



Position Specification

Executive Director

Private and Confidential

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Executive Director
Electronic Privacy Information Center (EPIC)

Our Client

The Electronic Privacy Information Center (“EPIC”) – a 501(c)(3) nonprofit established in 1994 – is a public interest research center and advocacy group based in Washington, DC, whose mission is to protect privacy, freedom of expression, and democratic values in the information age. See www.epic.org In support of this mission, the organization pursues a wide range of program activities including policy research, public education, advocacy, litigation, conferences, and publications. Specifically, these efforts include routinely filing amicus briefs in federal courts, pursuing open government cases, defending consumer privacy, organizing conferences, and speaking before policy makers worldwide about emerging privacy and civil liberties issues. EPIC works closely with a distinguished advisory board – with expertise in law, technology and public policy.

Nearly 90 percent of EPIC’s funding goes to programmatic work, with the concrete aims of:

1. Enacting a comprehensive federal privacy law that creates a U.S. Data Protection Agency;
2. Establishing regulations and human rights protections that ensure fairness, accountability, and transparency for systems that use artificial intelligence, machine learning, and other autonomous decision-making processes;
3. Protecting privacy, civil liberties, and human rights amidst the development and deployment of new systems and technologies that collect, use, and disclose personal data;
4. Educating the public about emerging privacy and civil liberties issues.

EPIC’s primary programs and initiatives in support of its mission include:

- **Open Government Project:** promoting government transparency and accountability, and strengthening democratic institutions.
- **Consumer Privacy Project:** advocating on behalf of consumers and Internet users, and working to protect personal data and the autonomy of individuals in the digital marketplace.
- **Domestic Surveillance Project:** reining in the scope of government surveillance, particularly as to new systems for identification, and profiling.
- **Amicus Project:** promoting privacy, open government, and consumer protection through the filing of “friend of the court” briefs in federal and state courts.
- **AI and Human Rights Project:** advocating for the adoption of transparent, equitable, and commonsense development of AI policy and regulations.
- **Public Voice Fund:** supporting public participation in decisions concerning the future of the Internet.

The EPIC Staff consists of highly recognized and well-regarded lawyers who are certified to practice before most of the federal appellate courts in the United States, a dozen state courts, and the US Supreme Court. The EPIC Advisory Board includes many of the leading technologists, scholars, and public policy experts in the privacy field who have won accolades including the Turing Award (computer science), the Thurgood Marshall Award (law), the Norbert Wiener Award (computers and ethics), and the MacArthur Fellows Award. EPIC works with reputable allies and partners around the world, small NGOs, established leaders,

and subject matter experts who give of their time and energy to help support the work of EPIC. EPIC relies on the support of individual donors and foundations that believe the defense of privacy is critical and who wholeheartedly support EPIC's mission.

The Role

Based in Washington, DC, and reporting to the Board of Directors, the Executive Director will serve as the chief executive officer and senior-most strategist, leader and advocate for EPIC's mission, values and operations. The Executive Director will have responsibility over all administrative, financial, development and programmatic activities at EPIC. The Executive Director also will have the opportunity to have an indelible impact on the organization, the privacy field, and the civil liberties ecosystem at large, as EPIC embarks on the next phase of its work.

The evolution of technology presents growing challenges to the protection of privacy and civil liberties. EPIC will look to its new Executive Director to shepherd the organization as it faces these new challenges. The Board will look to the Executive Director to establish an innovative strategic plan for the future success of the organization. It is essential that EPIC continues to be regarded as an expert and unbiased authority. To that end, the Executive Director will be relied up to recruit and retain the highest calibre talent, while pursuing the goal of increased diversity and representation of minorities. It also is expected that collaborations with sister organizations will continue, while maintaining EPIC's unique expertise and impact.

Candidate Profile

Given the diversity and constantly changing nature of EPIC's work and impact, the organization must have an Executive Director with the ability to impose structure and rigor while maintaining flexibility and versatility. They will have an established track record, while being forward thinking – and with demonstrated expertise and insights into EPIC's critical issues, but not a staid perspective. Ideally, this is an individual who has run an organization of similar stature and importance and/or demonstrated relevant leadership in an analogous capacity; the setting is less important, and EPIC recognizes that highly qualified individuals can come from a variety of settings including non-profit, governmental, academic and private sector settings.

In terms of additional performance and personal competencies required for the position, we would highlight the following:

Strategy & Vision: The Executive Director should have a fidelity and dedication to EPIC's public interest mission. They will have the capacity to lead the organization and Board in setting EPIC's vision and implementing its strategic plan for achieving its mission in rapidly-evolving political and technical contexts. They will have the ability to develop tactics commensurate with the digital ecosystem's reach, to curate new ideas, to challenge colleagues, and to reach beyond the conventional – while promoting free-thinking and independence. They will possess the ability to make clear, timely decisions and test limits even in the face of resistance, while enabling a solutions-oriented, adaptive, and self-regenerating institution that meets the urgency of the moment. In setting a vision and developing strategies, this leader must operate as a collaborative influencer, who listens first and acts second, keeping EPIC's values and ethical guidelines

front and center. Strategic growth and outcomes are critical, and the way in which the work is done is equally core to EPIC's ethos and reputation.

Team Leadership: The candidate should demonstrate the leadership necessary to be effective in an organization of high-performing, talented, motivated professionals with a diverse set of skills and perspectives. They should foster a culture of diversity, equity, and inclusion, as well as engagement and empowerment, while convening and leading to achieve excellence. They will have experience leading strategically through planned growth (in reach, budget, people, and ultimately impact) and the ideal candidates will have a track record of leading teams through such significant growth. They will have the interpersonal skills and intellect needed to recruit, retain, motivate, inspire, and mentor professional staff. The candidate should have the ability to set priorities decisively, delegate responsibilities, and manage to accountability to ensure results. They will be skilled at conveying the vision of the organization across the team and inspiring collective and individual actions that will enable achievement of the goals and objectives.

Operational Leadership & Organizational Stewardship: This leader will need to have a demonstrated ability to ensure that the organizational infrastructure and systems are best-in-class and at the same level of excellence of the organization's reputation and impact. They will have experience enhancing structures, optimizing output of limited resources, and ensuring that organizations are good stewards of donors' and stakeholders' financial investment. They will have the ability to understand the practical implications and on-the-ground reality of strategic plans, be able to take a data-driven approach to evaluating options and prioritizing decisions, and exercise excellent judgment in allocating resources accordingly. Ultimately, they will have a high comfort level with ambiguity, managing through change, and leading nimbly through complex situations. This leader must also have a familiarity with budgeting and business planning.

Subject Matter Knowledge and Experience: The ideal candidate will bring substantive knowledge of technology and privacy law and policy in the United States and across multiple other relevant jurisdictions, with an appreciation for and deep commitment to protecting privacy, freedom of expression, and democratic values in the information age. They must also understand how the legal, political, public policy and advocacy apparatuses in Washington, Europe, and other technology policy centers across the globe operate. They must have a strong, well-informed, and global grasp of questions shaping the future of privacy, and a tactical understanding of how policy research, public education, amicus briefs, and litigation can effect change and advance critical privacy and civil liberties issues.

Advocacy Acumen: They will be a substantive, compelling, and trusted advocate with a track record of success in conceptualizing and executing advocacy strategies that advance goals. They will be a thought leader, enabling EPIC to engage and influence decision makers throughout the corridors of power in Washington and globally, as well as other global policy and governance bodies. They will have the capacity and credibility to work with civil society to build and leverage multi-stakeholder coalitions and working groups to ensure landmark regulatory, legal, and legislative wins. They will possess the judgment, passion, and informed instinct to pursue a nuanced, fact-based approach that implicitly aligns with EPIC's own.

Fundraising: EPIC's leader will have the ability to sustain and grow the organization's financial support. The successful candidate will build upon the organization's current funding base to increase and diversify financial support from foundations and individuals and bring demonstrated experience in cultivating new and innovative revenue streams. They will have an ability to fundraise effectively on a significant scale to meet and increase the organization's annual operating budget while preserving and protecting the integrity of an institution that puts privacy, civil liberties and democratic values at the center of its work. If from outside of the nonprofit sector, candidates will have a demonstrated track record of building partnerships that lead to sustainable revenue generation.

Contact**Jamie Hechinger**

Russell Reynolds Associates
1700 New York Avenue, NW
Suite 400
Washington, DC 20006-5208
Direct: +1-202-654-7839
Mobile: +1-202-821-8276
jamie.hechinger@russellreynolds.com

TR Straub

Russell Reynolds Associates
1700 New York Avenue, NW
Suite 400
Washington, DC 20006-5208
Direct: +1-202-654-7857
Mobile: +1-917-767-0630
tr.straub@russellreynolds.com