

# President

## NASPA - Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education

Position Specification

November 2023

# The Organization

NASPA is the leading association for the advancement, health, and sustainability of the student affairs profession. We serve the diverse needs of our community, from vice presidents of student affairs to undergraduate student leaders considering a career in the field. Founded in 1919, NASPA includes more than 15,000 members in all 50 states, 29 countries, and 8 U.S. Territories. Guided by the principles of integrity, innovation, inclusion, and inquiry, we are dedicated to empowering our members to realize their full potential and to cultivating student success in collaboration with our institutional members, who represent every sector of higher education. NASPA centers justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion in our work; read more about our [commitment here](#).

## Strategic Goals

With the vision of fulfilling the promise of higher education and the mission of serving as the leading voice of student affairs, NASPA's 2019 to 2026 Strategic Goals include:

### Advocacy for Student Success

Advocate to support student learning and success.

NASPA will:

- Center student learning, development, and success as core outcomes of higher education.
- Develop independent, critical thinkers who understand their responsibility to foster community, civic, and democratic engagement.
- Collaborate with local, state, national, and global partners to champion and support legislation, policies, and practices that advance student learning and success.

### Equity, Inclusion, and Social Justice

Invest in and advocate for equitable and inclusive practices that promote socially just communities.

NASPA will:

- Strengthen capacity in all professional roles to recognize, challenge, and dismantle systemic barriers to improve post-secondary access and achievement.
- Open pathways throughout the Association and the student affairs profession for equity-seeking, historically minoritized, and marginalized communities.
- Collaborate on the development of evidence-based, innovative, inclusive, and socially just higher education policy and practices.

### Research and Scholarship

Generate research and scholarship that advance evidence-based, emergent, and equitable practices.

NASPA will:

- Create and foster interdisciplinary strategic partnerships to advance a data-informed research and practice agenda.
- Invest in and promote a scholar-practitioner identity and mindset within the student affairs profession.

- Develop innovative models to support the creation and recognition of exemplary research and scholarship.

## Professional Development and Engagement

Provide exceptional education and volunteer engagement that prepare members to lead on current and future issues in higher education.

NASPA will:

- Develop, implement, and evaluate accessible professional development and networking opportunities that address current and emerging issues for all career levels.
- Foster and promote volunteer engagement that enhances effective professional practice and pathways to leadership.
- Extend the value of NASPA membership to a wider network of higher education professionals and partners.

For more information about NASPA visit: <https://www.naspa.org/>

## The Opportunity

NASPA is seeking a visionary leader capable of guiding a dynamic, complex association to its next level of impact. Building upon NASPA's strength and strong financial position, the next President will be joining the Association as the landscape across the higher education sector is shifting, which brings both opportunities and challenges to make change. The President will be charged with setting strategy and aligning priorities to accelerate NASPA's position as a convener and thought leader within student affairs and the broader higher education landscape, with a focus on student success.

NASPA's brand and credibility are strong. As a leading voice in the field, the Association serves a diverse community of individual and institutional members. Leveraging its positive reputation, NASPA advocates for better policy, legislation, and practice in higher education and helps champion innovation, well-being, access, and a sense of community within the student affairs profession.

This is an ideal moment to join NASPA. The next President will inherit a strong, fully remote, and geographically dispersed team working within a people-centred organizational culture that invests significantly in staff development and belonging. This role presents the opportunity to further enhance NASPA's already diversified and stable funding model. The President will spearhead NASPA's position as the leading authority in student affairs, advocating for justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion both within the Association and in the wider community.

As NASPA's national and global presence continues to expand, the President will have the chance to champion the field, foster professional development, and influence change while addressing workforce-related challenges within student affairs. This unique moment offers the opportunity to shape the future of student affairs and higher education, allowing for a profound and lasting impact.

During the President's first year, it is important that they:

- Gain a strong understanding of NASPA's current state of affairs while building trust internally and externally.
- Build clarity around the current vision and articulate a roadmap of NASPA's future vision through the evolving landscape of higher education.

- Inspire work to maintain and enhance membership engagement and financial diversification.
- Support NASPA's internal culture and organizational structure, build upon the staff's commitment to mission and inclusion, and effectively engage and lead NASPA's geographically dispersed staff.
- Build relationships of transparency, trust, and collaboration with the board, senior leadership, staff, members, and partners.

## Key Responsibilities

The President shapes and leads the strategic direction and overall management of NASPA. In collaboration with the Board of Directors, the President develops a vision for the Association to ensure its continued relevance and value added to key constituents. The President oversees a budget of approximately \$22M and leads a highly skilled 90-person team.

Additionally, the President's primary responsibilities include the following:

### Vision and Strategic Direction

- Set and pursue a bold vision for the future of the student affairs profession, in consultation with the Board, NASPA members, and constituents.
- Establish and articulate an agenda advocating for student affairs by prioritizing and championing for the profession, the issues, and approach externally.
- Cultivate and foster close working relationships with the broad range of members to solicit input and build consensus around priorities that serve the needs of students, student affairs professionals, and higher education leaders.
- Prioritize accessibility of opportunities for NASPA members to engage in NASPA events and other member benefits.

### Management and Leadership

- Maintain a culture grounded in justice, diversity, equity, and inclusion that supports the agency and productivity of all staff.
- Model and inspire a spirit of collaboration and cohesion while maintaining a remote first environment.
- Ensure a collection of voices are being heard and represented.
- Provide meaningful opportunities for staff development and growth.
- Strategically invest in NASPA's infrastructure – its human resources, operations, financial systems, and processes and procedures.
- Provide strategic alignment of all financial systems in partnership with NASPA's finance and operations leadership, ensuring that sound financial structures are in place and reporting systems are accurate.
- Continue to engage and build the NASPA ecosystem – at the local, state, national, and global levels.
- In partnership with the NASPA Foundation Board, continue to develop new fundraising opportunities to support NASPA's members.

## Communications and External Relations

- Serve as a highly visible national and global thought-leader.
- Enhance advocacy of the field through policy engagement at the local, state, federal, and global levels.
- Represent NASPA on vital and relevant boards and committees, engaging in impactful speaking engagements.
- Cultivate and maintain solid relationships with NASPA's external partners to encourage ongoing collaboration.
- Champion the work of NASPA and student affairs professionals within the broad education ecosystem.
- In partnership with the senior staff, maintain a broad communications framework for NASPA with clear objectives and resource requirements, including the strategic use of publications, media-relations, and the proactive integration of appropriate technological strategies.

## Membership and Governance

- Actively build relationships with members across the Association.
- Support the Board Chair in encouraging all members of the Board of Directors to participate actively and facilitate Board involvement in activities important to NASPA.
- Keep the Board advised of the Association's activities and financial position and provide the Board with sufficient and high-quality information for making sound policy decisions.
- Serve as a non-voting, ex-officio member of the Board
- Act as a liaison between staff and the Board.

# The Candidate

## Experience and Requirements

The successful candidate should bring:

- Demonstrated experience and thought leadership related to NASPA's mission of student success and access.
- Credibility with and connection to higher education and student affairs sectors.
- Experience with associations or nonprofit organizations as a senior leader, or through service on a board, or as a highly engaged member.
- Experience leading as a senior executive an entity of a scale, function, or complexity similar to that of NASPA.
- Demonstrated commitment to justice, diversity, equity, and inclusion and to cultivating a culture that values the perspectives and lived experiences of a diverse workforce and membership.
- Experience and comfort with public speaking and presenting as a compelling spokesperson or advocate.
- Capacity to align an organization for greater impact through the development and assessment of a strategic plan.
- Financial and administrative acumen.
- Exposure to partnering with an active and engaged volunteer Board.
- Demonstrated ability to manage a multiple constituent environment.

- Ability to work effectively with and gain the respect and support of highly accomplished staff and constituents from various backgrounds and perspectives.
- Experience and comfort managing and supporting a dispersed, remote working environment that is built on flexibility, trust, and empowerment of staff.
- Successful advocacy or fundraising experience, including developing and framing the organization's work, mission, and goals to persuade a broad range of potential partners.

### Preferred Qualities and Characteristics

The successful candidate should also bring the following qualities and characteristics:

- Strong written and oral communication skills.
- Astute organizational, analytical, and strategic planning skills.
- Highest ethical standards and integrity.
- An understanding of the concepts of institutional and structural racism and bias and their impact on underserved and underrepresented communities coupled with the courage to engage in challenging conversations.
- An embrace of ambiguity balanced with agility.
- Accessible and approachable.
- Authentic, transparent, fair, and self-aware; one who shares information readily, listens well, and is used to seeing and grappling with nuanced issues.
- Strategic and not "stuck in the weeds."
- Intentionally innovative.
- Politically savvy, able to navigate across the political spectrum and within circles at local, state, national, and global levels.
- Emotionally intelligent and empathetic.

### Compensation and Location

The salary range for this position is \$470,000 to \$500,000.

The President may be based anywhere in the contiguous 48 states.

## Procedure for Candidacy

Confidential review of applications, nominations and expressions of interest will begin immediately and will continue until an appointment is made. To apply for this position, please forward a resume and completed application questions to [NASPA-President@kornferry.com](mailto:NASPA-President@kornferry.com).

In lieu of a formal cover letter, we ask you to briefly respond to these four application questions. Your answers will help deepen the Search Committee's understanding of how your leadership and professional background can significantly impact the organization moving forward.

Please answer each question individually in a single Microsoft Word document, limiting your responses to a couple of paragraphs for each question (no more than 1-2 total pages for all questions). We look forward to continuing the conversation.

1. Through your knowledge of some of the opportunities and challenges facing student affairs and higher education, explain what motivates you to consider the role of President of NASPA.
2. Please give an example of a recent approach to building an inclusive team culture that you have implemented.
3. Please share an example of a strategic initiative, priority, or program that you executed/implemented from idea to impact.
4. Please share an experience in effectively engaging external constituents and members to enhance their involvement and satisfaction with the organization.

*NASPA provides equal employment opportunity for all applicants and employees. NASPA does not discriminate on the basis of race; color, national origin; religion; sex; age; gender identity or expression, affectional or sexual orientation, veteran status, disability, marital status; personal appearance; family responsibilities; genetic information; educational status; political affiliation; unemployment status; place of residence or business; source of income; caste; matriculation; credit information; status as a survivor or family member of a survivor of domestic violence, a sexual offense, or stalking; reproductive health decision making; or any other basis protected by law in any of its policies, employment practices, or in any context in the workplace. When necessary, NASPA also makes reasonable accommodations for employees with disabilities.*

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