



President and Chief Executive Officer

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The Opportunity

Given the present challenges from many directions to higher education, its Boards, and its Presidents, the Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges' (AGB) launch of the search for a new President and CEO of AGB comes at a serious inflection point in our country at a time when authentic leadership and knowledgeable governance in higher education institutions could not be more important.

AGB's next President and Chief Executive Officer (CEO), will serve as AGB's leader and nationally respected advocate for consequential higher education board governance. Reporting to and partnering with the AGB Board of Directors, the CEO will provide strategic leadership for AGB, champion AGB's best practices of higher education governance, and work with the staff to fulfill AGB's mission and values. The CEO will maximize relevance for and engagement with the association's more than 1,300 member boards and over 40,000 trustees, presidents and chancellors, board professionals, and senior officers who have fiduciary responsibility for colleges, universities, multi-campus systems, institutionally related foundations, and state higher education coordinating boards.

A visionary and strategic leader, the CEO is expected to confirm and strengthen AGB's position as the thought leader of higher education board governance, gained over its more than 100 years of service to higher education. Further, the CEO will strengthen AGB's ongoing alignment with its members, ensuring that AGB is their trusted resource to address current and emerging issues, challenges, and opportunities. As leader of a multi-pronged enterprise, the CEO will pursue opportunities to drive innovation, collaboration, and inclusivity; expand relationships to enhance member services; and deploy new strategies for growth, engagement, and impact. Through the CEO's transformational leadership, AGB will advance its role as a prominent voice in higher education for student and graduate success; the value of higher education and board independence in a democracy; diversity, equity, and

inclusion; and other societal values that are fundamental to college and university mission fulfillment.

Working with the AGB Board of Directors, the CEO will lead and collaborate with an exceptional AGB staff leadership team responsible for mission fulfillment, content, programs and publications, membership experience, consulting services, marketing, strategic communications, finance, human relations, and executive search services. The CEO will have a demonstrated passion for listening to and learning from stakeholders and will bring that perspective to working collaboratively with members of the leadership team to strengthen and reimagine the organization's products and services.

Above all, the CEO is a leader with proven success running a complex, mission-driven, financially sustainable organization. They have a significant experience-based understanding of higher education and higher education governance, and they support AGB's good-governance guidance and Board of Directors' statements. Candidates may come from diverse backgrounds to include higher education, business, military, government, and nonprofit organizations. An advanced degree is required; a terminal degree is preferred.



Strategic Priorities

Enhance AGB's Reputation

As primary spokesperson with the media, members, other organizations, governmental bodies, external partners, and constituents on issues and trends facing higher education and their governing boards, the CEO will champion AGB's renowned thought leadership and recommended practices for higher education governing boards. The CEO will stay abreast of developments and debates across sectors of higher education, considering how members can best take advantage of AGB's governance expertise in that area. At this critical moment for higher education in an

environment of heightened polarization and documented skepticism and distrust of higher education, they will ensure that AGB understands and meets members' needs by providing good governance practices and effective strategies. The CEO will maintain and enhance AGB's position as the preeminent authority on board governance and leadership in higher education.

Recognizing how diverse ventures in recent years may have confused external constituents and fragmented mission-driven staff efforts, the CEO will work with the leadership team and the Board of Directors to develop and clearly define AGB's identity, scope, and brand in accordance with the new mission, vision, and values. The CEO and the Board will exemplify AGB's recommendations for good governance and partnership, and they will support each other's efforts to improve.

Manage and drive growth across a multi-pronged business

Leading a strong team of professionals who have demonstrated excellence and innovation in content, programs, publications, member services, consulting, and executive search, the CEO is responsible for motivating and driving growth across the entire organization.

- **Content and Programs** is the department that is responsible for AGB's intellectual property, which is AGB's most-valuable asset, the foundation of its expertise, and the source of its value proposition. AGB's repository of intellectual property is deep. It represents decades of research and expertise on the principles and dynamics of governing boards, trustees, executive leadership, and board support staff. It provides "how to" applications of such knowledge in the context of a wide and current array of members' issues, challenges, and opportunities. AGB has powerful, diverse strategies to listen intently and widely, then translate members' messaging to timely, expert, useful content.

The department plans, commissions, and ensures the quality of new intellectual property, and it seeks multiple ways to use and re-use existing works. It is responsible for many of the ways AGB brings content to and engages with members. It and other AGB departments produce a top-rated bimonthly magazine, award-winning website, three annual conferences, print and digital books and resources, several specialized institutes, topical webinars, blogs, social media, and digital messaging customized to the recipients' roles. AGB staff also convene several position-based councils that meet quarterly, provide input and advice to the association, and promote networking opportunities for key member constituencies, including board chairs, presidents, and board professionals.

- **Membership Experience** is passionate about meeting individual members' needs. Although institutions, systems, or foundations pay AGB dues, access to all AGB resources is afforded to each of their trustees, presidents, board professionals, and key administrators. The membership team ensures members understand and can access all member benefits that are relevant for them, regardless of membership type or role. Through direct member outreach and response to inquiries, the team listens and learns so AGB can address emerging needs.

- **AGB Consulting** provides customized advisory services for members only. The work is led by a team of consultants who possess deep understanding rooted in their experience as college, university, system, and foundation board and committee leaders, chief executives, board professionals, or senior level executives as well as specialists in critical areas for board oversight. Underlying AGB Consulting's work is a strong appreciation for the essential working relationship between the chief executive and the governing board of any institution, system, or related foundation of higher education.
- **AGB Search** has a unique understanding of the qualifications that are critical for creative and effective higher education leadership. As an affiliate of AGB, AGB Search leverages 100 years of experience and best practices to help colleges, universities, and foundations attract highly qualified, diverse candidates for senior-level executive positions. AGB Search specializes in services specifically for higher education institutions and foundations and offers permanent executive search, transition assistance for newly appointed presidents, interim executive search, executive compensation advising, and executive coaching.

Build Strategic Alignment

AGB is currently led by an interim president who is not a candidate for the position. Strategic focus during this interim year is on governance education for AGB members and applying good governance practices to address the top strategic issues immediately facing higher education: board independence and leadership, student success and inclusion, leadership support and succession, and innovation and digital transformation. In addition, the interim year has focused on delivering value to members, as always, but also on internal matters such as board development, leadership team development, aligning the board and leadership and building transparency and trust. AGB's board and staff are ensuring that the organization is ready to partner effectively with a new CEO who understands the extraordinary pressures on higher education boards and leaders today, the unacceptable costs of governance gone wrong, and the opportunity for AGB to support history-making transformations for the benefit of society and democracy.

The CEO will work with staff and the board to create a multi-year strategic plan designed to move AGB and higher education toward the new vision, mission, and values the Board of Directors expects to adopt this spring. Early in their tenure, the CEO will lead and participate in substantive discussions within and between board and leadership team members to develop a shared understanding of what these brief statements of vision, mission, and values mean in practice, how they translate to priorities, what infrastructure and culture they require, and what kinds of goals and outcomes they envision in the next few years.

In collaboration with the leadership team, the CEO will establish integrated strategies that expand membership growth, engagement, and impact through AGB's resources and services. Gleaning insights from member feedback, they will determine prioritized

areas of focus for AGB to best serve all higher education governing boards and different types of institutions. They will develop prioritized themes and identify alternative resources to differentiate and deepen AGB's reach, influence, and position, while sharpening the association's competitive edge.

Effectively Oversee AGB's External Partnerships

The CEO leads AGB's efforts to pursue external support to facilitate the association's board governance initiatives through grant-funding organizations, as well as developing programmatic and other partnerships more broadly (for example, with the National Governors Association, National Association of System Heads, the Higher Education Secretariat, and accrediting agencies) that will enhance the association's support for governing boards. Experience with partnerships and initiatives on philanthropic, workforce, business, and economic development in the higher education community would be valuable for success in this area.



Professional Experience and Personal Attributes

While candidates may come from diverse backgrounds, their experience will demonstrate or afford them:

Knowledge

A minimum of 10 years of organizational leadership experience, with proven success running a complex organization or business – whether for profit or nonprofit - that has experienced significant, consistent growth through up and down markets.

A deep understanding and passion for higher education and especially for the importance of fiduciary board governance and leadership to its future. Strong

familiarity with the contemporary higher education landscape and the often-conflicting forces at play.

A firm grasp on the challenges and opportunities facing higher education and the historical context of these challenges and opportunities.

Awareness of the needs of fiduciary governing boards as either an employee of a board or through service on a board.

Experience and/or scholarly production in higher education governance.

The ability to engage with and find solutions for higher education leaders on complex topics, challenges, and opportunities.

The respect of AGB constituents as a national thought leader in advancing AGB's principles of excellence in trusteeship.

Exceptional creative and entrepreneurial instincts that can synthesize the landscape and develop creative and financially sustainable solutions in support of AGB's mission and values. An ability to build an organizational culture that embodies these attributes.

Skills and Abilities

Courage and skill to advocate for the role of higher education in advancing democracy.

Courage and skill to advocate for and advance diversity, equity, and inclusion in higher education and in AGB.

Well-developed managerial skills, including the ability to build and retain a high performing, engaged team; leverage team strengths; delegate authority; create ownership of performance among the senior team; and make challenging decisions.

Experience collaborating effectively with a highly engaged governing board, while forging trust and deep working relationships with them as individual members and as a group. A track record for transparency and communicating effectively on an organization's progress toward goals and objectives.

A record of success driving best practices into an organization and modeling them for an industry.

The ability to attract and retain top talent.

Demonstrated success in development and successful execution of a strategic plan, with appropriate urgency, timeliness, and responsiveness to outlined goals and established metrics.

The skills to serve as an active and deep listener who absorbs information; someone who takes necessary time before drawing conclusions and making decisions.

Outstanding relationship building skills, key to forging and sustaining relationships with institutions, associations, national leaders in higher education, government officials, among other stakeholders. An extensive network of relevant relationships within higher education and the proven ability to strengthen those relationships in the near term.

The stature and presence to serve as the external face of AGB with its members, policy and political leaders, and other audiences.

Outstanding oral and written communication skills, including public speaking and media relations.

An ability to stay current on both higher education and association industry trends, explore potential new areas of opportunity and latest research and best practices in both higher education governance and the association sector.

The ability to leverage all modes of communication that would be relevant for the membership and advance AGB's strategy.

Attitudes

- Emotional intelligence.
- Demonstrates commitment to justice, diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- An orientation toward action.
- Generative and agile thinking.
- Drives and motivates with honesty and transparency.
- Models governance and leadership best practices.
- Inherent optimist who can see worst case scenarios and think positively towards solutions.
- The highest standard of personal integrity, decency, and humility.



About AGB

AGB is the premier organization focused on empowering college, university, and foundation boards to govern with knowledge and confidence. Governing boards in higher education must focus now more than ever on strategic leadership of their institutions and foundations to ensure institutional vitality and student success. It is critical that they reinforce the value of higher education, innovate through the effective use of technology, and respond to shifting demographic trends. AGB provides leadership and counsel to member boards, chief executives, organizational staff, policymakers, and other key industry leaders to help them navigate the changing higher education landscape.

For more information about AGB, please visit www.AGB.org.



Nomination and Application Process

The Search Committee will begin reviewing applications in April and will continue until the position is filled. For best consideration, applicant materials should be received by **April 5, 2024**.

Candidates Should Provide:

- Letter of interest stating how the candidate's experiences and qualifications connect with the characteristics and priorities expressed in the position profile.
- Resume or curriculum vitae.
- Five professional references with emails, telephone numbers, and a description of the candidate's professional relationship with each reference listed (references will not be contacted without prior written authorization from the applicant).

Please [click here](#) to apply for the position. Should you have any questions or encounter any difficulties with the application process, please contact AGBCEO@agbsearch.com.

The search is being assisted by the following professionals from AGB Search:

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Advancing Higher Education Leadership

AGB is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action employer. Employees are selected on the basis of their qualifications and work experience. AGB does not discriminate against any candidate for employment or employee because of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, personal appearance, sexual orientation, family responsibilities, physical handicap, matriculation, or political affiliation. AGB also strives to recruit and promote qualified candidates from minority groups, women, veterans, and the disabled.