

# RAILS

Reaching Across Illinois Library System | 125 Tower Drive | Burr Ridge IL 60527 | [www.railslibraries.info](http://www.railslibraries.info)

## **Request for Proposal – Executive Director Search Reaching Across Illinois Library System**

### **Introduction**

The Reaching Across Illinois Library System (RAILS) is one of two multitype regional library systems in the state. The membership of RAILS includes academic, public, school, and special libraries. RAILS was formed in 2011, through the merger of the Alliance, DuPage, Metropolitan, North Suburban, and Prairie Area Library Systems.

RAILS provides delivery service to support Illinois' vast interlibrary loan program, technology support for more than 400 libraries' online shared catalogs, and Talking Book Services that serve persons with visual or physical disabilities who cannot read conventional print material.

The RAILS service area covers northern and western Illinois. The system serves more than 1500 public, private, university, and school library members, representing more than 3700 library facilities in a 27,000 square mile area. Although the city of Chicago is within RAILS' boundaries, and a number of RAILS member libraries are located in Chicago, the Chicago Public Library constitutes a separate library system.

Additional information about Illinois Regional Library Systems can be found at <http://www.cyberdriveillinois.com/departments/library/libsystems.html>.

The Executive Director will be responsible for managing a budget from July 1, 2011 through June 30, 2012 of \$12.9 million with staff positions totaling 136 across 7 facilities. The current interim administrative offices are located in Burr Ridge, Illinois, however, RAILS is currently undergoing a facilities study that may result in a change of location of the administrative offices.

### **Proposal Requirements**

The Board of Directors for the Reaching Across Illinois Library System (RAILS) is empowered by Illinois statute to hire and fix compensation for an Executive Director for the system. The Board seeks to engage a firm to conduct the search for an Executive Director. The successful bidder will work with the RAILS Board of Directors and Executive Search Team, which includes board members plus representatives from the Member Advisory Group as RAILS Member Libraries.

The Personnel Committee of the RAILS Board will be entertaining proposals from qualified search firms through Thursday, January 12, 2012.

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## **Please provide the following information:**

1. A description of your firm's philosophy of candidate search and conducting per-qualification interviews.
2. A description of your firm's methodology for conducting a successful search.
3. A description of the services your firm offers volunteer boards in managing hiring decisions.
4. A description of up to three successful searches where your firm acted as the principal agent.
5. Your company's name, location, website and phone, your primary staff contact for the Proposal, along with key staff member biography(s).
6. An enumeration of all fees for services.
- 7. The Board would like the successful candidate to begin work on July 1, 2012. Please provide a timeline for your work that will give the prospective Executive Director enough time to give notice to their current employer.**

Please submit your completed proposal via email to Barb Brooks, RAILS Human Resources Manager at [barb.brooks@railslibraries.info](mailto:barb.brooks@railslibraries.info) by 5:00PM CST on Thursday, January 12, 2012. Please be prepared to respond to questions from the Personnel Committee of the RAILS Board between Monday January 16, 2012 and Thursday January 19, 2012, with your subsequent responses returned via email by 5:00PM Thursday January 19, 2012.

## **Evaluation of Proposals**

The RAILS Personnel Committee will meet on Monday, January 23, 2012 to discuss qualified respondents. The full RAILS Board will be meeting on Friday January 27, 2012 to discuss qualified proposals. The RAILS Board will make the final selection. Search Firm Finalist(s) will be notified on Monday, January 30, 2012.

## **Conditions of the Project**

- All costs associated with preparation of the Proposal are solely the responsibility of the respondent.
- All proposals become property of RAILS.
- The consultant's position is strictly contractual. The person fulfilling the specifications of this project will in no way assume an employee/employer relationship with RAILS.
- Confidentiality, both during and after the search is required.
- The RAILS board reserves the right to reject any or all proposals without explanation.

12/19/2011

**Job Title: Executive Director****Description Type:**  New  Revised**Job Category:** Administration**FLSA Status:**  Exempt  Non-exempt**Job Type:** Library Professional**Reporting Relationship:****Reports to (Title):** RAILS Board of Directors**List of direct reports (by Title):**  Applicable  Not Applicable

- Associate Executive Director
- Director, Communications
- Executive Assistant

**Position Summary:**

The Executive Director is responsible for providing executive leadership in the overall administration and integration of a multi-type library System that has been formed from five previously existing Systems. The Executive Director will work closely with the System Board of Directors, System staff, member library directors and representatives, as well as Illinois library regional System directors and the Illinois State Library.

**Core Job Functions:**

- Acts as the principle of the RAILS leadership team in the overall operations and directing the planning, implementation, and evaluation of all RAILS services and operations
- Leads, participates in, and delegates planning activities for all phases of the library System's operations with particular attention to integrating program services and operations as a result of the merger of the five library Systems
- Works to assure System service programs are efficient, effective and respected by all multi-type member libraries; Employs a collaborative approach to carrying out duties and responsibilities
- Coordinates and directs System staff in developing programs designed to help member libraries achieve their goals; Delegates responsibility for various aspects of System programs as appropriate, and works effectively with System staff, member library directors and Illinois library leaders in problem solving and decision making
- Bears final authority and responsibility for staff recruitment, evaluations and promotions, discipline management and terminations, as well as all other personnel matters in accordance with System policies; Bears responsibility for maintaining written System personnel evaluation records; Establishes and maintains an HR System for personnel
- Works with member library directors to plan quality and desirable service programs
- Serves as the communication link between Board and System staff, as appropriate
- Interprets Board policies to System staff and provides staff support in the execution of such policies; Advises and provides recommendations to the Board on the need for new or revised policies; Advises Board on plans and concepts for current and future policy revisions
- Prepares and submits to the Board recommendations and reports relative to all matters requiring Board action; Ensures communications include necessary and helpful information as needed to ensure informed decision making
- With System staff, implements the policies of the System Board and the Plan of Services as defined in the ILS Per Capita Grant
- Assists the President in calling meetings and special meetings of the Board of Directors; Prepares agenda and reviews minutes for Board meetings; Serves as staff representative to the Board
- Attends System, regional and state committee meetings; Plans, promotes and facilitates System-wide meetings; Serves as ex-officio to the System Advisory Committee
- Ensures compliance of all library System activities with the provisions of the Library Systems Act and regulations of the Illinois State Library
- Responsible for preparation and management of the annual budget; Supervises preparation and presentation of

the monthly and annual financial reporting, and brings financial recommendations and budget concerns to the Board in a timely manner; Provides for participation of System staff in budget preparation, and supervises alternate revenue sources

- Signs contracts for services and grants; Certifies bills and monies expended by countersigning checks and managing expenditures
- Ensures completion of annual audit as recommended by the Board
- Supervises processes needed for, and facilitates evaluation of, building and equipment maintenance and replacement with particular attention to implementing the facilities consolidation plan as approved by the Board of Directors
- Represents the System and its membership in civic, educational, and library affairs of the System area and its relations at state and national levels; Works with the state legislature on library funding and relevant legislation affecting libraries; Assists with the development, oversight and promotion of approved legislative functions to member libraries on the state level; Promotes advocacy efforts on library legislation and assists with implementation of state laws as relevant to libraries; Promotes System and its member libraries throughout the state and serves as System spokesperson to the press
- Contributes to professional development of librarianship; Informs self on educational, political, legal, technological and sociological trends as they apply to librarianship; Is vigilant of emerging library trends within the System and its member libraries, and the promotion thereof where appropriate
- Promotes library services to un-served and underserved areas of the System, and helps to develop new programs consistent with changing environments; Works to further the growth of library services throughout the System area, and to encourage improvements for member library services as well; Promotes participation in System-wide programs; Acts as liaison with member libraries and serves as consultant in appropriate areas
- Promotes productive cooperation among member libraries and other library Systems or agencies; Contributes to the elevation of library cooperative concept
- Works to maximize the System's grant support; Delegates administrative supervision of special projects and grants as appropriate
- Other duties as assigned by the RAILS Board of Directors

### **Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities:**

#### Education -

- MLS Degree from an ALA accredited library school

#### Knowledge/Experience -

- Minimum of ten years progressively responsible library management experience, with five years at the senior and/or executive level including supervision of professional and supervisory staff
- Knowledge of and experience working with the Illinois legislative process affecting libraries
- Knowledge of principles and practices of library System administration
- Hands on experience in long range planning and budgeting
- Proven experience of operating and influencing within a political environment

#### Technical/Physical Requirements –

- Ability to create an effective senior management team to oversee 100 or more staff over multiple locations
- Ability to create a cohesive corporate culture for the merged system
- Ability to envision problem solutions and define critical paths to reach those solutions
- Strong ability for negotiation and effective conflict resolution
- Capacity to be responsive and empathetic to member library needs
- Organizational skills; ability to delegate authority, supervise and lead staff effectively at multiple, remote sites
- Strong verbal and written communication skills: ability to concisely summarize essential needs to the System Board, System staff, state legislators and member libraries; ability to disseminate information in a concise, timely manner and in a format that is friendly to the Board and member libraries
- Capability for regional and statewide travel on a regular basis