



Harris Hill
51 Soaring Hill Drive
Elmira, NY 14903-9204
Tel: (607) 734-3128 . Fax: (607) 732-6745
info@soaringmuseum.org · www.soaringmuseum.org
Affiliated with the Soaring Society of America

Executive Director
National Soaring Museum
Elmira, New York

The National Soaring Museum (NSM), located on historic Harris Hill in Elmira, New York, seeks an energetic and collaborative Executive Director to lead the organization into its next chapter of growth and public engagement.

The National Soaring Museum preserves and presents the history of motorless flight in America while inspiring appreciation for the science, innovation, and spirit of soaring. As the steward of significant aviation and archival collections, and as an affiliate of the Soaring Society of America, the Museum serves visitors from across the nation and around the world.

This position offers a unique opportunity for a motivated leader to guide a nationally recognized museum with deep roots in aviation history and strong connections to the soaring community.

The Executive Director reports to the Board of Trustees and works closely with a small professional staff, volunteers, donors, community partners, and the Soaring Society of America.

Position Summary

The Executive Director provides strategic, operational, financial, and creative leadership across all aspects of the organization. Because of the Museum's size and collaborative structure, this is a highly engaged and hands-on role that combines traditional nonprofit leadership responsibilities with active participation in day-to-day museum operations, public engagement, exhibit development, fundraising, marketing, and institutional advancement.

The successful candidate will be a strong communicator, capable manager, and relationship builder who is equally comfortable representing the Museum publicly, developing new initiatives, and contributing to the practical work required to operate a small but nationally significant institution.

Key Responsibilities

Organizational Leadership & Operations

- Lead and manage the Museum's daily operations in accordance with policies established by the Board of Trustees
- Supervise and collaborate with staff and volunteers to support a positive, productive, and mission-focused workplace
- Develop and administer annual operating budgets and maintain the Museum's fiscal health
- Support long-term strategic planning and organizational growth initiatives
- Ensure compliance with applicable nonprofit, employment, safety, and museum industry standards
- Assist with facility oversight and operational needs associated with maintaining an active public museum

Fundraising & Institutional Development

- Oversee and actively participate in fundraising efforts, including donor cultivation, sponsorships, membership growth, annual giving, and campaign initiatives
- Research, write, and administer national, regional, and local grant opportunities
- Build and maintain strong relationships with trustees, members, donors, foundations, and community supporters
- Support initiatives that expand the Museum's visibility, audience reach, and long-term sustainability

Marketing, Communications & Public Engagement

- Lead the creation and coordination of Museum marketing and promotional materials across print and digital platforms
- Develop advertising, outreach, and public-facing communications that support visitation, fundraising, memberships, exhibits, and special events
- Maintain and strengthen the Museum's public image through storytelling, media engagement, and community outreach
- Represent the Museum as a speaker and ambassador at public events, civic organizations, aviation gatherings, and professional meetings
- Support Museum events, programs, and visitor engagement activities, including occasional evening and weekend commitments

Exhibits, Collections & Interpretation

- Oversee the care, preservation, interpretation, and responsible stewardship of the Museum's collections and archives
- Support exhibit planning, exhibit improvements, and collections-based storytelling initiatives
- Assist with collections management activities including cataloging, acquisitions, loans, and preservation planning
- Respond to research inquiries and support educational initiatives relating to soaring and aviation history
- Foster engaging visitor experiences that connect aviation history, science, innovation, and education

Community & Partner Relations

- Maintain strong working relationships with the Soaring Society of America, Harris Hill Soaring Corporation (HHSC), Chemung County, the Chemung County Chamber of Commerce, and other community partners
 - Collaborate with tourism, educational, and cultural organizations to advance the Museum's mission and regional impact
 - Promote the Museum as an important educational, historical, and tourism asset within the Finger Lakes and Southern Tier regions
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Qualifications/Skills

Preferred qualifications include:

- Leadership experience in a nonprofit, museum, cultural, educational, or related organization
 - Strong communication, organizational, and interpersonal skills
 - Experience with fundraising, grant writing, budgeting, and project management
 - Ability to manage multiple responsibilities in a collaborative small-team environment
 - Experience with marketing, visual communications, public outreach, or content development
 - Interest in aviation, aerospace, history, STEM education, or related fields
 - Museum or collections management experience preferred
 - Experience in Adobe Suite, Microsoft Office Suite, QuickBooks, and CRM software preferred
 - Soaring background or familiarity with the soaring community strongly preferred
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Compensation & Schedule

This is a full-time salaried position based in Elmira, New York. Some evening and weekend availability is required for events, programs, and organizational activities.

Compensation will be commensurate with experience and qualifications.

To Apply

Interested candidates should submit:

- Cover letter
- Resume
- Three professional references

Applications and inquiries may be directed to:

jobs@soaringmuseum.org