

GARY KAPLAN & ASSOCIATES

EXECUTIVE SEARCH

POSITION SPECIFICATION

TITLE: Chief Executive Officer

CLIENT: International Species Information Systems

International Species Information Systems (ISIS) was founded in 1973 when Drs. Ulysses Seal and Dale Makey proposed the idea of an international database to help zoos and aquariums accomplish long-term conservation management goals. At that time, 51 zoos in North America and Europe responded to the invitation to participate in this network.

The Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA), the American Association of Zoo Veterinarians (AAZV) and other zoological associations provided grants and endorsements for ISIS. In addition, the doctors raised development funding from private foundations and the United States Department of Interior. The Minnesota Zoological Garden hosted the program for 15 years.

Since 1989, ISIS has been incorporated as a non-profit entity under an international Board of Trustees elected by subscribing member institutions. ISIS has sustained annual membership growth over the last 30 years. Today, ISIS members number in excess of 825 institutions in 76 countries on six continents.

ISIS also serves as a center for cooperative development of zoological software for in-facility use. This allows software development costs to be spread across more institutions – making professional software and professional-level support available to all participants at a reasonable cost.

For more information about International Species Information Systems, please visit their website at: www.isis.org.

LOCATION: Eagan, Minnesota

This Minneapolis/St. Paul area offers a high quality of life, modest housing costs and some of the best public schools in the United States.

REPORTING

RELATIONSHIP: This position reports to the Board of Trustees, and will directly supervise five full time staff at the corporate office to include an Assistant Director/Chief Technology Officer, an Administrative Manager, a Director of Science, a

Certified Help Desk Manager, and a Communications Coordinator. The Chief Executive Officer will also have oversight for a total of 30 information technology and zoological professionals, including five distributed member-support positions located in Amsterdam, Sydney, Bogota, Delhi, and Tokyo.

**POSITION
CONCEPT:**

The Chief Executive Officer will lead a management team and collaborate with the Board of Trustees in an effort to enhance and grow the ISIS value proposition to the global membership.

The Chief Executive Officer will provide overall leadership with an emphasis on technology management as well as the advancement of a strategic direction with an international reach. The Chief Executive Officer, while possessing the necessary technical skills to carry out the defined responsibilities, should also have the personal capabilities and character to effectively interact with and be sensitive to the varied needs of a global membership. He/she will take a long-term view, while obtaining short-term quantifiable results.

It is of paramount importance that this person effects meaningful, carefully planned, and organized change while understanding when technology can solve real world problems. The successful candidate will inherently recognize the balance between the organization's limited resources and the need to think in a manner that is entrepreneurial, innovative, and service focused.

**SPECIFIC
DUTIES:**

1. Lead the largest international non-profit zoological information services membership organization, implementing the mission and vision developed by the ISIS Board of Trustees. This will include the ongoing review and, as appropriate, revision of organizational structure, objectives, and goals.
2. Develop and implement more rigorous and disciplined project management processes/methodologies that will improve efficiency, productivity, costs, and the timely, successful completion of projects.
3. Assure the recruitment, development, training, and evaluation of qualified personnel to support the operations of the organization. Evaluate, develop, and implement human resources policies and procedures to insure efficiency, exceptional service delivery, and ongoing personnel assessment opportunities.
4. Offer strong, credible, and consistent professional management to the staff.

5. Provide direction and oversight to outside vendors to insure all contractual obligations are met on time and within budget.
6. Prepare and monitor budgets to assure fiscal health, accountability, and stability, while working closely with the Treasurer, for Board review and approval.
7. Build and enhance living collection information services and trust-based relationships with all member zoological institutions worldwide.
8. Assess the organization and develop a growth-oriented strategic plan that capitalizes on its strengths and capabilities.
9. Maintain organizational awareness of best practices while promoting the effective use of current and emerging technologies.
10. Identify new member institution services and suitable new revenue opportunities. Ensure the generation of additional income necessary to sustain the organization and enable growth.
11. Provide the Board of Trustees with regular reports on projects, process improvements, service levels, and operational issues.
12. Engage the membership in the proactive exploration, discussion, and assessment of ISIS services and offerings. Deliver on membership needs as a result of this input and communicate the outcomes with transparency.
13. Act as a sponsor for a very large community collection-management software project (ZIMS). Insure that all project related deadlines/deliverables are met.
14. Provide sound business judgment as well as entrepreneurial leadership and vision to technology functions worldwide. Build a business plan supported by a credible and reasonable business case.
15. Serve as the ambassador to over 20 zoo-, aquarium-, and related professional associations at global, regional, and national levels worldwide.
16. Support the ISIS Board of Trustees in policy and strategic organizational development.

**CANDIDATE
QUALIFICATIONS:**

- The ideal candidate will be a highly energetic, diplomatic, and entrepreneurial leader with a minimum of ten years of progressively responsible management experience, **five of which will include executive level experience gained in either the non-profit or business sectors.** Must have excellent planning, administration, leadership, and financial management skills as well as a high degree of emotional intelligence. Experience leading a membership organization and/or association as well as familiarity with zoos and aquariums would be a plus. Additionally, management experience gained in a software company, software consulting/professional services firm and/or highly technology reliant organization would be of interest.
- The successful candidate will have a fundamental appreciation and understanding of conservation and its impact on the global community.
- Must be able to build cooperation cross culturally and worldwide; an appreciation of the organizational dynamics of an international membership organization is essential.
- While ISIS is not seeking a “technologist,” they do want an arbiter who is sufficiently competent with technology and its attendant issues to ask the right questions, give appropriate guidance, and ensure that decisions serve the best short- and long-term interests of all stakeholders.
- Be able to present complex information system issues in straightforward terms to zoo and aquarium professionals who do not have technical backgrounds.
- Intelligence and interpersonal skills required to effectively partner with the Board of Trustees and other sources of influence.
- A strong commitment to and demonstrated experience in providing high quality, client-oriented service.
- Collegial and collaborative work style; adept at leading others through process rather than by mandate; able to be tough-minded if required to ensure goals are met.
- Pro-active rather than reactive, this individual must possess strong decision-making skills, be willing to take action, and capable of implementing work plans within appropriate deadlines.

- The following personal traits are extremely desirable: unquestioned integrity; a passion for excellence; empathetic; excellent listening skills; persuasive communications skills; an entrepreneurial spirit; politically astute; an open mind; and diplomatic yet decisive.
- The ability to function as a catalyst, coach, and doer, guiding people at all levels of the organization by utilizing a facilitative approach.
- A demonstrated knowledge of managing people and global technology operations through change and expansion.
- This executive should have the ability to control and move forward on several priorities simultaneously.
- Knowledge of other languages, in addition to English, would be a strong advantage.
- Ability to travel approximately 30% of the time, including six or more international trips per year.

EDUCATION: A Bachelor's degree is required; an advanced degree desired.

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