



VICE PRESIDENT AND CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER
ASPEN MUSIC FESTIVAL AND SCHOOL
ASPEN, COLORADO



Aspen Leadership Group is proud to partner with the Aspen Music Festival and School in the search for a Vice President and Chief Operating Officer.

The Chief Operating Officer (COO) will play a leadership role in ensuring excellence in the operation of the Aspen Music Festival and School (AMFS) across a wide range of responsibilities. The COO will work in close collaboration with the President and CEO, the board of directors, and various departments to support the achievement of AMFS's strategic priorities, operational goals, and financial health. The COO will be deeply engaged in the implementation of AMFS's strategic plan and annual budgeting process, overseeing the allocation of fiscal and human resources, financial modeling, and progress tracking.

This role demands a blend of acute financial acumen, strategic foresight and operational execution, and understanding of the human resources function, including compensation, hiring practices, and adherence to employment laws. Additionally, the COO will serve as a key partner in working with the board of director's management of the institution's \$90 million endowment. The COO also is responsible for assessing organizational risk and implementing mitigating measures. The COO will engage with a range of external and internal stakeholders, from fund managers and city officials to internal staff and faculty, ensuring that AMFS's operational and financial practices align with the institution's mission and goals. The ability to develop collaborate internal and external relationships, foster an inclusive and welcoming environment, optimize resources, and drive long-term sustainability is paramount to success in this position.

Founded in 1949, AMFS is regarded as one of the leading classical music festivals in the world, noted both for its concert programming and its musical training of mostly young-adult students. The typical eight-week summer season includes more than 300 classical music events — including concerts by three orchestras, solo and chamber music performances, fully staged opera productions, master classes, lectures, and children's programming — and brings in 70,000 audience members. In the winter, the AMFS presents a small series of recitals and runs programming for music education in local schools.

AMFS offers musicians a choice of ten programs of study: Orchestra, American Brass Quintet Seminar @Aspen, Solo Piano, Collaborative Piano, Opera Coaching, the Aspen Opera Theater Center and VocalARTS, the Aspen Conducting Academy, the Susan and Ford Schumann Center for Composition Studies, the Aspen Contemporary Ensemble, and Classical Guitar.

The Michael Klein Music Tent, which opened in 2000, is the Festival's primary concert venue and seats 2050. Concerts are held in the Klein Music Tent on a nearly daily basis during the summer. The 500-seat Joan and Irving Harris Concert Hall is located next door to the Klein Music Tent and was opened in 1993.

The Wheeler Opera House — a Victorian-era venue owned by the City of Aspen — is the home to certain Aspen Opera Theater Center and VocalARTS productions in the summer. The Matthew and Carolyn Bucksbaum teaching campus was completed in 2016 and includes fourteen new buildings and two historic buildings.

AMFS is a leader among Aspen’s extraordinary group of cultural and humanistic nonprofits. The Aspen Institute is an internationally important organization; Aspen Art Museum is nationally recognized and celebrated; AspenFilm, Theatre Aspen, the Aspen Santa Fe Ballet, the Anderson Ranch Arts Center, the Aspen Center for Physics, and many other groups sustain an unparalleled climate for philanthropy and engagement. AMFS has long-standing partnerships with local, state, and federal government agencies, including the City of Aspen, Colorado Creative Industries, and the National Endowment for the Arts. Aspen is internationally renowned as a destination for outdoor sports, both winter and summer.

REPORTING RELATIONSHIPS

The Chief Operating Officer will report to the President and CEO, Alan Fletcher and serve as a senior member of the organization’s Leadership Management Team. The Chief Operating Officer will oversee seven staff including three Finance staff, one Information Technology staff (as well as one seasonal staff position), and three Facilities staff (as well as one seasonal staff position).

FROM THE PRESIDENT AND CEO

Following our inspiring 75th anniversary season in 2024, Aspen Music Festival and School is in a strong position for future growth. In December 2023, our board approved a five-year strategic plan which focuses on securing our future with capital improvements, endowment funding, and increased student aid. We are in the nucleus phase of a capital campaign to support these new initiatives, and we already have very strong assurances of success. In 2024, we completed a transition in Board leadership with a remarkable gift from our outgoing Board chair and great new energy from our incoming Chair. The Vice President and Chief Operating Officer will have the opportunity to participate in shaping this campaign and strategizing its execution. Our history of extraordinary financial management and highly favorable ratio of endowment to operating budget provide a great platform for continuing achievement.

— Alan Fletcher, President and CEO

PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES

Strategic Planning and Organizational Management

The Chief Operating Officer will

- partner with CEO in the development, articulation, and implementation of AMFS’s strategic plan, annual goals, and capital projects;
- work with the CFO on financial modeling, asset allocation planning, budgeting, tracking, and reporting related to AMFS’s strategic plan and annual goals;
- advise CEO on matters of critical importance to the organization, including its financial health, the wellbeing and performance of its staff, and the development and status of key initiatives;
- promote a culture of operational excellence, collaboration, and effectiveness and partner with CEO and other organizational leaders on management initiatives and priorities;

- work with the Advancement team on the current multi-year capital campaign and other fundraising efforts, tracking and allocating funding for strategic priorities;
- ensure that the organization's structure and workforce plans are responsive to current and developing organizational needs;
- assess organizational risks and implement appropriate mitigation strategies, policies, and processes; and
- represent the organization and its mission in engagements with various stakeholders, including donors and community members and leaders.

Board Engagement

The Chief Operating Officer will

- work closely with a deeply dedicated and sophisticated board of directors and serve as liaison to a number of board committees; and
- provide regular reporting to board of directors and board committees.

Human Resources

The Chief Operating Officer will

- have primary responsibility for the human resources needs of the organization, including the annual salary review and salary structure, compliance with Code of Conduct, coordination of response for emergency and disaster management, establishment of inclusive hiring practices, and promotion of a welcoming and healthy environment for all staff, students and faculty;
- keep apprised of employment and contractor rules and regulations and work with managers on staffing needs, hiring and terminations, and compliance; and
- work with Accounting Director to optimize benefit plan offerings and keep all plans current with changes in the law.

Endowment

The Chief Operating Officer will

- in consultation with the external endowment manager, implement investment decisions made by the Investment Committee in its investment of the organization's \$100 million endowment;
- work with Investment Committee on endowment investments including manager selection, asset allocation, fund performance, performance review, and reporting; and
- track all endowment gifts and confirm that restricted funds are being appropriately spent.

Finance and IT

The Chief Operating Officer will

- work in close partnership with CFO to implement appropriate procedures for internal control, cash disbursements, cash management, etc. and oversee the annual budget process, monthly reporting, and financial projections;
- as necessary for capital projects or other strategic priorities, arrange financing which may include issuing tax-exempt debt, procuring a tax-exempt loan, or direct bank loan/letter of credit;
- working with CFO, prepare, assist or review, as appropriate, the 990 filings and review audited financials; and
- working with CFO and IT Director, provide leadership for organization's technology and cybersecurity strategy and implementation, including for financial data systems and processes.

Planned Giving

The Chief Operating Officer will

- work with Advancement Department on planned gifts, serve as main point of contact for probate matters, and set up and administer split-interest agreements.

Legal

The Chief Operating Officer will

- engage outside counsel as appropriate and serve as the main point of contact with outside counsel on all legal matters including human relations, real estate, bylaws, litigation, and contracts, as well as in matters relating to the board (e.g., revisions to bylaws).

Campus, Facilities, and Housing

The Chief Operating Officer will

- work to ensure housing for staff and students, including working on long-term plans for housing availability, overseeing property leases, assisting with property management, and managing external relationships and compliance with agreements for shared campus facilities; and
- manage all compliance requirements from campus redevelopment including housing audits, FTE counts, transportation management plan, etc.

External Engagements

The Chief Operating Officer will

- represent AMFS externally and liaise with other organizations and stakeholders, including serving on boards as a representative of AMFS and liaising with the City of Aspen.

LEADERSHIP

Alan Fletcher

President and CEO

Alan Fletcher, one of this country's most accomplished music administrators and respected composers, was born in 1956 in Riverside, New Jersey, and earned his baccalaureate at Princeton University (1978) and his master's degree (1979) and doctorate (1983) at Juilliard. He studied composition with Roger Sessions, Milton Babbitt, Edward T. Cone, and Paul Lansky and piano with Jacob Lateiner and Robert Helps. In 1985, Fletcher was appointed to the faculty of the New England Conservatory of Music, teaching composition and theory and serving successively during his 16-year tenure at the school as Dean, Provost, and Senior Vice President.

From 2001 to 2006, he was Professor of Music and Head of the School of Music at Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh, after which he assumed his current position as President and CEO of the Aspen Music Festival and School. Fletcher has lectured nationally and internationally on music and music administration and served on many boards, panels, juries, seminars and committees, including the board of the Aspen Institute and the Pittsburgh Opera. He has also contributed articles and op-ed pieces to the *Huffington Post*, *The Guardian*, *Symphony* magazine, *Gramophone* magazine, the *Wall Street Journal*, *Sonus: Journal of Global Music*, *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, *Baltimore Sun*, the *Journal of Music Theory Pedagogy*, *Chronicle of Higher Education*, and many others. Fletcher has won numerous composing awards and received commissions from the National Dance Institute, the Pittsburgh Symphony (2008, 2011, and 2015), Los Angeles Philharmonic, Atlanta Symphony, Zurich Chamber Orchestra, Nashua Symphony, National Gallery of Art, Boston Celebrity Series, Duquesne University, New York Camerata, and other noted ensembles, organizations, and soloists. He chaired the 1997 Salzburg Seminar Music for a New Millenium: The Classical Genre in Contemporary Society.

CANDIDATE QUALIFICATIONS AND COMPETENCIES

Aspen Music Festival and School seeks a Vice President and Chief Operating Officer with

- experience working with leadership to develop, implement, and track strategic priorities, including financial modeling and resource allocation;
- a strong finance background including experience as a Chief Finance Officer or other senior role that includes organizational budgeting, allocation of resources, and financial modeling;
- knowledge of investment strategies and an ability to work with external investment managers and report on investment performance to leadership and board of directors;
- a passion and aptitude for operational excellence and management and an ability to lead in a nonprofit environment;
- strong interpersonal skills and an ability to develop strong cross-organizational relationships, ensuring collaborative teamwork, smooth communication, and collaboration;
- an ability to work with highly engaged boards and volunteers and an ability to leverage the time, talent, and resources of boards to further institutional priorities;
- an ability to represent the Aspen Music Festival and School in the community, and to coordinate and engage with local organizations and government entities;
- an understanding of the human resources function including organizational staffing, compliance with employment laws, hiring and termination processes, and compensation structures and an ability to create an infrastructure that promotes inclusive hiring practices;
- an understanding of nonprofit sector business practices or an ability to acquire the skills needed to lead within the nonprofit sector; and
- an understanding of the contributed revenue model and an ability to interact effectively with nonprofit arts boards and donors.

A bachelor's degree is required for this position. An advanced degree is preferred.

SALARY, BENEFITS, AND CULTURE

The salary range for this position is \$200,000 to \$230,000 annually. Aspen Music Festival and School offers full employee medical, dental, and vision insurance coverage; \$25,000 life insurance policy; option to put aside money pre-tax for health and dependent care expenses; pre- or post-tax retirement plan with company match after two years of service; medical expense reimbursement plan to offset the insurance deductible; cash health and wellness benefits; employee assistance program; paid holiday schedule of 18 days including a six-day post-festival break and a holiday break from Christmas Eve to New Year's Day; paid vacation of 13 days the first year that grows up to 26 days after five years; paid sick time of 15 days per year; season pass to the festival plus one guest; and Aspen Chamber discount on ski passes.

All members of the AMFS community exhibit the highest level of professionalism, act civilly, and maintain an environment conducive to learning and music making. This means that all students, faculty, staff, and guest artists represent AMFS well, both on- and off-campus, treat each other with respect and dignity, promote excellence on- and off-stage, and act as good citizens. AMFS is an institution that welcomes people of diverse backgrounds and perspectives. It is committed to being an open and inclusive organization and believes that when people feel respected and included, they can be more creative, innovative, and successful. While it has more work to do to advance diversity and inclusion, it is investing to move the organization and classical music industry forward. All members of the AMFS community use inclusive language that is accurate, fair, and respectful of an individual's pronouns when stated.

LOCATION

This position is in Aspen, Colorado. The Chief Operating Officer may work remotely with time spent on-site weekly excluding in summer when the Chief Operating Officer must be on-site daily.

APPLICATION DEADLINE

All applications must be accompanied by a cover letter and résumé. ***Cover letters should be responsive to the responsibilities and qualifications listed in the prospectus.*** Review of applications will begin immediately and continue until the successful candidate has been selected.

To apply for this position, visit: [Vice President and Chief Operating Officer, Aspen Music Festival and School.](#)

To nominate a candidate, contact [Wisla Heneghan.](#)

All inquiries will be held in confidence.