



# Position brief for the position of Chief Executive Officer Epilepsy Foundation

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# Opportunity Overview

The Epilepsy Foundation has retained Odgers Berndtson to conduct a national search on their behalf for a Chief Executive Officer. The national office is based in the Washington, DC region and provides support to chapters and affiliates throughout the United States. The mission includes fundraising for research, patient/family support, and education/advocacy at the local, state, and national levels. In addition, the Epilepsy Foundation is committed to destigmatizing this neurological disorder through ongoing education, outreach, and media resources.

Ideal candidates will be executives recognized for their ability to balance a bold vision and business acumen with strong interpersonal skills reflective of a collaborative and inclusive leader. The ability to inspire teams and bring out the best in them at the national and chapter/affiliate levels is also important. A track record of leading or supporting successful fundraising is a valuable attribute. Finally, passion and deep respect for the mission of the Epilepsy Foundation as well as enthusiasm to grow the organization and deepen its impact is critical. This is an exciting, strong opportunity for highly qualified candidates.

## About Epilepsy Foundation

The mission of the Epilepsy Foundation is to lead the fight to overcome the challenges of living with epilepsy and to accelerate therapies to stop seizures, find cures, and save lives.

The Epilepsy Foundation, a national non-profit with nearly 50 local organizations throughout the United States, has led the fight against seizures since 1968. The Foundation is an unwavering ally for individuals and families impacted by epilepsy and seizures across the world, providing the largest online education and community portal about the topic with over 19 million global visitors a year. Working to prevent, control, and end epilepsy, the Foundation goes through various channels to instill change including community services; public education; federal and local advocacy; and supporting research into new treatments and therapies. The Foundation works to ensure that people with seizures have the opportunity to live their lives to their fullest potential.

Local chapters and affiliates, often tailoring to the communities they serve, provide education and outreach to community organizations like school systems, emergency services, and local governments. Educating the general public to help improve understanding of epilepsy, seizure recognition, and first aid helps normalize the experiences of the epilepsy community and institutionalize support for them. Distilling past public advocacy, the Foundation also provides educational resources to individuals and their families by providing guidance on navigating their health concerns on a daily basis.

As a research arm, the Foundation has built an ecosystem with programs that span the entire spectrum from idea to market. Their innovation programs push for new ideas on care and cures while their engagement projects work across various stakeholders to get therapies to market faster among other initiatives. Simultaneously, the Epilepsy Foundation supports young researchers in their efforts to expand access to specialty care for those with epilepsy as well as develop digital tools that support research infrastructure.



The Epilepsy Foundation advocates for the community on a federal, state, and local level in order to establish that voices from the epilepsy community are heard on issues and policies that will affect them. This includes efforts to expand access to legal resources, accessible and affordable health services, and first responder training.

# The Position

The Epilepsy Foundation seeks a Chief Executive Officer (CEO) to magnify the impact of its work across the nation. Reporting to the Board of Directors this individual will be responsible for leading over 125 employees within the national organization and over 600 local employees and board volunteers within its network to establish and achieve aggressive growth strategies that utilizes new technologies and research to manage and cure some forms of epilepsy. Imagine the opportunity to make this type of difference for 3.4 million individuals in the United States with epilepsy and their families.

Direct reports include Senior Staff (Chief Operating Officer; Vice President, Research and New Therapies; Vice President, Government Affairs and Advocacy; Chief Development Officer; Vice President, Programs and Services; Vice President, Marketing; and Vice President, Communications and Digital Strategy) and the Administrative Staff.

## Responsibilities

- Strategic Leadership: Develop and implement the National board-approved strategic plan.
- Network Collaboration: Work with local organizations to continue to improve the network.
- Board Governance: Act as primary liaison to the 23-member National Board of Directors. Monitor and coordinate activities to ensure that performance is consistent with the organization's objectives.
- Organization Operations: Recruit, retain, and mentor a high-performing, diverse team with a commitment to strong staff engagement, equity, and inclusion. Lead using a disciplined team approach based on proven business practices, policies, procedures, enhanced communication, and collaboration.
- Financial Performance and Viability: Active fundraising will be an essential priority. Develop and implement fundraising campaigns to aggressively support growth in core, mission-critical activities, including research and services.
- External Representation: Serve as the external face of the organization, enhancing the Epilepsy Foundation's visibility, brand recognition, and credibility.
- Equity, Diversity and Inclusion: Actively seek opportunities to expand the reach of the Foundation to communities and stakeholders that have not traditionally benefitted from the Foundation's offerings.
- Expansion: Set and achieve an aggressive growth strategy for the national office and affiliate network.



# The Candidate

The Epilepsy Foundation's next CEO will have the opportunity to further build upon an organization that has accomplished a great deal, but that wants to do more and promote a more unified approach to fighting seizures and finding cures, especially with and among the multitude of organizations with complementary missions.

## Competencies & Areas of Expertise

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- Team Building: Proven leadership to deliver desired results.
- Strengthening Partnerships: Leverage the individual and collective talents of the network. Develop mutually beneficial relationships with other epilepsy-related organizations in the United States.
- Functional Know-How: This individual will be capable of leading a large, diverse and mission-based organization.
- Achievement Orientation: The CEO will have a bias for action and delivering results.
- Decisiveness and Flexibility: The CEO must balance these two competencies in an organization where multiple priorities compete for resources. This person will need to build consensus where appropriate and act where necessary to ensure that objectives and timelines are met.
- Strategic Acumen: Develop high quality business strategies and plans.
- Leadership: Train and lead a high performing managerial team.

## Essential Qualifications

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- Possess and model unquestionable integrity.
- Have demonstrated the ability to earn the respect and lead a talented team of diverse individuals.
- Have a broad personal and professional national network.
- Have a strong presence and the ability to inspire and influence others.
- Have deep interpersonal skills.
- Have the ability to articulate a sense of mission and purpose.
- Be open, direct, confident, prudent, and humble.
- Have a proven record of financial management and resource deployment.
- Be able to demonstrate successful experience as a CEO, president, or a member of a senior management team in a small to medium complex organization, experience in a national organization is a plus.
- Have a bachelor's degree (an advanced degree is a plus).

## Location & Remuneration

The position is located at The Epilepsy Foundation's U.S. headquarters in Landover, MD. Consistent with a position of this importance, The Epilepsy Foundation will provide the successful candidate a competitive compensation and benefits package.



# Contact Information

For inquiries regarding the CEO search for the Epilepsy Foundation, please email us at [EF.CEO@odgersberndtson.com](mailto:EF.CEO@odgersberndtson.com). Thank you for your consideration of this strong opportunity with such an important organization.

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## About Odgers Berndtson



Odgers Berndtson is a leading global executive search firm, assisting organizations to find the highest caliber people for senior management appointments across North America and internationally. Our reputation at the top of the executive search profession is over 50 years old. With offices in over 60 cities worldwide, our experienced executive search specialists operate with absolute discretion, integrity and care, and are expert in finding exceptional individuals for challenging roles.





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