



1420 King Street
Alexandria, VA 22314-2794

Tel: 703-684-2845
Fax: 703-836-4875

WWW.NAFE.ORG

Request for Proposals:

UPDATED Executive Director Services for the National Academy of Forensic Engineers (NAFE)

Issued September 29, 2023, Updated October 25, 2023
Proposals due 5pm EST October 30, 2023

Summary:

The National Academy of Forensic Engineers (NAFE) is issuing this Request for Proposals for the services of an Executive Director (ED). The ED shall perform and oversee day-to-day business of the Academy, assist the volunteer member Board of Directors in developing and directing the strategic plan, and maintain compliant corporate function of the Academy.

The ED will coordinate its efforts with the President, Board of Directors, and Committee Chairs outlined in the Bylaws, Standard Operating Procedures, and attached Job Description.

Background:

NAFE is multi-disciplinary, 400-member professional organization committed to advancing the ethical and professional practice of forensic engineering by providing education and networking opportunities, producing a bi-annual peer-reviewed technical journal, and certifying individuals who have achieved expertise in forensic engineering. Founded in 1982 as a Chartered Affinity Group of the National Society of Professional Engineers (NSPE), NAFE functions independently as a largely volunteer organization. Executive Director services are required to provide consistency, accountability, compliance, and administrative support to maintain and develop the Academy.

Further information can be found at [About the Academy | National Academy of Forensic Engineers \(nafe.org\)](http://About%20the%20Academy%20|%20National%20Academy%20of%20Forensic%20Engineers%20(nafe.org))

The existing ED services have been provided through contract with NSPE staff for the last 9 years. In addition, the Board relies on volunteer efforts and discrete contractor services to facilitate independent growth, modernize academy functions, and manage pandemic driven changes. Following staffing changes and recent strategic planning efforts, the Board seeks to contract independent Executive Director services in the coming months.

Executive Director Position:

The Executive Director (ED) serves as the Chief Executive Officer of the NAFE and is responsible for the administration of all Academy activities in accordance with the NAFE Bylaws and Standard Operating Procedures. Based on previous and existing service, the Executive Director Services will require approximately 80 hours per month.

The Academy currently functions with an Academy budget of approximately \$200,000 per year. The Academy budget is based solely on income from current membership fees and two in-person conferences per year (January and July).

NAFE headquarters is currently tied to NSPE, located at 1420 King St., Alexandria, VA 22314, though nearly all functions are completed remotely. The new Executive Director service will require establishing a new mailing address, while actual functions may remain remote.

Details on the duties of the ED can be found in the attached job description. It is expected that the ED will serve an initial 3-year term with subsequent 3-year terms, based upon mutual agreement.

Services Requested:

The NAFE Executive Director Search Committee seeks ED Services as outlined in Exhibit A. The Executive Director shall serve as Chief Executive Officer and be responsible for the administration of the Academy's headquarters and all activities in accordance with the Bylaws and Standard Operating Procedures. The Executive Director shall be responsible to the volunteer Board of Directors for the continuing management of the Academy in all respects, except as specifically reserved by the Bylaws as duties of the President, Treasurer, Secretary, or other specified officer.

The Executive Director is appointed by a majority vote of the Board of Directors, holds office at the pleasure of the Board of Directors, and can be removed by a vote of a majority vote of the Board of Directors.

RFP Selection Process Timeline:

Proposals are due 5pm EST October 30, 2023.

It is expected that the ED will serve an initial 3-year term with subsequent 3-year terms, based upon mutual agreement.

NAFE anticipates scheduling interviews in the initial weeks of November 2023 and finalizing a selection in December 2023, pending approval by the Board.

The selected candidate will be asked to attend the NAFE Board Meeting at The Shores Resort & Spa in Daytona Beach Florida on January 19, 2023.

RFP Submission Requirements:

Proposals should be no more than 15 pages, not including references, and cover the following:

1. Organization Description / Individual Resume: Brief history and summary of your firm and expertise. Proposal shall include resumes for all individuals who will directly communicate with NAFE leadership or members. Please designate a single point of contact for external communication.
2. Service Summary and Approach: Detail how you will accomplish the proposed scope of work, including a clear delineation of services to be provided by independent contractor(s) or service providers (i.e. conference planning, corporate counsel). Indicate your firm's responsibilities and your expectations of NAFE.

3. Deliverables: Delineate how success can be measured throughout the process.
4. Budget: Proposed costs along with narrative description of what is included.
5. References: Provide two references, including board member contact information, from previous or current clients for whom Executive Director services were provided for more than 3-years.

Proposals must be sent electronically in a single PDF file to: execsearch@nafe.org; *Subject Line: Executive Director RFP*. By submitting a proposal, the firm/individual authorizes NAFE to contact references to evaluate the applicant's qualifications for this project.

Evaluation Criteria:

All proposals will be evaluated based on the following key criteria:

1. Performance capability: the extent to which the proposal demonstrates the firm's ability to provide the depth and breadth of experience, skills, knowledge, and creativity generally required by this scope of services.
2. Understanding of and commitment to NAFE's mission, values, programs and strategic objectives.
3. Demonstrated experience with similar-sized nonprofit organizations.
4. Completeness and quality of response, including clear deliverables and reasonable approach.
5. Proposed cost and timeline
6. References

While the order of these factors does not generally denote relative importance, NAFE acknowledges that selecting best value providers primarily requires a balanced combination of (1) reasonable rates and (2) strong experience and demonstrated expertise in providing Executive Director Services.

Disclaimer: This RFP does not commit NAFE to select any firm, award any work order, pay any costs incurred in preparing a response, or procure or contract for any services or supplies. NAFE reserves the right to accept or reject any or all submittals received, cancel or modify the RFP in part or in its entirety, or change the RFP guidelines, when it is in the best interests of the NAFE to do so.

EXHIBIT A

National Academy of Forensic Engineers (NAFE) Executive Director Services

Job Title: Executive Director of the National Academy of Forensic Engineers

Job Overview: The National Academy of Forensic Engineers (NAFE) is seeking an experienced and visionary Executive Director to lead and advance the organization's mission of promoting excellence in the field of forensic engineering. As the Executive Director, you will oversee all aspects of NAFE's operations, strategic planning, membership services, and advocacy efforts. This role requires a strong background in association management, familiarity with the engineering profession, computer and web proficiency, exceptional leadership skills, and a passion for driving professional growth and recognition in the field of forensic engineering.

Responsibilities:

1. Strategic Leadership:
 - Develop and execute a strategic vision for NAFE, in alignment with the organization's mission and goals.
 - Collaborate with the Board of Directors to establish strategic priorities and ensure their successful implementation.
 - Provide guidance and support to NAFE's board, committees, and task forces to promote collaboration and achieve organizational objectives.
 - Identify emerging trends and opportunities in forensic engineering and propose initiatives to address them.
2. Operational Management:
 - Oversee day-to-day operations of NAFE, ensuring efficient and effective functioning of the organization.
 - Manage the organization's budget and financial resources, in collaboration with the Board of Directors and the Finance Committee.
 - Foster a positive and inclusive organizational culture that encourages professional growth and engagement among staff and members.
 - Develop and implement policies and procedures to ensure compliance with relevant laws, regulations, and ethical standards.
3. Membership Services and Engagement:
 - Enhance the value proposition for NAFE members by developing and implementing programs, resources, and networking opportunities.
 - Strengthen relationships with existing members and identify strategies to attract and retain new members.
 - Promote professional development and knowledge sharing through conferences, seminars, webinars, and publications.
 - Foster engagement and collaboration within the forensic engineering community by facilitating member involvement in committees and initiatives.
4. Advocacy and External Relations:
 - Represent NAFE in professional and industry forums, conferences, and public events to promote the organization's visibility and influence.
 - Advocate for the recognition and advancement of forensic engineering as a critical field within the legal, engineering, and regulatory communities.
 - Collaborate with external stakeholders, including government agencies, professional organizations, and educational institutions, to establish strategic partnerships and advance the profession.

5. Communication and Marketing:

- Develop and implement a comprehensive communication and marketing strategy to raise awareness of NAFE's mission, services, and achievements.
- Oversee the creation and dissemination of high-quality content, including publications, newsletters, and social media updates.
- Serve as the primary spokesperson for NAFE, effectively communicating its key messages to diverse audiences.
- Cultivate relationships with media outlets and respond to media inquiries related to forensic engineering and NAFE's work.

Qualifications:

- A minimum of a bachelor's degree in a relevant program; advanced degrees are preferred.
- Proven experience (at least 7-10 years) in association management.
- Familiarity with engineering and/or forensic professions and principles. Willingness to learn, embrace, and promote forensic engineering principles, practices, and industry standards.
- Familiarity with technical certification processes. Willingness to learn, embrace, and manage the NAFE certification process.
- Excellent strategic thinking and planning skills, with a track record of successfully implementing organizational strategies.
- Exceptional leadership and management abilities, with experience in overseeing a team and working collaboratively with diverse stakeholders.
- Effective communication skills, both written and verbal, with the ability to represent the organization to various audiences.
- Demonstrated experience in membership development, engagement, and program management.
- Proven ability to build relationships and establish partnerships with key stakeholders.
- Proficiency in utilizing technology and digital platforms to support organizational goals.
- Membership or active involvement in relevant professional organizations is desirable.

NAFE headquarters is currently tied to NSPE, located at 1420 King St., Alexandria, VA 22314, though most functions are completed remotely. The new Executive Director service will require establishing a new mailing address, while actual functions may remain remote.

The current contract language is attached as Exhibit B for reference and comment.

EXHIBIT B

National Academy of Forensic Engineers (NAFE) Response to Candidate Questions

NAFE received requests for additional information and clarification on the Executive Director Services RFP issued on September 29, 2023. Specifically:

NAFE Board Meetings:

The NAFE Board meets regularly to conduct the business of the Academy. The summary below is based on the Bylaw requirements and historical scheduling. NAFE intends to maintain the current schedule outlines below:

1. In-Person:
 - The NAFE Board meets in-person twice a year (January and July). The meetings are scheduled on the Friday of Conference weekend. For example, the Board will meet Friday, January 19, 2024 as the first day of our 2024 Winter Conference, January 19 through January 21.
 - While timing varies based on business and Academy activity, the in-person Board meetings are typically scheduled for 6 hours.
 - The Executive Director (and staff if utilized) is expected to arrive at the conference venue on Conference Thursday and depart following Conference events on Conference Sunday.
2. Virtual:
 - The NAFE Board meets virtually four (4) times per year. Virtual meetings are not held on a standard schedule but can generally be assumed as once per quarter.
3. Additional Meetings:
 - While individual Presidents may vary, the President (including limited additional Leadership) and Executive Director schedule regular check-ins every other week.
 - NAFE may request additional meetings related to specific projects, committee needs, or emergency communication.
 - On average, the Executive Director may participate in up to four (4) governing or planning meetings per month.

External Meetings:

As stated in the Executive Director Services (Exhibit A), the Executive Director shall, “*Represent NAFE in professional and industry forums, conferences, and public events to promote the organization's visibility and influence.*” The specific meeting attendance may vary by year, meeting geography, and Board member involvement, but for planning and budgeting purposes, NAFE assumes the following:

1. External Meetings:
 - Proposals should assume travel and attendance at two (2) in-person meetings with external organizations.
 - Proposals should assume limited planning and participation in two (2) virtual meetings with external organizations.

- For example, please see the 2019 conference attendance schedule including Board and ED representation:

EVENT	ORGANIZATION/LOCATION/DATE	NAFE REPRESENTITIVES
NABIE	NABIE Conference, March 2-3, 2019, Boston, MA	Board Member
NCEES	NCEES Professional Organization Liaison Council, March 9, 2019 (Virtual only since 2020)	President, Executive Director
CESB	CESB, March 19, 2019 (Virtual only since 2020)	CESB Committee Chair, Executive Director
NAE	NAE, April 8, 2019, Washington DC	President, Executive Director
NSPE	NSPE, July 17-21, 2019, Kansas City, MO	Past-President, Executive Director

Communication and Marketing:

As stated in the Executive Director Services (Exhibit A), the Executive Director shall:

- Develop and implement a comprehensive communication and marketing strategy to raise awareness of NAFE's mission, services, and achievements.
- Oversee the creation and dissemination of high-quality content, including publications, newsletters, and social media updates.
- Serve as the primary spokesperson for NAFE, effectively communicating its key messages to diverse audiences.
- Cultivate relationships with media outlets and respond to media inquiries related to forensic engineering and NAFE's work.

NAFE does not currently operate under a cohesive or defined external communication and marketing strategy. We are seeking a candidate who will work with the Board to create and execute professional and effective external communications.

Our current operations include the following specific communication tasks from the Executive Director:

1. Internal Communications:

- The Executive Director issues an Executive Directors Report for the Board Book prior to each in-person Board Meeting. The Board Book is generally emailed and posted to the NAFE website in early January and Early July.
- The Executive Director crafts two (2) letters to the Members. These letters are typically issued following the Winter and Summer Conferences and include a general summary of Academy actions and activities. Letters are generally emailed and posted to the NAFE website in early February and early August.
- The Executive Director works with appointed NAFE leaders to craft public messages and press releases following public tragedies related to the practice of Forensic Engineering.
- The Executive Director (or staff) disseminates external information and requests to the membership via the NAFE1 email list. Messages include requests for forensic services and engineering opportunities crafted and published by external organizations (i.e. ASCE call

for abstracts, a law firm request for expert services in Texas, and call for experts from the National Academy of Sciences). The Executive Director currently sends an average of two (2) NAFE1 messages per month.

- The Executive Director manages direct member communication and requests through FreeScout responding to direct inquiries such as, "I applied months ago, why won't anyone respond to my emails?" "I would like a refund of my conference fee." "What do trials and depositions mean and can arbitration work for my application?"
 - The Executive Director and assigned committee members solicit member feedback via LimeSurvey.
 - Committee members currently manage the NAFE LinkedIn account and associated content. The Executive Director is asked to provide content approximately once a month.
2. Publications:
- NAFE does not currently issue newsletters or other formal publications beyond the Journal.
 - The NAFE Journal is fully created and published by the Journal committee and third party staff. The Executive Director is not an active participant in the Journal.