiential learning, whether that involves direct contact with people from diverse communities and cultures, engagement with professionals on the requirements of working in a global marketplace, or sending students and teachers overseas through Global Travel Scholarships or funded teacher travel.

With respect to public programs

The World Affairs Council increasingly must compete with the increasing demands on time among each of its constituencies, as well as the growing availability of news and commentary from a multitude of sources.

Programs need to be self-sustaining economically, more effectively tailored to various key constituencies (e.g., long-time members, corporate supporters, younger professionals) and more readily accessible, including using online formats and alternative venues.

A critical element of this effort is engaging a younger professional demographic that will sustain its support of the Council and keep the Council connected with—and relevant to—the broader corporate community.

With respect to resource development

The Council’s funding climate has undergone structural change in recent years, as corporations and foundations are increasingly focused on measurable results that serve specific ends to which the Council must be attuned.

Although the Council receives generous support from a few sources, the base of funding must be broadened to guard against strategic redirection among funders and to establish a base of sustainable revenue. The Council must also continue to develop and expand earned revenue program models.

The Council’s internal systems of membership development need to be strengthened significantly to target effectively different demographics—be they young professionals, business leaders, or particular communities—and integrated effectively with program marketing efforts.
With respect to staff management

The Council has relied on a highly skilled and extremely dedicated team to deliver programs in high “operations tempo,” but it is a team that has always had too little depth.

A constant challenge is to protect against being too dependent on one individual in any critical function, whether in the domains of programming, resource development, administration, or financial management.

Like many small organizations, the Council has a distinct “culture,” working in functional teams with empowerment and a collaborative spirit. Employees enjoy a significant degree of flexibility alongside a recognition that they are accountable for getting the job done. Maintaining a fulfilling work environment that respects employees’ individual needs and talents is critical to the successful recruitment and retention of the right employees in an environment of constrained compensation.

To be responsive to change means investing in new approaches that will both increase staff capacity and the quality of programs, materials, and systems.