



Alfred University
Executive Director of Financial Aid
Alfred, NY

[Alfred University](#) invites inquiries, nominations, and applications for the position of **Executive Director of Financial Aid** (EDFA). Nestled in the foothills of the Allegheny Mountains and the Finger Lakes wine region of Western New York state, Alfred is an impactful, private, comprehensive doctoral-degree-granting University.

Reporting to the Vice President for Enrollment Management, the Executive Director of Financial Aid will serve as a key strategic partner and integral member of the enrollment management leadership team offering expertise in financial aid strategy, compliance, and wisdom in the development and execution of an institutional strategic enrollment plan. As a member of Alfred's Executive Council, the EDFA will work collaboratively with the president and Cabinet to advance the mission and strategic priorities of the university.

The Executive Director will administer a comprehensive financial aid program for approximately 1600 incoming and current students by effectively stewarding university resources to meet enrollment and net tuition goals while maintaining full compliance with all federal, state and University regulations, policies and procedures. Additionally, the Executive Director will develop, update and standardize policies, manage office operations with an emphasis on increased efficiency and exceptional customer service, and provide ongoing training and leadership to seven professional staff.

Alfred University seeks a highly collaborative leader with exceptional analytical acumen, expertise in leading financial aid leveraging strategies, and a command of financial aid software (Banner) to achieve strong financial aid outcomes.

Duties and responsibilities

To assure the continued achievement of enrollment objectives, the Executive

Director of Financial Aid will focus on the following opportunities and responsibilities:

- Partner with the enrollment leadership team to align financial aid strategy with institutional initiatives and objectives, directing resources for maximum effectiveness and sustainability;
- Collaborate with enrollment leadership team and external partners on enrollment and retention strategies and initiatives;
- Partner with Vice President for Enrollment Management to balance class size, profile, discount rate, and net-tuition revenue; provide the Vice President and senior leadership with financial aid optimization models and projections;
- In partnership with the Vice President of Enrollment Management, provide strategic leadership in the development, evaluation and adoption of financial aid leveraging models;
- Provide oversight and wisdom in the selection, management, and evaluation of a university financial aid leveraging vendor;
- Develop, propose and implement a long term aid leveraging strategy to support the University's enrollment of international students;
- Serve as the University's primary compliance agent and oversee the administration and regulatory reporting of all federal and state financial aid programs, ensuring full compliance and accuracy;
- Oversee the A-133 audit including any necessary response and remediation efforts related to financial aid management and programs;
- Administer the timely delivery of student financial assistance at the federal, state and institutional level, including institutional need-based, merit and endowed gift assistance, as well as all federal and state grants, loans and work programs;
- Recommend, interpret, and administer financial aid policies ensuring compliance with pertinent federal, state and university regulations;
- Monitor changes in state and federal regulations; assess, evaluate, and illustrate the impact of changes to financial aid staff and university stakeholders, and articulate changes to students and families;
- Contribute to or complete financial aid surveys, forms and reports, including, but not limited to the annual FISAP, CDS, NCAA, yearly statistical updates, and recertification of the program participation agreement;
- Manage the financial aid awarding and verification process within the Banner financial aid software module;
- Proactively educate campus partners, students, and families on financial aid policies processes, timelines, opportunities, and regulations, sharing information across multiple channels;
- Propose the annual financial aid departmental operating budget and manage staffing, processing expenses, training and planning within the approved budget;

- Lead, mentor and develop financial aid staff, providing supervision, training and professional development opportunities as well as organizing, prioritizing and scheduling office assignments;
- Build a cohesive, capable and nimble financial aid team assuring a depth of expertise and a culture of collaboration, cross training, advancement, and exceptional service to students and colleagues;
- Partner with marketing communications in the development of messages and campaigns to inform and educate students and families;
- Collaborate with the Office of Advancement to ensure adherence to endowed scholarship agreements with regard to institutional financial aid budget relief;
- Collaborate with the Office of Admission to ensure admission counselors are well trained on financial aid topics;
- Build a positive partnership with athletics assuring compliance with all NCAA D-III regulations, while supporting the recruitment and retention of student athletes;
- Prepare and present financial aid related topics and materials to a broad range of internal and external audiences including administration, faculty, staff, alumni, the Board, students, and families;
- Represent Alfred University at professional state, regional and national organizations.

Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities

The ideal candidate will possess a bachelor's degree and at least eight years of progressive leadership and management experience in higher education administration, with an advanced degree preferred. In addition, the following job-related qualifications represent the knowledge, skills and abilities of the successful candidate:

- A strategic and critical thinker with an understanding of econometric enrollment models, development of financial aid leveraging programs, and strategic use of merit and need-based aid funding, able to balance institutional needs with the needs of individual students from a variety of backgrounds;
- A history of crafting financial aid policy and comprehensive working knowledge of Title IV financial aid programs, as well knowledge of or the ability to quickly master New York State student scholarships and grants programs;
- Previous experience working with A-133 audits, reconciliation, and federal reporting;
- Experience in all government processing and reporting systems related to financial aid;
- Comprehensive knowledge of financial aid information systems, models and interfaces, including annual application setup, routine and exception processing, data import and export functions, and complex query language

data extraction and reporting with a strong preference to experience in Banner;

- Experience in financial aid packaging and processing automation, as well as the automation of checks and balances, and reconciliation;
- Ability to evaluate and improve processes for greater efficiency and effectiveness in all manual and electronic processes and reporting and for the benefit of customer service;
- Experience in developing, documenting, and appropriately disseminating institutional policies and procedures;
- Experience leading a team of financial aid professionals with an approach that prioritizes mentorship, cross training, empowerment, transparency and accountability;
- An approachable, positive leader experienced in leading change thoughtfully and successfully;
- Outstanding communication (both oral and written) and presentation skills;
- A collaborative spirit, committed to the well being of students and providing exemplary customer service to students, families and campus constituents;
- Familiar and comfortable serving students with a highly personalized approach;
- Demonstrated emotional intelligence; empathetic with the ability to engage and educate students, families and colleagues;
- A visible and communicative leader who values relationships, listens deeply, and engages the community;
- Demonstrated ability to work independently and to maintain confidentiality where appropriate.

Alfred University

Alfred University is a comprehensive private University with a long-standing tradition of excellence in liberal arts and inclusive practices. The peaceful setting and academic rigors of Alfred draw intellectually curious and creative students from around the country and the world. Founded in 1836 by liberal, independent thinkers who placed a high value on education for all citizens, the University has retained and built upon the strong values of its founders, developing as an institution of international renown that is responsive to the needs of contemporary society while remaining consistent with the spirit of its origins. Alfred University is the second oldest coeducational University in the United States and one of the earliest nineteenth-century colleges to have enrolled African American and Native American students.

Since its founding, Alfred University has evolved into a complex institution offering a

full range of programs in the liberal arts and sciences, art and design, engineering, business, education, counseling, the performing arts, and school psychology.

Leadership & Governance

[President Mark Zupan](#) has served as Alfred University's 14th president since 2016. Drawn to Alfred by the quality of its people, its supportive community, and commitment to uniting people through common goals, President Zupan is an ardent champion of inclusivity and celebrating the ways in which Alfred University graduates, students, faculty, and staff have made the world a better place. He encourages Alfredians to live the University motto: "Fiat Lux!" – Let there be light! President Zupan is joined by members of the President's Cabinet and the Chief Operating team in stewarding the University's mission, with their efforts supported and informed by an Executive Council.

Strategic Planning

The University's most recent strategic plan "Fiat Lux!" was built on institutional strengths and focuses energies and resources on the most pressing issues the community seeks to address. The structure of the plan encourages multidimensional approaches to achieving significant goals in three key areas critical to the University's future, all supporting Alfred's promise to help students realize their purpose:

- Intersections, through the broad range of curricular and co-curricular opportunities from which students can select as they create their educational pathways;
- Mentorship, through a commitment to fostering a relationship-rich educational environment that positively influences students' personal and professional trajectories; and
- Inclusivity, through promoting a sense of belonging among all members of the campus community.

To learn more about Alfred's 2024-2026 strategic plan visit [here](#).

Academic programs

Alfred University students spend little time behind the desk learning. The curriculum is designed around experiential learning, which opens the door for unlimited hands-on opportunities. Alfred offers 47 majors and over 65 minors in a wide range of areas. From wind tunnels to outdoor kilns, the amazing hands-on facilities, the 13:1 student-to-faculty ratio and class sizes averaging 18, the personal attention and the graduate-level specializations/programs are present in the colleges, schools, and

programs.

Alfred University boasts a broad array of academic units: the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences with a Phi Beta Kappa chapter; the School of Art and Design, which is ranked in the top 10 nationally and is a world leader in ceramic and glass art; the Performing Arts Division with inclusive state-of-the-art performance spaces; the AACSB-accredited College of Business; the Inamori School of Engineering, which offers the world's top programs in ceramic and glass; and science engineering; and a Graduate and Continuing Studies School with significant offerings in Western New York as well as New York City.

The campus is also host to the Institute for Electronic Arts, the Space Materials Institute, the National Casting Center Foundry, the Institute for Experiential Entrepreneurship, the Center for Advanced Ceramic Technology, the Center for Glass Innovation, the Hall of Glass Science and Engineering, and more.

Student Life

Nearly 1600 undergraduate and graduate students live, learn, and play on Alfred University's 232 acre campus. On this active campus, students can be found engaging in a variety of activities ranging from mountain biking to gaming. The University offers over 80 student clubs and organizations, the majority of which are led by the students themselves. In addition to cheering on their fellow Saxons, students enjoy cultural events, films and annual traditions that connect students and community members such as the annual Hot Dog Day with Pine Hill Derby and FestiFall.

As a residential campus, Alfred offers students a variety of housing accommodations among 14 residence halls. From traditional dorms to cabin-like accommodations with spectacular views, undergraduate students enjoy living on campus for a minimum of six semesters.

The campus facilities are renowned and include two libraries, the Ceramic Art Museum, four art galleries, an integrated art and engineering glass exhibition space, multiple performing art facilities, hot glass and neon light studios, ceramic studios, and digital media labs.

The hub of student activity is the 60,000 square foot Arthur and Lea Powell Campus Center which features panoramic hillside views, a forum/movie theater, an "open air" food court, a large open event space, student organization offices, a media hub, the bike hub (bike rentals), meeting rooms, an Alumni Lounge, mail room, gaming space, commuter lockers and student lounge. Resources found in Powell Campus

Center are the Center for Student Involvement, Pamela Lavin Bernstein Center for Advising, Offices of Vice President of Student Experience and the Dean of Student Experience, the Institute for Cultural Unity and the University Barnes and Noble Bookstore.

More than 400 student-athletes combine sportsmanship and scholarship, competing in 17 NCAA Division III, one USCSA and two IHSA intercollegiate sports. Athletics is a vibrant and integral part of student life at Alfred University. AU Saxons compete on 27 varsity teams, and approximately 50% of students participate in either club or intramural sports. All students enjoy nationally recognized wellness and athletic facilities. A new \$30 million athletics and recreation facility will open in early 2026, enhancing the high-quality experience for Alfred University's student athletes.

Affordability

Alfred University's endowment is valued at over \$200 million. The University has a strong record of inspiring philanthropic support and securing research grants that underwrite both faculty and student research. Alfred is in the process of concluding its largest ever fund-raising campaign (\$200 million over 10 years) and has also garnered \$49 million in research grants over the last three academic years (\$9,200 per undergraduate student per year).

Alfred University has a statutory college that receives significant New York State funding. Established in 1900 by then-governor Teddy Roosevelt, the New York State College of Ceramics receives about \$9 million in operating support per year from New York State and averages another \$2-5 million per year in facilities support from the State University of New York Construction Fund.

Alfred University is committed to supporting students from a wide range of backgrounds, strengths, and talents. The University's goal is to make education affordable by offering a variety of awards based on academic achievement, financial need, creativity, and personal background. [Alfred University's](#) financial aid policies focus on accessibility; 99% of Alfred students receive some form of institutional, state, or federal support.

Alfred, New York

Alfred offers a balance of arts, culture, and outdoor activities. Downtown coffee shops and restaurants are filled with faculty and students — artists, poets, actors, linguists, counselors, engineers, athletes, business majors — who are energized by the community's vibrant intellectual and cultural life. Surrounded by rolling hills, residents and visitors enjoy the nearby Finger Lakes, the dramatic waterfalls and

gorges of Watkins Glen, and stunning views of the “Grand Canyon of the east” in Letchworth State Park. Rochester, New York, just 80 miles north and the largest metro area in Western New York, hosts festivals almost every weekend from late spring through the fall.

Reflecting the high concentration of students per capita, Alfred has been recognized as a Number 1 Ultimate College Town by the Washington Post. The historic Village of Alfred is host to both Alfred University and Alfred State College. When classes are in session, the local population, of about 1,000, more than quadruples.

Local legend claims that the village is named after medieval England's King Alfred (noted for his commitment to educating his people). Retaining much of its turn-of-the-century charm, the downtown historic district is listed in the National Register of Historic Places. Alfred's early terra cotta clay companies produced the roofing tile still found on many homes and barns and inspired generations of ceramic artists and engineers at Alfred University.

Located in western New York with convenient access to the I-86 freeway, Alfred offers convenient access to students from New York, Pennsylvania and adjoining states. International airports in Buffalo and Rochester provide access to national and international students and visitors.

Compensation

Alfred University offers a competitive compensation and benefits package, including relocation assistance, and a salary commensurate with qualifications and experience. The range identified for this role is \$120,000-\$140,000. In this important leadership position, the successful candidate will have an active on-campus presence.

To Apply

[NES](#), a national executive search firm specializing in higher education, is assisting Alfred University with the search for an Executive Director of Financial Aid. If you wish to have a confidential conversation about this opportunity or submit nominations, please contact: Drew Nichols (drew.nichols@nessearches.com) or Catherine Capolupo (catherine.capolupo@nessearches.com). All conversations will remain confidential unless otherwise stated and agreed. To apply, please send the following items: 1) a resume, 2) a detailed letter of interest, and 3) contact information for five professional references by email to: alfred@nessearches.com by February 27, 2026. For confidentiality, references will not be contacted without permission. The position is campus-based and the preferred start date is late spring, 2026.

Alfred University actively subscribes to a policy of equal employment opportunity, and will not discriminate against any employee, student or applicant because of race, age, sex, color, sexual orientation, gender identification or expression, physical or mental disability, religion, ancestry or national origin, marital status, genetic information, military or veteran status, domestic violence victim status, criminal conviction status, political affiliation or any other characteristic protected by applicable law.

