National Conference of State Legislatures

Strategic Direction and Executive Director Search Overview

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Input Process and Timeline

October 1, 2018: NCSL Officers
October 16: Executive Team
November 1: Program & Group Directors
November 16 & 26: Advisory Committee
December 4-7: Capitol Forum
December 12-14: Legislative Leaders Symposium
January 4, 2019: Additional NCSL Staff
January 8: Washington D.C. Staff
January 17-19: Winter Meeting
The Why

In this time of escalating complexity, NCSL is uniquely positioned to support and strengthen state legislatures.
Key Findings

The Mission and Purpose accurately reflect why NCSL exists and the work it is charged to perform. No one disputes that NCSL is the bipartisan NGO providing state legislatures with support, ideas, connections and a strong voice on Capitol Hill.
Key Findings

Legislative members and staff, as well as NCSL staff and stakeholders perceive that today state legislatures are more important than ever, as the “Forum for America’s Ideas.”
Key Findings

During this time of escalating complexity, NCSL has a unique opportunity to build on its current success with nimble and innovative programs, services and products.
NCSL is…

Recognized as the pre-eminent bipartisan organization founded to:
• Improve the quality and effectiveness of state legislatures.
• Promote policy innovations and communication among state legislatures.
• Ensure legislatures a strong, cohesive voice in the federal system.
Strategic Direction

Between today and the end of 2025 NCSL should focus its highest level of attention and resources on these five priorities.
Strategic Direction

1. Provide a robust continuum of professional development and leadership development opportunities for legislative members and staff.
Strategic Direction

2. Timely delivery of high quality data, and resources to facilitate information exchange among state legislatures and to promote policy innovation.
Strategic Direction

3. Enhance brand awareness to advance NCSL’s position as the most respected bipartisan NGO serving state legislatures and promote greater understanding and utilization of NCSL programs, products and services.
Strategic Direction

4. Provide timely and nimble representation of the states and their legislatures in the American federal system.
Strategic Direction

5. Refine the existing NCSL organizational platform to provide relevant, responsive programming to meet the evolving needs of legislatures.
Strategic Direction

Achieving the results we want on these priorities requires that we either strengthen existing capacities or develop new capacities in the components listed below:

- Market/Communications capacities
- Program/Product/Service capacities
- People/ Human Resource capacities
- Organization capacities
- Financial capacities
Organizational Next Steps

Operate with a strategic plan that is not opportunity adverse and focuses organizational energy and resources. As part of this performance outcome, programs and services are more model-driven and data-driven.
Organizational Next Steps

Create a work environment that is even more focused on attracting and retaining quality staff.
Organizational Next Steps

Governance structures assessed for alignment with future organizational needs.
Organizational Next Steps

Management, administrative, financial, technology and communications systems are updated to support the expanding and complex program array and desired outcomes.
Executive Director Skills, Attributes and Experience

**Nonpartisan:** Politically astute. Embraces ambiguity and finds common ground.

**Values and understands State Legislatures:** Passionate about the role of state legislatures. Knows what legislatures do, and why they are important to a democratic society. Fully supports the work of legislative staff and the work of legislators.
Executive Director Skills, Attributes and Experience

**Experienced Leader:** Big picture vision, understands the importance of culture and has a track record producing results. Understands how to build effective teams and advance organizational results.

**Relationship Builder:** Connects, engages and inspires.
Executive Director Skills, Attributes and Experience

**Governance:** Has prior experience working for a Board and understands how to advance the Board’s work as NCSL’s strategic governing body.

**Integrity:** High ethical standards.

**Humble:** An authentic servant leader who works in support of the mission and purpose of NCSL and to advance best best practices in legislatures.
Executive Director Skills, Attributes and Experience

**Good Listener:** Approachable person who authentically engages. Values the perspectives and contributions of others.

**High Energy:** Likes to work hard, on many different projects, with lots of different people. Enjoys never having the same day twice. Embraces the inherent complexity of NCSL.
Executive Director Skills, Attributes and Experience

**Strong Communicator:** Promotes the value of state legislatures to the media, funders and partners. Understands how to tell stories that make a topic compelling and accessible. Presents complex information clearly, accurately, and transparently. Enjoys fundraising, working with the media and providing thought leadership in a variety of forums.
Next Steps and Timeline

- February – Executive Director Position Posted and Candidate Sourcing Begins
- April – Preliminary Interviews
- May – Final Interviews
- June – Hire Executive Director
- July – Announcement of New Executive Director
Discussion