***EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR* (Association Manager) –** DPS Association Management

About DPS Association Management

DPS Association Management (DPS-AM) is an innovative, Chicago-based AMC, with **over 20 years of experience in successfully managing non-profit organizations of diverse sizes.** Our team of trusted experts is dedicated to helping nonprofit organizations thrive and grow through disciplined governance, innovative approaches, and proactive management backstopped with a rigorous suite of technical resources, management tools, and back-office processes.

We are a growing company that services a variety of non-profit sectors, including the legal, medical, insurance, technology, and the meeting professional industries. The growth of DPS-AM is due in part to our commitment to team culture and insistence on transparency.

DPS-AM is wholly owned by DRI, the leading bar association of defense attorneys and in-house counsels. Membership in DRI provides access to resources and tools for attorneys who strive to provide high-quality, balanced, and excellent service to their clients and corporations. DPS-AM's ownership by a leading legal bar association gives DPS-AM a unique set of resources, financial wherewithal, and transparent governance that privately owned AMCs often lack.

Position Summary

We are seeking a highly organized and experienced Executive Director / Association Manager to lead and support an assigned portfolio of nonprofit client associations. Serving as a trusted staff partner to volunteer boards, the Executive Director will provide leadership, guidance, and strategic support to help organizations strengthen their operations, achieve their goals, and maximize their impact.

This role offers the opportunity to develop and apply a broad range of association management skills across governance, organizational operations, financial oversight, event planning, marketing, membership engagement, and strategic planning. The Executive Director will work closely with volunteer leaders and members to facilitate effective board meetings, maintain organizational compliance, oversee day-to-day operations, and support the continued growth and development of each client association.

Reporting to the Vice President of Association Management Services, this position offers considerable variety, professional autonomy, and the opportunity to build meaningful relationships while developing a strong foundation for continued career growth within the association management industry and nonprofit sector.

Key Duties and Responsibilities

Governance and board partnership

- Serve as ex-officio Executive Director to each client's Board; staff committees as HQ liaison.
- Plan, facilitate, and document board and committee meetings, steering discussion while respecting the authority and role of volunteer leaders.
- Advise boards on bylaws, policies, volunteer recruitment, and governance best practices.

Strategy and growth

- Bring ideas for organizational transformation, new revenue, and membership growth.
- Support strategic planning and track progress against it.
- Identify and cultivate sponsors and partners.

Financial oversight

- Explain budgets, financial statements, and variances clearly to treasurers and boards. (DPS-AM's finance team prepares the financials.)
- Monitor compliance deadlines, filings, and contracts.

Events

- Oversee board meetings, conferences, and educational events with internal teams and vendors.
- Lead onsite staffing; domestic travel up to 5%.

Marketing, membership, and communications

- Direct membership recruitment and renewal campaigns using data to drive retention.
- Partner with DPS-AM marketing on email, social, web, and digital campaigns.
- Write polished member communications, board reports, and leadership messages.

This Role Might Be for You If…

- You have demonstrated exceptional customer service skills.

- You exhibit strong written and verbal communication skills, with excellent attention to detail.
- You have strong skills in time management and organization.
- You display the ability to work independently and as part of a team.

Executive Director (Association Manager) Requirements and Qualifications

Required Qualifications

- Bachelor's degree in management, business, marketing, or a related field.
- At least one (1) to four (4) years of relevant experience in association management, nonprofit administration, or a comparable field.
- Demonstrated understanding of association operations, membership, events, and member engagement.
- Strong written and verbal communication skills, including the ability to explain complex or abstract concepts clearly and concisely.
- Strong organizational and project management skills, with the ability to coordinate operations, manage costs, and meet deadlines.
- Ability to manage multiple projects and competing priorities simultaneously.
- Self-starter with the ability to work independently and exercise sound judgment.
- Ability to work effectively with staff, volunteers, and other stakeholders.
- Willingness and ability to travel up to 5% of the time.

Preferred Qualifications

- At least five (5) years of experience as an Executive Director or in a comparable senior leadership role within the nonprofit association sector or a similar field.
- Demonstrated expertise in association operations, governance, membership, events, and engagement.
- Experience working with or supporting a volunteer-governed board.
- Experience leading, managing, and motivating teams of staff and/or volunteers.
- Knowledge of or proficiency with association management and related platforms, such as Cvent, Hootsuite, Personify, MemberClicks, YourMembership, or WildApricot.
- Certified Association Executive (CAE) credential.

Working Conditions

For Full-time position:

- Self-starter with the ability to work independently.
- Strong project management skills, with the ability to plan and manage operations and costs effectively.
- Ability to manage multiple projects simultaneously.

- Must be able to lift 15 pounds at times
- Willingness to travel up to 5% of the time.
- This is a hybrid position, with a full-time employee working 37.5 hours per week Monday through Friday in Chicago, which currently includes three (3) office days per week, with Tuesday as a mandatory office day.

Equal Opportunity Employer

DRI provides equal employment opportunity without regard to race, color, creed, gender and gender identity or expression, age, mental or physical disability, medical condition, including pregnancy and childbirth, religion, national origin, marital status, sexual orientation, ancestry, genetic information, political belief or activity, veteran or military discharge status, or any other basis protected by local, state or federal law and regulations under Title VII.

The policy applies to all employment practices, including but not limited to recruitment, hiring, training and development, promotion, transfer, termination, layoff, compensation, benefits, social and recreational programs, and all other conditions and privileges of employment in accordance with applicable federal, state, and local laws.

Benefits

Salary Range: $52,000–$69,000, based on experience.

- Life Insurance
- Medical Insurance - PPO/HRA, Prescription Drug Program, HMO, and Prescription Drug Copay available
- Dental Insurance
- Vision Insurance
- Short-Term and Long-Term Disability
- Pet insurance
- Work/Life Balance Program
- Up to 15 vacation days per year
- Up to 12 sick days per year, which accrue monthly
- Up to two personal days per year

To apply, please submit your resume and cover letter to Patrick Ruetschlin, SR. HR Coordinator, patrick.ruetschlin@dri.org