Opportunity Profile: Executive Director

Simon Fraser Student Society
THE ORGANIZATION

SIMON FRASER STUDENT SOCIETY

Established in 1967, the Simon Fraser Student Society (SFSS) is a student-led organization that represents and advocates for the interests of the 25,000+ undergraduate students at Simon Fraser University (SFU). The SFSS serves as a not-for-profit support network and voice at SFU, providing services and support to enhance not only the lives of students but their academic experience as a whole.

The SFSS is governed by a student-elected Board of Directors that is elected every spring semester and are advised by Council, a body representing every faculty and departmental student union across all three SFU campuses. The organization employs indispensable permanent and student staff to assist its activities with front-line services and behind-the-scenes support from their location on the second level of the Maggie Benston Centre on SFU’s Burnaby Campus. The SFSS also has an office and provides services at the satellite campus of SFU Surrey, and is in the process of constructing a Student Union Building and Stadium project on the Burnaby campus.

Dedicated to finding new and better ways to engage with members and students on all campuses, cultivating new strategic relationships to improve support programs, and linking advocacy efforts to member needs and interests, the SFSS works together with SFU to improve the student experience.
SFSS Mission and Values

Mission Statement:
The Simon Fraser Student Society exists to improve the health and wellbeing, academic conditions, social experience, and financial conditions of our members.

Organizational Values:
In all its activities, the members, employees, and guests of the Society will act in a manner consistent with the Society’s fundamental values:

- Inclusivity
- Integrity
- Empowerment
- Advocacy
- Community

To learn more, please visit SFSS’ website.
THE OPPORTUNITY

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The Executive Director (ED) is the prime driver for guiding, coaching, supporting, and managing the student services and governance operations of the SFSS. This role requires business savvy skills, assertiveness, political acuity, and emotional intelligence to develop and successfully manage a diverse group of employees, while simultaneously working with and reporting to a dynamic student Board which changes annually.

This is an outstanding opportunity for a well-rounded not-for-profit leader, attuned to the challenges and opportunities inherent in student life, to take this long-standing, respective organization to the next level.

Reports to:
- SFSS Board of Directors, Executive Committee

Direct Reports:
- Administrative Supervisor (excluded)
- General Manager (excluded)
- Build SFU Manager (excluded)
- Seven Coordinators (included)

Budget and Total Staff
- $7M+ budget and total staff of 30

Supports:
- SFSS Board of Directors
- Executive Committee
- Board Subcommittees

Stakeholder Relationships:
- SFU Admin. (Student Services, Facilities, Finance)
- Union leaders (CUPE, SFSS Shop Stewards)
- Lenders
- Student Groups
Specific Accountabilities

Orientation of New Board Members

- Ensures each Board Member has the information necessary to properly exercise their responsibility;
- Upon the annual election of each new Board, coordinates a program, which may include the outgoing Board providing the incoming Board with background information on their individual responsibilities, as well as briefing on general issues facing the SFSS at the time; during this phase, identifies and explains items such as role clarity, reporting structures, and clear divisions between the role of governance and operations.

Support SFSS Staff and Board Members

- Supports members of the Board in the execution of their range of governance responsibilities;
- Ensures the Board receive relevant information regarding SFSS operations, including but not limited to financial, policy, and personnel issues;
- Provides expert counsel (legal, financial, and professional), advice, and recommendations on issues and strategies to the Board on matters affecting the operations of the SFSS; and
- Attends all Board meetings and relevant Board subcommittee meetings as required/requested.

Strategic and Annual Planning

- Ensures that strategic plans are developed, implemented, and updated as required;
- Assists Board of Directors in establishing annual priorities and ensures that human, financial, and other resources are made available to assist in pursuing priorities; and
- Provides Board and appropriate subcommittees with relevant briefing notes and timely reports on the progress in achieving objectives.

Business Operations

- Ensures business operations are appropriately managed; continually monitors the needs of the members of the SFSS to identify potential to improve existing services and/or develop new services; and
- Ensures that services are delivered effectively, efficiently, and on budget.
Human Resources and Labour Relations

• Provides strong and effective leadership to the staff of the SFSS to capitalize on the full potential of existing resources;
• Communicates, motivates, guides, and directs all those involved with the SFSS to contribute fully to the realization of the mission and priorities;
• Maintains high visibility throughout the SFSS and remains focused on effective two-way communication with all personnel;
• Sets and manages expectations, and takes on an active role in staff performance reviews as well as any hiring or firing decisions; and
• Acts as the key liaison with Union leaders with respect to employment conditions, interpretation of the collective agreement, collective bargaining and employee disciplinary matters.

Financial Management

• Ensures the effective utilization of SFSS resources to maintain and enhance financial strength; and
• Ensures support is provided to the Board in the development and recommendation of the annual budget, internal auditing processes, financial management and accounting systems, and timely and accurate financial reporting.

Communication

• Ensures the flow of accurate, timely information to and from SFSS members; and
• Liaises with a wide variety of stakeholders and generates buy-in on diverse and sometimes contentious issues affecting the SFSS, members, or business operations.

Organization and Management of Resources

• Develops an effective organizational structure that defines position descriptions, highlights reporting relationships, reflects operational needs, and prescribes the authority/responsibilities of staff as they relate to the accomplishments of specific objectives and priorities; and
• Eliminates ambiguity, inefficiencies, and any duplication of work within the internal organizational structure by clarifying roles of staff versus those of the Board, and ensuring a clear understanding of the differing and separate functions of governance and business operations.
Legal and Professional Advisor

- Ensures that student leadership are provided appropriate advice relative to the range of legal relationships the SFSS is involved with or is considering;
- Ensures the SFSS is in compliance with applicable legislation and its bylaws; and
- Provides professional business and governance advice, as required, to Board Directors.

Full Services Review

- Regularly assesses programs/services offered by the SFSS to ensure relevancy, effectiveness, and efficiency;
- Provides recommendations to the Board on programs and services, followed by the appropriate implementation strategies; and
- Addresses inefficiencies, duplication of services, debts or deficits, and restructures operating units as required to better serve the SFSS and its members.

Change Management

- Creates/adapts to organizational change in goals and mandates, with a focus on constant improvement;
- Examines existing structures, processes, and policies with a critical eye; and
- Adopts an ‘out of the box’ visionary approach and has the patience, energy, and drive to work through obstacles and various committees to make change happen for the betterment of the SFSS and its members.
THE PERSON
The ED should be a refined leader and well experienced with the complexities of leading a non-profit organization, particularly one with a dynamic, changing Board. Possessing an inclusive, mentoring leadership style, the ED builds engagement with staff, Directors, students, and key stakeholders by creating a team environment, leveraging the expertise and strength that exists within the Institution. The ED should also be decisive, and possess sufficient financial acumen, labour relations, and governance expertise to assist and Directors with complex decision-making, and to ensure the continued relevance and sustainability of the SFSS.

Required Qualifications, Education, and Experience
The ideal ED candidate will possess the following qualifications and experience:

- A master degree is preferred; or a bachelor degree in an appropriate area of specialization, combined with relevant leadership experience.
- At least five years of effective administrative leadership experience at a non-profit organization; experience in a student-centred post-secondary institution is a plus;
- Subject matter expertise in contemporary student affairs best practices is an asset;
- Experience in strategic planning and in the development and implementation of operational plans;
- Strong labour relations, staff development, and team management experience;
- Deep understanding in board governance and developing / mentoring directors, as well as stakeholder engagement / communication in a complex organization; and
- Knowledge of and experience with budgetary processes, including the development, administration and reporting of budgets.
Competencies and Personal Characteristics

Leadership – Achieves desired organizational results by encouraging and supporting the contribution of others; a proactive and positive team player who acts with a sense of urgency and leads by example; sets and communicates clear goals.

Accountable – Holds self and others accountable for responsibilities; focuses on results and measuring attainment of outcomes in a business focus.

Strategic – Develops/implements a plan in support of organizational strategic direction. Demonstrates an understanding of the link between job responsibilities and overall organizational goals and needs, and performs one’s job with the broader goals in mind.

Integrity and Honesty – Demonstrates a resolute commitment to and respect for the rules and core values of the organization, setting an example of professionalism and ethical propriety.

Creativity and Innovation – Develops new insights into situations; questions conventional approaches; encourages new ideas and innovations; designs and implements new, cutting edge programs/processes.

Effective Working Relationships – Treats colleagues, staff, and students with respect; resolves conflicts respectfully, in a timely manner; negotiates effectively; provides effective feedback to colleagues/employees.

Influential and Collaborative – Has an honest, open, consistent approach to working with others; possesses strong relationship and interpersonal skills, with the ability to build relationships and develop/maintain partnerships, obtaining stakeholder agreement.

Communication – Clearly presents written and verbal information and writes with clarity and purpose; communicates effectively in both positive as well as negative circumstances; listens well.

People Development – Fosters long-term learning and development of others through coaching, managing performance and mentoring; has a genuine desire to develop others and help them succeed; formally recognizes deserving staff and colleagues.

Student-Focused – Anticipates, responds, and attends to the needs of students, and other internal/external stakeholders of the institution; keeps the student interests in the forefront.
COMPENSATION
A competitive compensation package will be provided including an attractive base salary and excellent benefits. Further details will be discussed in a personal interview.

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