Folk Alliance International (FAI) was founded in 1989 to connect folk music leaders working to sustain the folk community and genre. An NEA-designated National Art Service Organization based in Kansas City, Missouri, FAI is the leading international voice for folk music with over 3000 members including a global community of artists, agents, managers, labels, publicists, arts administrators, and festival, venue, and concert series presenters.

FAI produces the world’s largest annual conference of the folk music industry and community (with over 3300 delegates from 42 countries at its 2020 edition), the International Folk Music Awards, an Artist in Residence program, a Finest Folk concert series, the Folk ExChange, and Ethno USA (in partnership with JMI). FAI has five regional affiliates in North America that represent members in their respective regions, and one global affiliate. The affiliates produce their own year-round content, annual events, and operate with their own boards.

FAI defines folk broadly as “the music of the people” (reflective of any community they are from), and programs a diverse array of sub-genres including, but not limited to, Appalachian, Americana, Blues, Bluegrass, Celtic, Cajun, Global Roots, HipHop, Old-Time, Singer-Songwriter, Spoken Word, Traditional, Zydeco, and various fusions.

As a disruptive leader, FAI takes seriously its role in advancing issues of justice, anti-racism, cultural equity, multiculturalism, sustainability and the environment, health and wellness, and community safety regarding harassment in the music industry. With community consultation, a new strategic plan will be created in May 2022.

- FAI’s mission is to serve, strengthen, and engage the global folk music community through preservation, presentation, and promotion.
- FAI’s vision is to advocate for the folk music community; create thoughtful, intentional growth; be a respected organization within the music industry; and continue to produce high profile, meaningful events.
- FAI values diversity, equity, inclusion, and access; strives to ensure gender parity in all its programming; celebrates multiple languages and cultures; and actively welcomes participation from marginalized, disenfranchised, and underrepresented communities.

In 2021, FAI signed on to the national 10/20/30 Pledge, which is a 10-year commitment to achieve 20 percent representation and allocate 30 percent of artistic and vendor fees to organizations whose primary focus is, and individuals who identify as Black, Indigenous, People of Color, women, individuals with disabilities, and LGBTQ2IA+ persons.

As a response to the pandemic and other important field issues, FAI launched a number of programs including a substantial series of online webinars, a virtual conference, and a Committing to Conversation online space to discuss race, equity, and social justice. It also launched The Village Fund (a grant program for folk artists and independent professionals experiencing financial hardship. FAI has awarded $50,000 to date.)

FAI is a member of the Performing Arts Alliance (PAA) and the Alliance of Performing Arts Conferences (APAC), and provides year-round support of the field through advocacy, education, peer support, and industry networking. FAI honors legends and leaders in the folk community through its annual awards. The 2021 recipients included Gordon Lightfoot, Celia Cruz, Reggie Harris, Jackson Browne, Suni Paz, and others. Past guest speakers at the conference include Vice President Al Gore, Judy Collins, Mavis Staples, Billy Bragg, and Rhiannon Giddens.

FAI is governed by a 21-member board of directors elected by members led by Board President Amy Reitnouer Jacobs. The FY21 financials had total revenues of $968,849 and expenses of $940,151. Due to the pandemic, this is significantly less than the previous year’s actual income of $1.6 million. FAI has typically maintained a surplus budget prior to COVID with an anticipated loss in FY22, which will be covered by a reserve. FAI has eight full-time staff members, two year-round contractors, and 10 seasonal contractors.
Community
Known for its barbecue, jazz heritage, sports teams, and fountains, Kansas City, Missouri, straddles the border with Kansas and incorporated in 1953, eight years before Kansas became the 34th state. The name was inspired by the Kanza People, Native Americans of the Kaw Nation, and was originally called the City of Kansas. With its affordable housing, top-rated colleges, incredible arts and culture, and exciting professional sports teams, it is no wonder that *US News and World Report* has ranked Kansas City in the 50 best places to live in the United States.

Major employers include the federal government, Cerner, Hallmark, American Century Investments, and Russell Stover Candies. In addition, Kansas City added the third highest percentage growth of tech jobs in the United States in 2020, trailing only San Francisco, California and Austin, Texas. Kansas City has put much emphasis on encouraging entrepreneurs in the area and has been increasing its funding of the arts and boosting spending on park maintenance and miles of trails and bikeways.

Kansas City is home to two, one-of-a-kind museums; The National WWI Museum and Memorial designated by Congress as America’s official World War I Museum; and the Negro Leagues Baseball Museum, the world’s only museum dedicated to preserving and celebrating the rich history of African American baseball and its impact on the social advancement of America.

The thriving arts and culture scene includes the American Jazz Museum, the celebrated Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, the beautiful Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts, the Kansas City Symphony, the Lyric Opera of Kansas City, and the Kansas City Ballet. Kansas City celebrates its creative culture throughout the year with popular festivals and events highlighting the unique flavors of the many charming neighborhoods around the city. Kansas City’s Country Club Plaza, with its Spanish-inspired architecture, is a hub for shopping, dining, festivals, and special events. And for seven weeks each winter, it is the jewel of the Midwest with its holiday light display.

Sources: kctechcouncil.com, worldpopulationreview.com, census.gov, visitkc.com

Position Summary
The Executive Director (ED) is the head of the organization and will champion folk music and ensure that the organization achieves its mission and financial objectives. Reporting to the Board of Directors, the ED will build on the foundation of success and strengthen FAI to ensure the support of its members and its strategic direction as a professional association. Collaborating across the field and building authentic relationships, the ED will serve as an ambassador who supports FAI’s national and international visibility while cultivating support. This individual will work in partnership with the board to cultivate relationships and financial resources while educating, engaging, and energizing the board in its role as advocates and supporters.

Roles and Responsibilities

**Strategic Vision and Field Leadership**
- Serve as a committed, visionary, and accessible leader for FAI with a passionate connection to the organization’s mission and the folk community.
- Propel FAI into the future by supporting and creating sustainable strategic and mission-aligned pathways for new relationships, programs, and revenue possibilities.
- Demonstrate a collaborative leadership style in a wide range of communities and settings that inspire internal and external stakeholders to participate in FAI’s future.
- Embrace the principles of equity, diversity, inclusion, and access to ensure an organizational culture that respects different perspectives and nurtures an environment of antiracism, goodwill, and empowerment.
- Develop and cultivate strong working relationships with members, outside advisors, and experts in the field.
- Contribute to FAI’s knowledge by keeping abreast of current trends, emerging issues, policies, political landscapes, influential leaders, and best practices.
- Support communications initiatives that increase overall knowledge of and support for FAI, its programs and strategic growth, nationally and internationally.

**Fundraising Excellence**
- Partner with the board and development staff in creating opportunities to broaden the donor base and increase overall contributed revenue.
- Cultivate and nurture authentic relationships with individual donors, potential corporate sponsors, and other funders in collaboration with the development department to support increased contributed revenue.
- Develop contributed revenue strategies, engaging new donors and funders, and stewarding existing supporters.
- Encourage innovative membership program service, research, and emerging technologies for new and renewed memberships.
- Build and implement annual and multi-year fundraising plans to increase earned and sponsorship income for operations, programs, and special initiatives.

**Board Governance**
- Identify, cultivate, and assist in the recruitment of board members whose skills, experience, financial connections, and diversity meet the organization's needs and can help achieve its strategic goals.
- Maintain a strong partnership with the board, engaging in open and transparent communication with individual members and all committees to enable the board to fulfill its fiscal and fiduciary responsibilities.
- Guide the board, staff, and members in building a culture of philanthropy, developing strategies, and defining key messages to ensure that revenues meet organizational goals.

**Management and Financial Administration**
- Lead FAI's day-to-day operations to meet fiscal and operational goals and ensure an inclusive, productive, and collaborative work environment.
- Ensure the creation of departmental budgets and provide financial management oversight to the budget.
- Support the management of key external relationships with partners, stakeholders, and funders in collaboration with other team members.
- Maintain an effective and collaborative community of staff, board, artists, partners, and patrons.
- Align the entire organization at all levels to work in collaboration towards programming goals.
- Participate in setting short and long-term mission goals while remaining fiscally responsible.

**Traits and Characteristics**
The ED will be a resourceful and collaborative leader who enjoys frequent communication and engagement with others. As an altruistic and people-oriented connector, they will be an active member of the larger community and will use their love of learning to maximize practical results. In this post-pandemic era, the ED will need to adapt to various situations and be poised and ready to navigate shifts in an ever-changing landscape. The ED will recognize, respect, and promote diversity in all forms and will demonstrate exceptional agility and strength in nurturing and enhancing staff internally while building and enhancing partnerships with a broad base of stakeholders externally.

Other key competencies include:

- **Diplomacy** – The commitment to build authentic rapport and relate well to a variety of people, demonstrating respect for others regardless of cultural background, personal biases, or beliefs.
- **Time and Priority Management** – The adeptness to develop goals and objectives, identify and resolve issues, determine realistic timelines, and establish top priorities that result in significant and positive outcomes.
- **Personal Accountability** – The capacity to accept responsibility for one’s own actions and results, apply feedback in self-evaluation, and envision new possibilities in personal performance which result in significant and positive outcomes.
- **Continuous Learning** – The initiative to acquire and master new skills and learn new concepts, technologies, and methods.

**Qualifications**
A bachelor's degree or equivalent and five to seven years of senior management experience at a national association, cultural organization, industry organization, or similar nonprofit entity are required. Must have a demonstrated commitment to the folk music community. Experience in fundraising, advocacy, and membership are needed. Leading candidates will have a proven track record in working with a diverse group of individuals who come from a range of cultural backgrounds, ideological approaches, professional experiences, and geographic areas.
**Compensation and Benefits**
FAI provides competitive compensation for an organization of its size, with a salary range between $95,000 and $115,000, and a standard benefits package that includes health insurance, annual and sick leave, and paid holidays. Relocation assistance is also available.

**Applications and Inquiries**
To submit a cover letter and resume with a summary of demonstrable accomplishments, please click here or visit artsconsulting.com/employment. For questions or general inquiries about this job opportunity, please contact:

Mario Garcia Durham, Vice President

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FAI acknowledges that all of its activities and that of its North American member organizations take place on ancestral Indigenous lands. FAI’s office is located on the traditional land of the Kansa/Kaw, Osage, Kickapoo, and Očhéthi Šakówin nations.