

## Position Opportunity

### **President and Chief Executive Officer Aspen Music Festival and School Aspen, Colorado**

**Aspen Music Festival and School** (AMFS) welcomes applications and nominations for the position of President and Chief Executive Officer. Alan Fletcher, who has served with distinction since 2006, has announced that he will step down at the end of 2026. A Search Committee has been appointed to identify the next President and CEO and has engaged Catherine French Group (CFG) to assist them in identifying and recruiting qualified candidates. The AMFS Board expects to introduce the President and CEO-Elect to the Aspen community during the 2026 Summer Season. The President and CEO will assume leadership in January 2027.

#### **About Aspen Music Festival and School**

[www.aspenmusic.org](http://www.aspenmusic.org)

The Aspen Music Festival and School is widely recognized to be among the finest classical music centers for performance and education both nationally and internationally. Presenting more than 400 musical events during its eight-week summer season, AMFS draws leading classical musicians from across the world for a rich combination of performances of orchestral works, opera, chamber music, recitals, contemporary music, works by new or previously unrecognized voices, popular genres, family events, and talks, competitions, and classes.

In 2026, more than 450 students will participate in orchestra, opera, chamber music, piano studies, classical guitar, composition, and conducting studies. Students come to Aspen from 40 U.S. states and 40 countries to play in three orchestras, sing, conduct, compose and study with more than 135 artist-faculty members from the leading professional ensembles, conservatories, and schools of music in North America and across the world.

The Aspen Music Festival and School started as a bold dream in June 1949, when Walter and Elizabeth Paepcke organized an event that brought leaders, artists, thinkers, and dreamers to the remote mountain town of Aspen to discuss big ideas and listen to music that touched the soul. The experience was both profound and joyful, and the following year, the musicians returned. Walter Paepcke asked his friend the acclaimed baritone Mack Harrell to form a school, and the annual music festival and school was born.

Over seven decades, AMFS's magic has been in this combination of seasoned professionals and youth as colleagues and co-inspiring forces. AMFS alumni fill every corner of the music world today, performing in orchestras, as soloists, singing, composing, conducting and teaching. AMFS continues to create, educate, and inspire.

A deep commitment to Aspen itself and the surrounding communities is reflected in the many events in and around the Klein Music Tent that are free to the public during the summer season. From Fall to Spring, AMFS engages young audiences with popular in-school and after-school music programs throughout the Roaring Fork Valley.

AMFS is governed by a Board of 48 dedicated and engaged Trustees. The FY 26 operating budget is \$23 million. Alexandra Munroe is Board Chair; Robert Spano is Music Director.

## **The Opportunity**

As AMFS celebrates the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversaries of the first concerts and its incorporation as the Music Associates of Aspen, a Strategic Planning Committee has evaluated AMFS's strengths, opportunities, and priorities for the much-changed landscape of the post-COVID world. Working with an energized Board, the next President and CEO will take a leadership role in shaping the future of AMFS through a number of initiatives that will strengthen the organization, expand the quality and reach into key strategic areas, and deepen a commitment to excellence and access. The President and CEO will take a leadership role in completing a major campaign to achieve a significant increase in the financial aid and unrestricted net assets that will support significant growth and impact for AMFS and for the future of classical music education and performance. In addition, raising capital to expand housing is also part of the current campaign.

## **The Position**

The President and Chief Executive Officer provides leadership and vision that enable Aspen Music Festival and School to fulfill its mission and achieve its goals for artistic and educational excellence, community impact, and long-term financial sustainability.

The President and CEO is responsible for all aspects of AMFS's operations, including: education and professional training programs; artistic programming; faculty, student, and staff recruitment and oversight; strategic planning; financial management; fundraising; facilities management and site development; community education programs and partnerships; audience engagement; marketing; public relations and positioning; and public advocacy. The CEO ensures that AMFS maintains its competitive edge by recruiting the highest caliber faculty; partnering with the faculty to recruit top talent among students nationally and internationally; and presenting a Music Festival of international significance to the widest possible audience.

Working with the Music Director, the Vice President of Artistic Administration, the co-artistic directors of Aspen Opera Theater and Vocal Arts, resident artists, and program directors, the President and CEO oversees the artistic direction and design of the Festival season, which includes orchestra concerts, opera and music theater productions, chamber music and solo recitals, community collaborations, and special events. The President provides leadership in recruiting guest artists, conductors, and composers of international repute for its extensive festival and school programming. The President fosters an environment of collegiality, clarity, and transparency that encourages artists to do their finest work through collaboration, renewal, and a sense of possibility.

With the Board Chair, the President and CEO takes an active role in recruiting a dedicated and engaged Board. The President provides impetus and support to the work of the Board and ensures that the Board and its committees have timely and accurate information to support decision making. Working with the Treasurer and the Chief Operating Officer, the President develops and implements annual and multi-year operating plans and capital budgets. The President recruits, supervises, motivates, and evaluates a high-performing professional staff.

With the Board Chair, the President and CEO takes the lead in on-going efforts to address issues of critical importance to AMFS, including: the shortage of available and affordable housing for AMFS

faculty, staff, students, and guest artists; the campaign for increased restricted and unrestricted endowment to support growth in programs and services; reimagining the concert-going experience to increase attendance at performances in the Klein Music Tent and Harris Concert Hall, among other venues; recruiting artistic leadership; and managing anticipated generational shifts in faculty, board membership, donors, and audience.

As AMFS's top fundraiser, the President and CEO works with the Board Chair to ensure that AMFS has the volunteer and staff leadership and systems in place to achieve and exceed annual operating income goals, endowment growth, and capital campaign goals. The President takes a leadership role in the identification, cultivation, and solicitation of donors in the greater Aspen community and in communities across the country and beyond.

The President and CEO is a visible representative of AMFS throughout the greater Aspen community on a year-round basis. The President actively seeks opportunities to develop cultural and civic partnerships and collaborations with organizations that share an interest in developing arts and cultural opportunities for the broad and diverse Aspen area community while building organizational impact and sustainability in a challenging resort environment.

The President and CEO is the chief spokesperson for AMFS, and oversees public positioning and messaging to internal and external audiences locally, nationally, and internationally.

The President and CEO reports to the Board through the Board Chair. The CEO oversees a faculty of 136 and a year-round staff of 39 that increases to 150 during the summer Festival Season.

### **Presence in the Aspen Community**

The next President and CEO of AMFS will participate actively in the civic and cultural life of the Aspen community and, with support from the Board, Aspen will become their primary residence. The position requires that the President and CEO be in residence for the full summer program from June through August. While maintaining a strong visible presence in Aspen throughout the year is of the utmost importance, the President and CEO must be willing and able to travel as necessary during other months of the year for donor cultivation and fund raising; for student, faculty, and guest artist recruitment; to be an advocate for AMFS; and to engage broadly with the arts, humanities, education, and philanthropic communities nationally and internationally.

### **Candidate Profile**

The next President and CEO of AMFS will be a charismatic and visionary leader whose professional career demonstrates a passion for the broad spectrum of classical music; a commitment to education and professional training at the highest level of excellence; and the ability to inspire and secure significant audience and philanthropic support for music and professional education.

The President will be a thoughtful agent for change. The President will unite the Board, faculty, and staff around a shared vision for the ways that AMFS can adapt to the challenges facing classical music and the institutions that support classical music. The President will have the ability to challenge and empower young musicians to envision and create their professional futures.

The successful candidate will have a strong working knowledge of music and the professional music world. Leadership experience with a performing arts organization such as a professional orchestra, opera company, chamber music organization, and/or presenter, while not required, will be seen as an asset.

While respectful of the traditions that have long influenced the preparation of young artists, the President will have clear vision of the opportunities and challenges that await the next generation of professional vocalists, instrumentalists, conductors, and composers as they expand the boundaries of classical music and artistic expression.

The President will have the broad interests and social skills needed to communicate comfortably and effectively with people across a broad socio-economic spectrum.

The President will have the emotional and organizational maturity required to manage competing interests and bring differing points of view into alignment in order to build consensus about the strategies that the Board has identified as critical to future success.

The successful candidate will be creative, innovative, curious, and persistent. The candidate will be a person of integrity and high ethical standards with a strong personal commitment to transparency. The candidate will have excellent listening skills, sound judgment, and a good sense of humor.

### **Compensation and Benefits**

The salary range for this position is \$450,000 to \$600,000 based on qualifications and experience. AMFS offers a comprehensive benefits package. The Board will work with individual candidates to understand their specific housing needs and to facilitate their ability to make a home in Aspen.

### **Applications**

The Search Committee welcomes recommendations, nominations, and applications from all qualified candidates regardless of race, sexual orientation, gender expression, age, disability, religion, ethnicity, or national origin. Applicants should submit a letter that speaks to their specific interest in the position and qualifications as described in the position specifications. Please include a resumé and contact information for at least three references. All applications will be treated as confidential, and references will not be contacted without the applicant's agreement. Electronic submissions in Adobe Acrobat PDF format are requested.

Please submit application materials to: [applications@catherinefrenchgroup.com](mailto:applications@catherinefrenchgroup.com)

The position will remain open until filled.