

## Job Announcement

### **American Press Institute Director of Finance**

(Posted: October 7, 2004)

The American Press Institute (API) in Reston, Virginia, has retained Slesinger Management Services to recruit an experienced accountant to serve as director of finance. This is an exceptional opportunity for an individual to be part of API's senior management team, overseeing the financial operations of a nonprofit organization that has a budget of \$5.7 million, assets of \$27 million, and a staff of 35. Applications will be accepted until this search is completed.

#### **The Organization**

The American Press Institute is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to improve the quality of newspapers in the United States. API does this by conducting leadership development and skills-training programs for senior executives in the newspaper industry. API annually hosts 45 week-long seminars, held at its headquarters, on topics such as editorial page content, circulation, newspaper design, advertising, and marketing. With a major grant from the Donald W. Reynolds Foundation, API has recently launched a program to strengthen business journalism, primarily through seminars that take place throughout the country and a new website for business journalists. API's Media Center is the newspaper industry's think tank on interactive news media.

Founded in 1946, API is one of the country's leading centers of continuing education for the newspaper industry. Its \$5.7 million operating budget comes mostly from tuition paid by newspapers that send key staff API's seminars; corporate membership contributions from most U.S. newspapers; and grants, primarily from foundations affiliated with newspaper and other media companies. API currently has a staff of 35.

API is governed by a board of directors of 23 people, primarily senior executives from newspapers around the country. API's president and executive director is Andrew B. Davis, who joined the organization in December, 2003. Mr. Davis previously was director of innovation and business development for the Media Management Center at Northwestern University, director of Marine Corps Public Affairs at the Pentagon, and president of Chicago Sun-Times Features, a division of The Sun-Times Company.

For more information about the American Press Institute, please go to [www.AmericanPressInstitute.org](http://www.AmericanPressInstitute.org).

## **The Position and its Principal Responsibilities**

Reporting directly to the president and serving on the organization's senior management team, the director of finance's overriding responsibility is to ensure the fiscal health of the organization.

Key responsibilities include:

1. Developing creative and effective financial strategies to convert API's plans into reality.
2. Analyzing processes and systems related to key accounting functions to insure they are as efficient as possible. (At the moment, the accounting system is being converted from a cash to accrual system.)
3. Leading an organization-wide process to produce an operating budget that reflects the organization's shared goals and fiscal realities.
4. Producing financial reports that are timely, accurate, and understandable for senior management and the board.
5. Instituting an activity-based costing system that will help senior management know the full cost of its programs so that they can be priced appropriately.

Providing the senior management team and the board of directors with financial projections for the future based on sound models.

Serving as the staff liaison to investment advisory firms that manage API's endowment and other long-term investments, currently totaling \$20 million.

Supervising a staff of three that includes an accounting assistant, a database manager, and an administrative assistant.

## **Desired Skills and Characteristics**

As the person overseeing API's financial management, the director of finance should be:

1. Highly knowledgeable about financial accounting within nonprofit organizations that generate revenue from multiple sources, including restricted grants.
2. Interested in a hands-on, operations job since the finance staff includes only two other staff (not including the database manager, whose work is mostly outside the finance area).
3. A strategic thinker, who is capable of devising sound ways to finance the organization's future. Expertise in modeling and forecasting is highly desirable.
4. Capable of developing, motivating, and supervising accounting staff.
5. A superb communicator, orally and in writing, especially in articulating financial and other quantitative data to senior staff and to the board of directors.
6. Adept at using new technology to support the organization's financial management systems.
7. A person with the confidence and presence to be able to work effectively with a business- and finance-oriented board.
8. Collegial and open. The director of finance must have a personality and work style that ensures that the internal atmosphere will remain open and collaborative, at all levels of the organization.

## Desired Experience

The ideal director of finance will have:

1. At least seven years of financial management experience. Experience in a nonprofit organization, especially one with an educational mission, is desirable. A CPA license or certificate is desirable, but not required.

## Compensation

Salary will be commensurate with experience and qualifications. API offers a generous benefits package.

## To Apply

Please **e-mail** (or mail): 1) cover letter, 2) resume, 3) e-mail address, and 4) three-year salary history (which will be held in strict confidence) to:

Larry H. Slesinger  
Slesinger Management Services  
5016 Westpath Terrace  
Bethesda, MD 20816  
Tel.: 301-320-0680  
E-mail: [Larry@SlesingerManagement.com](mailto:Larry@SlesingerManagement.com)

(please include "API" in subject line; attached files  
in Microsoft Word or PDF only)

(This job announcement can also be found at <http://www.SlesingerManagement.com>.)

*The American Press Institute is an Equal Opportunity Employer.*