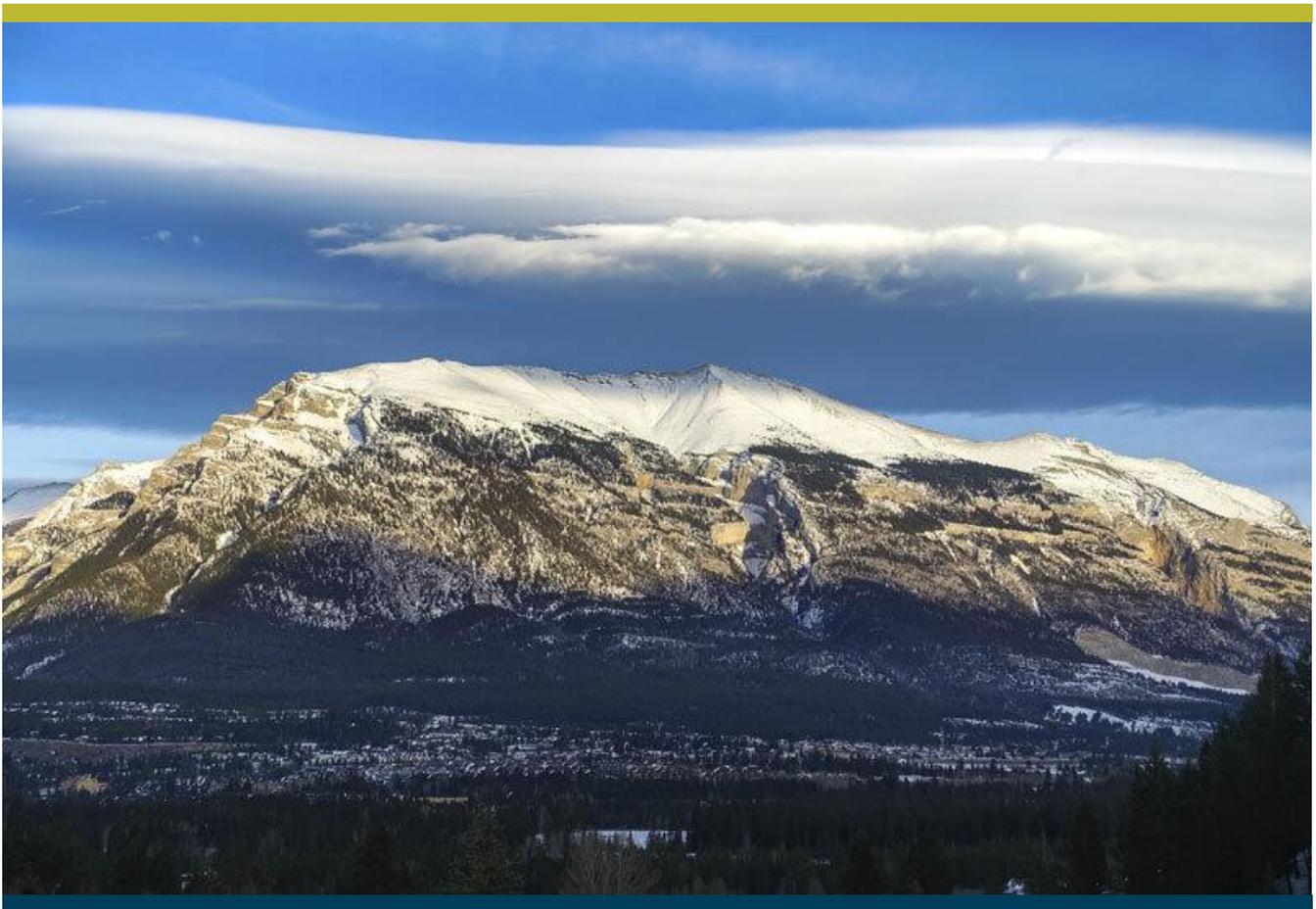




## **Executive Director**

### Leadership Profile

April 2021



*WittKieffer*

## Executive Summary

The American Meteorological Society invites nominations and applications for the role of executive director. The executive director will lead with strategic and collaborative vigor, drive organizational innovation and enhance the relevance and impact of AMS on its members and society.

Founded more than 100 years ago, the [American Meteorological Society](#) (AMS) is the world's premier scientific and professional organization dedicated to advancing atmospheric and related sciences, technologies, applications and services to the benefit of society. The more than 12,000 members include scientists, professionals, educators, students and enthusiasts representing academia, industry, government and the public. Hundreds of individual volunteers are engaged in all aspects of the organization.

The executive director will join the AMS at a time when society's interest in extreme weather events and climate change has never been more acute and the work of the AMS never more urgent. This is a momentous time to join an organization of leading experts who are informing and shaping the public's understanding of, and response to, issues around weather, water and climate. This powerful mission – combined with the strengths of an active, engaged membership, an outstanding staff, strong volunteer leadership and the opportunity to chart an innovative path for the future of the AMS – make this an exceptional leadership opportunity.

The executive director serves as the chief executive officer of the AMS and reports to the [Council](#), a 20-person governing body. This person is responsible for the administration of the society's headquarters and activities ranging from membership programs, journal and publications, meetings and events to education and career development programs, and policy-related endeavors. The current AMS staff includes approximately 90 full time professionals and the society's annual budget is approximately \$16 million. AMS headquarters is located in Boston and the majority of staff are housed in this location, including the executive director. There is a second smaller office located in Washington, D.C.

To that end, the executive director will lead a collaborative effort to develop and define the AMS as a contemporary and innovative professional society. They will ensure the financial strength and sustainability of the organization through new business models and practices. The new executive director will help enhance the impact and influence of the science produced by the society's members and strengthen AMS's voice across the public and among policymakers. The new director will lead a collaborative, collegial and empowered workplace to enable the staff to achieve the organization's goals and support its members and volunteers. All of this work will be centered and built upon a foundation of equity and inclusion throughout all aspects of the society's endeavors.

The executive director will possess broad leadership capacities, a strong passion for and understanding of science and working within a scientific community, expertise and experience in managing a complex organization of the scale and scope similar to the AMS, an unequivocal commitment to justice, diversity, equity and inclusion, and exceptional communication and interpersonal skills to engage and empower a staff and cadre of volunteers in support of a compelling plan for the future of the AMS.

For information on how to be considered or to submit nominations, please refer to the section, "Procedure for Candidacy" on the last page.

## Role of the Executive Director

The executive director serves as the chief executive officer of the AMS and reports to the [Council](#), a 20-person governing body. This person is responsible for the administration of the society's Boston headquarters, Washington, D.C. office, and activities ranging from membership programs, journal and publications, meetings and events to education and career development programs, and policy-related endeavors. In addition, the next executive director will have the following essential responsibilities:

### Leadership

- Upholds the values of the Society, including fostering trust in science and promoting scientific integrity.
- Serves as the visionary leader and spokesperson of the Society, with the ability to effectively engage with all components of the Global Weather Enterprise (i.e. public, private, academic, NGOs, CBOs, etc.), as well as the Executive Branch, Congress, and the media.
- Creates a culture where staff are nurtured and provided growth opportunities in a safe environment, while instituting effective succession planning.

### Strategic Initiatives

- Works with the Council as collaborators in setting the strategic direction and policies of the Society, implementing policies and processes that align with Council guidance.
- Initiates and oversees a sound fundraising strategy aimed at diversifying and expanding the organization's funding base and sets aggressive development goals to increase financial support.
- Leads, executes, and completes initiatives, including discovery, delivery and adoption.
- Closely coordinates with the AMS Council and Executive Committee, and develops and maintains strong relationships with staff, members, and other stakeholders and organizations to achieve the goals and objectives of the Society.
- Fosters an ethos of equity and inclusion and is committed to advancing and promoting a diverse Society where all members feel valued, affirmed and belong.
- Successfully cultivates an effective policy strategy to ensure that the topics, issues, and concerns of the AMS community receive adequate visibility and are addressed as part of the legislative process, particularly at the federal level.

### Financial and Budgeting Processes

- Ensures the financial health and long-term stability of the organization by developing and implementing viable business models, ensuring compliance with all legal and regulatory matters and developing and leading a financial team to accomplish these goals with their guidance.
- Develops metrics and reporting to communicate financial performance, providing the Council and Executive Committee with transparency and decision support to dynamically adjust to changing demands.

## Maximizing Effectiveness

- Drives initiatives that strengthen, extend and innovate AMS programs in publications, meetings, and member services to maximize benefits and broaden and diversify the community.
- Establishes and manages efficient and strong status reporting and score carding to report on the health and performance of key initiatives and activities, as well as the overall wellbeing of the Society.
- Partners with staff and volunteers to address needs, issues and planning associated with Society activities and initiatives.
- Manages the responsibilities and day-to-day activities of a staff of approximately 90 individuals.
- Identifies priority areas, assesses risks in a timely manner and implements continuous process improvements to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the AMS.

## Opportunities and Expectations for Leadership

### ▪ **Lead AMS's development as a contemporary and innovative professional Society**

Over its more than 100 year history, AMS has developed into a distinctive organization with significant membership and impact on the weather, water and climate fields. The organization has built and sustained credibility, resources and a strong infrastructure. The next executive director will convene thoughtful conversations with volunteer leadership, staff and members around how the AMS will evolve in response to a number of dynamics that impact the AMS as a scientific professional society.

These include the following examples (among others) which are relevant to AMS's future:

- *Journals and publications*: AMS's journals and publications advance the science of water, weather and climate and generate significant revenue for the organization. The move toward open science and digital publishing will impact how the AMS publishes and generates revenue from its journals.
- *Meetings and events*: Like many organizations, AMS anticipates changing the nature of its future professional meetings and events given the ubiquity of virtual meetings necessitated by the pandemic. Ongoing economic challenges and cost cutting may continue to impact travel and reduce the viability of in-person meetings calling for a virtual strategy. Finding creative ways to pull off dynamic experiences to engage members and sponsors through a combination of virtual and in-person activities will be critical.
- *Membership*: AMS membership is robust yet stagnant. The organization would like to more aggressively grow its membership among current constituent groups and also identify and engage new constituent groups that intersect with the AMS mission. The AMS must address the interests of all of its members from the youngest through retirees and keep them engaged through the various stages of their careers in a way that fosters belonging and engagement.
- *Early and mid-career professionals*: The AMS recognizes it must better position itself to respond to the evolving needs of its early and mid-career professionals to increase membership among these groups and retain their active engagement over the course of their careers. The [Board for](#)

[Early Career Professionals](#) and the AMS Early Career Leadership Academy are active partners in this work.

The next executive director will take a data-informed approach to better understand the changing dynamics facing the organization as well as the needs of its members to develop appropriate and successful strategies to respond. The next executive director will work with the community to develop a shared vision and strategic plan to assist in making deliberate moves and to guide their activities into the future with the goal of advancing an innovative, adaptive and resilient organization. The next executive director will understand the importance of securing engagement and buy-in, have the capacity to make difficult decisions and will be adept at communicating the organization's future directions clearly and effectively to key stakeholders.

- **Help ensure the long term financial strength and sustainability of the organization through new business models and practices**

At the foundation of a plan for the AMS's future must be the long term financial strength and sustainability of the organization. The Society's current budget is approximately \$16 million.

The dynamics facing the AMS necessitate exploring and developing new business models and practices. The executive director must bring a high level of financial acumen and creativity to exploring new funding models that support the evolving structures within the society. The executive director will embody creativity, strong financial and business acumen and an active entrepreneurial spirit in the pursuit of innovative financial models that support sustainability and strength. The executive director will engage staff and volunteer leadership and other resources as needed to acquire the data to inform and model financial decisions facing the organization.

In addition to fostering collaboration and building partnerships, the executive director will also be expected to prioritize, lead and participate actively in fundraising activities to enhance philanthropic support of the AMS.

- **Support a collaborative, collegial and empowered workplace for staff**

The AMS benefits from a strong staff of approximately 90 professionals who share a passion for, and extraordinary commitment to, the organization as well as a palpable spirit of service. It is a priority to maintain the collegial and collaborative workplace environment. Much of their work is in support of vast and deep volunteer engagement. The next executive director must understand the unique nature of that work and empower and enable the staff to do it at an exceptional level. The executive director must set stretch goals for the staff while building on and further developing their individual and collective strengths in an often decentralized environment. The executive director will actively engage the staff in all aspects of considering the organization's future to capitalize on their knowledge, experience and skills. Likewise, the executive director will be adept at embracing and leading the team through change, guiding complex and perhaps charged discussions and communicating decisions with clarity and transparency.

- **Advance and promote, equity, diversity, inclusion and justice within AMS and across the communities it serves**

AMS leadership, staff and volunteers share a strong commitment to advancing equity, diversity, inclusion, and justice within the AMS and across the communities it serves. The Society has a unique opportunity given its work at the intersection of academia, industry, government and the public. This access, along with the organization's resources, presents the AMS with the capacity to lead on these issues. The next executive director will provide intentional leadership to advance meaningful and tangible initiatives, in collaboration with key stakeholders, to achieve equity and to advance inclusion, diversity, and justice in all aspects of the society's reach and to contribute to prioritizing these issues in the scientific enterprise. Likewise, the next executive director will seek to influence the conduct and dissemination of research to further understand the impact of weather, water and climate issues on communities of color which may be disproportionately impacted by extreme weather events and changes in climate.

Key internal partners in this work is the AMS's [Culture and Inclusion Cabinet](#) (CIC) and the [Board on Representation, Accessibility, Inclusion and Diversity](#) (BRAID). The executive director will be accessible to, and actively engage with, CIC and BRAID in support of their activities and to leverage their experience, expertise and perspectives to inform the organization's strategies.

- **Enhance the impact and influence of the science produced by society professionals**

The AMS [Policy Program](#) promotes the understanding and use of science and services relating to weather, water and climate with the goal of helping avoid risks and realizing opportunities associated with the Earth system. Given the increased risks to society from extreme weather events and a changing climate – and the public's growing interest in these issues – the AMS sees an opportunity to build on and further strengthen its work in this arena. The new executive director will identify opportunities to expand the ways it shares resources and information with the public and policy makers while navigating carefully to avoid the politicization of science and remain honest brokers for science.

## Professional Qualifications and Personal Qualities

AMS is seeking a strong, collaborative, and results-oriented leader that embodies and fulfills the Society's statement of purpose: "advancing the weather-climate-water enterprise, technologies, applications, and services for the benefit of society". The executive director will hold many, if not all, of the following qualifications and qualities:

- *Education:* An advanced degree in the sciences is preferred but not required.
- *Professional experience:* A minimum of 10 years of experience in a leadership role within a large-scale or medium-to large-scale organization, preferably a science-based organization or non-profit organization. This individual must have strong credibility in the sector in which they work.
- *Leadership and management:* A history of progressive leadership and administrative, financial and personnel management experience. The ability to recognize and develop talent and to

support a diverse workforce. A leader with strategic and organizational agility that handles ambiguity well.

- *Business and financial acumen:* An understanding of current and possible future policies, trends and developments relevant to the future of AMS and its mission. An understanding of the drivers of financial growth and sustainability; a strategic perspective of the business model and the interdependencies of short-term and long-term tradeoffs and decisions, especially in a non-profit setting. The capacity to recognize opportunities to establish new and improve existing revenue streams.
- *Collaboration:* An ability to work effectively internally and externally with the academic, public and private sectors, across a wide variety of cultures in terms of backgrounds and specializations, as well as an ability to build stakeholder coalitions in an interdisciplinary context.
- *Innovation:* Adept at bringing creative ideas of others forward, understanding which might have the most potential and utility for AMS, its mission, and its members and operationalizing those ideas.
- *Diversity, equity and inclusion:* A demonstrated commitment to, and track record of, promoting and supporting the careers of individuals from historically underrepresented populations in scientific disciplines. The ability to sustain and foster a diverse and inclusive environment.
- *Communication:* An excellent and charismatic communicator. Able to creatively and articulately inspire others by painting credible pictures and visions of the future.
- *Fundraising:* A record of effective fundraising and stewardship. The ideal candidate will have direct experience in building long-term relationships with various philanthropic partners.
- *Integrity:* A leader with the highest level of ethics and integrity.
- *Interpersonal skills:* High-energy, enthusiasm, empathy, humility, collegial, service-oriented and a self-less "organization first" attitude.

## About American Meteorological Society

### Overview

The American Meteorological Society advances the atmospheric and related sciences, technologies, applications and services for the benefit of society. The sciences at the heart of the AMS are crucial for understanding the world around us and for enhancing the safety, security, and prosperity of people in the United States and around the globe. The AMS serves as a trusted voice and committed advocate for weather, water and climate science and services. Working in support of the AMS mission are the Society's core staff as well as its many hundreds of volunteers, who span the private, public and academic spheres.

AMS members are scientists, researchers, students, educators, broadcasters and professionals working together to make a difference in the fields of weather, water and climate research. More than 12,000

make up the vibrant AMS community who shares knowledge, improves technology, promotes understanding and disseminates the science to ensure that our planet – and the people on it – can thrive.

**Science**: Since 1919, AMS has been a leader in fostering and disseminating the latest atmospheric, oceanic, hydrologic and related research. The remarkable scientific advances by the AMS community have transformed what we know and how we live.

**Community**: AMS builds connections between people across the weather, water and climate enterprise.

**Advancement**: AMS creates opportunities to collaborate, network and learn from others, advancing careers and society at the same time.

Learn more about the American Meteorological Society at the following links:

- [AMS Organization and Administration](#)
- [AMS Election Information](#)
- [AMS Commissions, Boards and Committees](#)
- [AMS Local Chapters](#)
- [AMS Membership](#)
- [AMS Publications](#)
- [Policy Program](#)
- [Education and Careers](#)

## Leadership

Leadership of the AMS is elected annually. AMS presidents serve a one-year term and rotate through AMS constituencies including government, the private sector and the public sector.

President: [Michael R. "Mike" Farrar, Ph.D.](#)

President-Elect: [Richard Clark, Ph.D.](#)

Immediate Past President: [Mary Glackin](#)

Please visit the following links for information on the [AMS Past Presidents](#), the [AMS Council](#) and [AMS Election Information](#).



Photo courtesy of King of Hearts.

## Boston

AMS headquarters is located at 45 Beacon Street, in the heart of downtown Boston.

First incorporated as a town in 1630 and as a city in 1822, Boston is one of America's oldest cities, with a rich economic and social history. What began as a homesteading community eventually evolved into a center for social and political change. Boston has since become the economic and cultural hub of New England and one of the truly great American cities.

Boston proper is home to over 692,000 residents, many renowned institutions of higher education, some of the world's finest inpatient hospitals and academic medical centers and numerous cultural and professional sports organizations. Millions of people visit Boston to take in its historic neighborhoods, attend cultural and sporting events, and conduct business. The Boston biotech hub lays claim to being the largest biotech cluster in the world in size and significance, driven by top-flight universities, hospitals and biopharma companies, access to venture capital and exceptional professional talent.

Boston and its surrounding communities are exceptional for families, with some of the nation's highest-ranked public and private schools, excellent community services, and varied and distinct residential neighborhoods. The city of Boston has wonderful parks and recreational areas, with more than 2,200 acres of park land throughout the city.

Visit [www.bostonusa.com](http://www.bostonusa.com) and [www.boston.gov](http://www.boston.gov) for information on all that the greater Boston area has to offer.



## Procedure for Candidacy

All applications, nominations and inquiries are invited. Applications should include, as separate documents, a CV or resume and a letter of interest addressing the themes in this profile.

WittKieffer is assisting the American Meteorological Society in this search. For fullest consideration, candidate materials should be received by June 30, 2021 and submitted through WittKieffer's [candidate portal](#).

Nominations and inquiries can be directed to the WittKieffer consultants supporting this search:

Suzanne Teer and Robert Luke

[AMSExecutiveDirector@wittkieffer.com](mailto:AMSExecutiveDirector@wittkieffer.com)

*It is the policy of the American Meteorological Society to provide equal opportunity to all employees and applicants for employment based solely upon the individual's qualifications and ability to perform the work assigned, without regard to any personal identity, status, or condition. These include but are not limited to the following: race, color, sex, age, religion, disability, veteran status, gender identity and expression, national origin, genetic information, and sexual orientation.*