

# EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SEARCH ANNOUNCEMENT

JULY 15, 2017

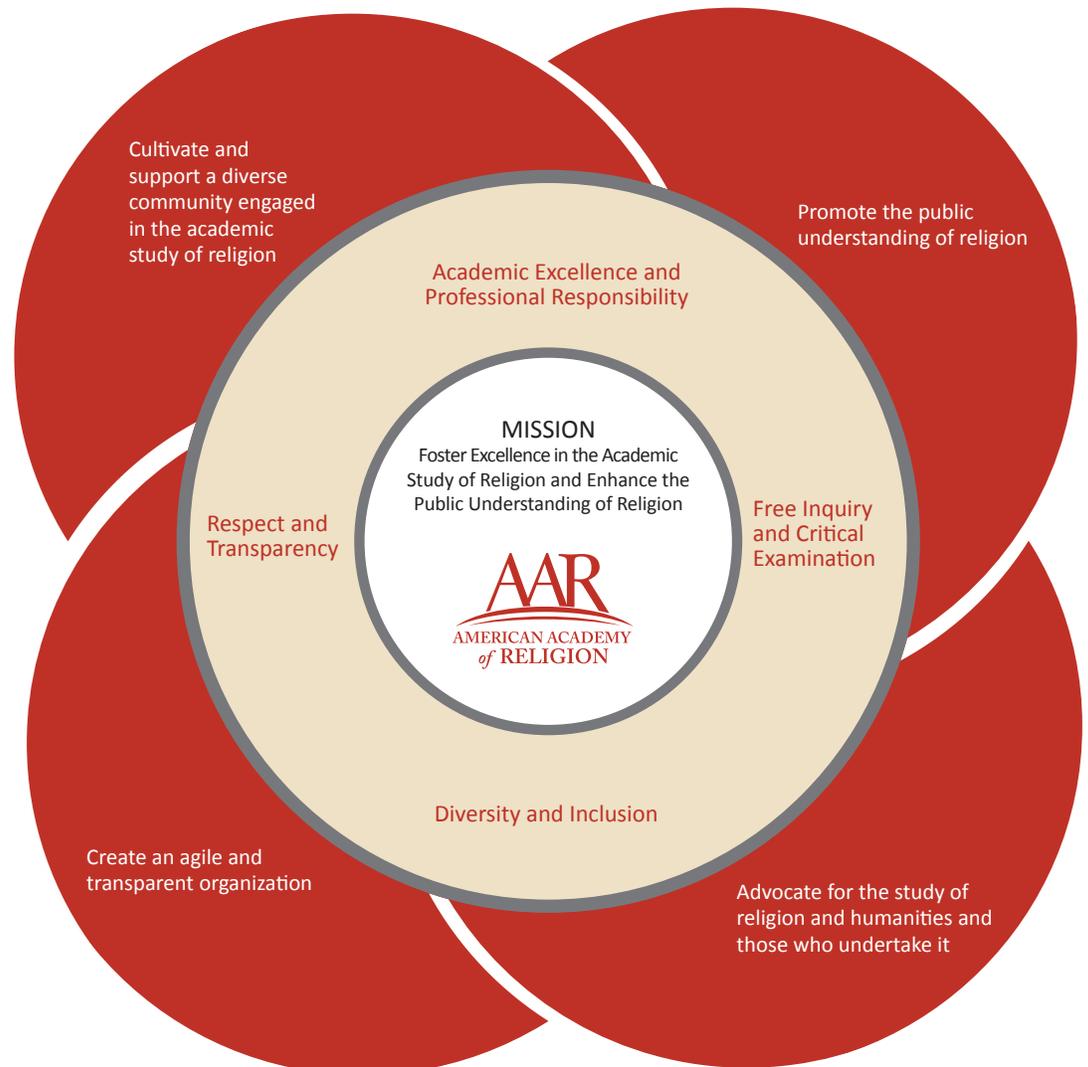


From its beginnings in 1909, the American Academy of Religion has grown to be the world's largest association of academics who research or teach topics related to religion, with some 8,500 members throughout the world. The AAR does not endorse any belief or practice but seeks understanding of religion.

In a world where religion plays so central a role in social, political, and economic events, as well as in the lives of communities and individuals, there is a critical need for ongoing reflection upon and understanding of religious traditions, issues, questions, and values. The American Academy of Religion promotes such reflection through excellence in scholarship and teaching and by furthering the understanding of religion in the public sphere.

The AAR's Board of Directors adopted a strategic (long range) plan in November 2016, affirming the organization's mission statement but adding emphasis on enhancing the public understanding of religion.

The strategic plan lays out a path to accomplish four goals. The goals are backstopped by a tactical plan with measures of success, strategies, actions, timelines/deadlines, and accountability assignments. As a learned society and professional association of teachers and research scholars, the American Academy of Religion is proud to represent its members in national and international arenas. AAR members are affiliated with more than 900 colleges, universities, seminaries, and schools across the world. The AAR's membership also extends to leaders in related fields including international diplomacy, foundation leadership, and nonprofit management.



AAR's diverse members can be found engaging in the world as public intellectuals, influencing the development of public policy, producing groundbreaking research in the field, and preparing the world's next generation of leaders.

The AAR is dedicated to furthering knowledge of religion and religious institutions in all their forms and manifestations. This is accomplished through the sharing of knowledge and scholarship via conferences, meetings, publications, and programs; providing resources for excellence in teaching; offering career services for members; advocating for and promoting the profession; and taking positions on public issues that impact society and the world.

The AAR's meetings and conferences are among the best-attended in the humanities. During its upcoming 2017 annual meetings, held in conjunction with the Society of Biblical Literature in Boston, it is expected that 10,000 people will attend more than 1,000 events and sessions featuring the world's leading experts in religion.

The AAR's office is in Atlanta, Georgia, on the campus of Emory University, but the AAR Executive Director is expected to manage the organization as a virtual entity with worldwide membership. The AAR is an independent nonprofit organization with 501(c)3 tax exempt status.

The AAR is governed by a 13-member Board of Directors; 12 members are elected by the membership and the 13th member is a non-voting seat for the Executive Director. The AAR's Executive Committee is comprised of its five officers. The Executive Director reports to the Board of Directors, which meets four

times per year. The Executive Director meets with the Executive Committee between board meetings.

The AAR is well positioned to extend its reach and influence and seeks a dynamic, high energy, experienced leader who will be dedicated to increasing the value of the organization for the AAR's members. The AAR's next Executive Director will build a 21st-century membership association geared to the needs of scholars, with an elevated profile in North America.

The successful Executive Director candidate will have the skills to grasp and manage the workings of the AAR, lead and develop a team of 16 staff members, and effectively implement cutting-edge communications plans. The Executive Director must implement the strategic plan with an emphasis on innovation and member engagement. An understanding of how to utilize technology to advance the organization is critical.

The Executive Director of the AAR must understand and embrace a member-centered, responsive philosophy of organizational management, and be able to interface with a complex system of volunteer involvement that includes more than 25 committees and 140 program units where some 1,200 members volunteer their service each year.

The ideal candidate will bring a global world view, an understanding of professional association management, an understanding of higher education, and will be a scholar in religious studies or another humanities field. A master's degree is required and Ph.D. is strongly preferred.

The AAR strongly encourages applications from candidates representing the full diversity of the AAR. To apply in confidence, please send a cover letter, CV, and contact information for three references to: Terri Theisen, Theisen Consulting, [terri@theisenconsulting.com](mailto:terri@theisenconsulting.com). We will accept applications from August 15-2017 – January 15, 2018, and continue the search until the position is filled.

The American Academy of Religion is an Equal Opportunity Employer (EOE). Qualified applicants are considered for employment without regard to age, race, color, religion, sex, national origin, sexual orientation, disability, veteran status, or any other characteristic protected by law. If you need assistance or an accommodation during the application process because of a disability, it is available upon request. The organization is pleased to provide such assistance, and no applicant will be penalized due to such a request.