



KORN FERRY



Position Specification

# **The American Civil War Museum (ACWM)**

**President and Chief Executive Officer (CEO)**

2020

## POSITION SPECIFICATION

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<b>Position</b>	President and Chief Executive Officer (CEO)
<b>Organization</b>	The American Civil War Museum
<b>Location</b>	Richmond, VA
<b>Reporting Relationship</b>	The CEO reports to the Board of Directors
<b>Website</b>	<a href="https://acwm.org/">https://acwm.org/</a>

## THE OPPORTUNITY

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*The mission of the American Civil War Museum is to be the preeminent center for the exploration of the American Civil War and its legacies from multiple perspectives: Union and Confederate, enslaved and free African Americans, soldiers, and civilians. The ACWM has the opportunity to position itself as the primary, indispensable source of objective background and perspective on the American Civil War and to bring its stories to life for the nation's citizenry.*

*With ongoing, reimagined, and recalibrated initiatives and programming, this new national museum is and will be at the forefront as the place for ongoing discussion and dialogue about the Civil War and how the effects of this important era are relevant today. This goal will be achieved through innovative approaches to media outreach, exhibits, technology, artifacts, performing and visual arts, writing, and humanitarian studies.*

*The Museum occupies a new \$20 million building on the site of the Historic Tredegar Iron Works on the James River in downtown Richmond, Virginia. It has achieved national recognition for consolidating two museums with divergent missions and strengths: the Museum of the Confederacy, with the world's largest collection of Confederate artifacts in private hands, and the American Civil War Center, with the location at Tredegar and an inclusive mission. A successful capital campaign has raised over \$47 million, positioning the ACWM for growing visibility and influence.*

*The Board seeks an experienced leader with the creativity and imagination to fulfill the organization's stated mission. The next CEO must be a storyteller captivated by the narratives of the American Civil War from all vantage points. The individual will understand and be able to navigate through the moral complexities of the Civil War and its aftermath and use the museum's resources to create understanding by sharing all perspectives. Through a record of excellent management skills, fundraising ability, and business acumen, the successful individual will be a leader who is inspired by the organization's potential and can in turn inspire others. Competitive candidates will possess the intellectual vigor and vision, professional reputation, and personal magnetism needed to build trust and galvanize support for ACWM.*

*ACWM's next leader will need to demonstrate agility and the ability to navigate change, both in developing the organization's new strategic plan and in responding to the challenging COVID and post-COVID environment regarding finances and operating procedures. The executive will*

*need to be effective in attracting new audiences and partners without sacrificing core constituents and be comfortable discussing a diverse range of issues and perspectives with unrelenting reverence for the courage and sacrifice of all of the Civil War's diverse participants.*

*Because of the assets of a new museum building, supportive Board and local partners, talented staff, and renowned repository of stories, research and artifacts, the new CEO enters at an exciting moment for the American Civil War Museum. The organization begins its next chapter in providing a vibrant and relevant public history experience where visitors see themselves as actors in an evolving history.*

## **ORGANIZATION BACKGROUND**

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The American Civil War Museum is much more than a collection of artifacts. “We are storytellers and educators. In the battle against the all-too-human instinct to wish the past were simple, we’re exploring the unparalleled significance the Civil War holds to complexities we face today.”

ACWM believes that understanding this period [the American Civil War] of America’s development is fundamental to understanding current culture, and who we all are as Americans. The organization seeks to provide visitors with multiple perspectives and added dimensions of the American Civil War.

Three distinct sites are maintained by ACWM, American Civil War Museum-Tredegar, White House of the Confederacy, and American Civil War Museum- Appomattox. There are 37 staff in addition to seasonal employees. The operating budget is approximately 3.3 million and the total endowment is valued at 3.1 million. The ACWM also maintains an operating reserve of 2 million as agreed with its landlord for the Tredegar grounds.

**American Civil War Museum- Tredegar:** Historic Tredegar, a National Historic Landmark, is the site of Tredegar Ironworks (founded in 1837), one of the country’s largest industrial sites before the Civil War and the largest in the Confederacy, supplying about half of the artillery for the Confederate Army. Situated on the James River, the site is home to the new flagship American Civil War Museum and the Richmond National Battlefield Park Visitor Center. The building contains three galleries for exhibits (one permanent, two rotating) and has over 500 artifacts on display. There is also great potential for future revenue through space and event rentals.



The permanent, core exhibit, *A People’s Contest: Struggles for Nation and Freedom in Civil War America*, features hundreds of original artifacts, dynamic theater experiences and compelling

imagery. Visitors are able to explore, understand and feel the dramatic story of the American Civil War and its legacies.

Organized chronologically as well as by topic, each gallery within the exhibit explores an aspect of the War that occurred during the 1850's and 1860's. Political developments are interwoven with civilian experiences and military events, providing multiple perspectives in a multifaceted manner. Technology is used selectively to impact visitors' experience and encourage their engagement with artifacts and images.



**White House of the Confederacy**, a National Historic Landmark, is the historic Richmond home where President Jefferson Davis and his family lived during the Civil War was used by the U.S. Army as part of its Reconstruction headquarters.



**American Civil War Museum-Appomattox**: just over a mile from the surrender site, explores exhibits featuring artifacts, documents, and photographs that illustrate the end of the Civil War and its legacies, especially the stories of Central Virginias who lived it.



*\*All images are the property of the American Civil War Museum.*

## THE POSITION

In partnership with the Board of Directors, the CEO is responsible for providing vision and strategic leadership to the organization. The CEO engages and inspires internal and external audiences, leads with clarity and purpose, expands partners and supporters, and demonstrates a strong commitment towards the mission. Specific responsibilities include:

### Leadership

- Serve as a national leader, promoting the mission of the American Civil War Museum through thought leadership, storytelling, and building partnerships.

- Strengthen the museum's position as a national center for the exploration of the American Civil War and its legacies from multiple perspectives.
- Secure short- and long-term financial needs of the organization.
- Provide general and active leadership and management of the business of the organization.

### **Organizational Management**

- Inspire, develop and execute the organization's strategic plan.
- Partner with the Board and executive team to define and implement organizational structure and strategy.
- Provide clear channels for internal communication.
- Support and retain effective team members and engage staff in strategic planning initiatives.
- Oversee the planning and budgeting process to maintain a sound financial basis for the organization, supporting both short-term and long-term needs and objectives.

### **Communications and Fundraising**

- Serve as the chief spokesperson and storyteller for ACWM and assure proper representation and visibility.
- Serve as the organization's chief fundraiser and creative connector by cultivating and maintaining relationships with key funders and partners and by forging new and innovative strategic partnerships and alliances.
- Develop a sound strategy for diversifying and expanding the organization's funding base across membership, governmental grants, foundation grants, corporate sponsorships, and major gifts.
- Evaluate and implement existing communications and marketing outreach and develop new strategies to enhance the organization's brand and image.

### **Board Development and Governance**

- Maintain a productive relationship with the Board ensuring transparency and regular communication regarding the organization's plans, progress, and financial condition.
- Work with Board members to set the organization's strategic direction and policies, enabling ACWM to adapt to a challenging external environment.

## **PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE/QUALIFICATIONS**

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The Board seeks an experienced leader with the creativity and imagination to fulfill the organization's stated mission. The leader presents a fresh perspective to re-energize organizational culture, inspires current and new audiences and partners, solidifies long-term financial stability, and leads the organization into its next chapter.

The successful candidate should bring a comprehensive knowledge and understanding of the requirements of running a museum or nonprofit organization including fundraising (either demonstrated or potential), growing an endowment, developing a strategic plan, and creating solid working relationships with the board and its chair.

Experience and qualifications will include:

- Strong thought leadership on the role of public history and an appreciation of the museum's collection. Passion for American History is essential and deep knowledge of

the Civil War would be a plus.

- A national vision for the museum that aligns with the board's vision.
- Experience building and executing a strategic plan to enhance an organization's capacity/impact.
- Financial acumen as it pertains to museum finances; A high level of financial literacy and good business judgment, and experience establishing and meeting budgets.
- Experience elevating an organization's brand and visibility.
- A track-record as a sophisticated relationship builder, especially regarding fundraising; the ability to identify unique funding opportunities, generate new sources of revenue.
- Strong networking skills and collaborative spirit to build and sustain relationships.
- Ability to manage complex stakeholder engagement and build bridges across diverse perspectives.
- Ability to hire, motivate, inspire, lead, and retain a talented team to manage internal operations and programs, the ability to assess and trust staff expertise and delegate autonomy.
- Commitment to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion both internally and externally; create a welcoming environment for a diversity of audiences.
- Ability to utilize technology for in-person visits, virtual experiences, and marketing.
- Civic leadership with the ability to speak to elected officials (local, state and national) and others and make the compelling case that the museum and its mission matter.
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills, with the ability to connect effectively with audiences of varying levels of expertise.
- Experience working with and developing a diverse Board of Directors.

Ideal personal characteristics include:

- Excellent listening skills.
- The ability to see the mission as larger than one person or one perspective.
- Courage; ability to step up to address difficult issues.
- Clear thinking with the ability to make quality decisions.
- Approachable personality, reflecting an ease with people and a willingness to embrace the public demands on a leader with visibility in the community.
- High tolerance for ambiguity and risk-taking; innovative; can operate without a playbook.
- Impeccable character and integrity.

## EDUCATION

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An undergraduate degree from an accredited college or university is required.

## KORN FERRY CONTACTS

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