



ASSOCIATION ON AMERICAN INDIAN AFFAIRS

Protecting Sovereignty • Preserving Culture
Educating Youth • Building Capacity

ANNOUNCEMENT OF JOB OPENING

POSITION

CULTURAL SOVEREIGNTY DIRECTOR

- ⇒ This is a leadership position within the organization.
- ⇒ Full-Time Exempt / Salaried position (40+ hours per week)
- ⇒ Virtual and requires dedicated home office space
- ⇒ Flex time is available
- ⇒ Beginning Salary Range: \$80,000 - \$125,000, depending on experience
- ⇒ Benefits include health, dental, retirement plan, robust holiday, vacation, and sick leave, ongoing training, intergenerational healing opportunities
- ⇒ **APPLICATIONS ARE DUE ON OR BEFORE FRIDAY, MAY 15, 2026**

ABOUT US

The Association on American Indian Affairs, also known as the Association, is the oldest national Native non-profit protecting sovereignty, preserving culture, educating youth and building capacity. The Association was formed in 1922 to change the destructive path of federal policy from assimilation, termination, and allotment, to sovereignty, self-determination and self-sufficiency.

Have you heard about the Indian Reorganization Act - the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act - the Indian Child Welfare Act - the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act? What about the oldest Native graduate and undergraduate scholarship program or our Native youth summer camp grants or our Annual Repatriation Conference? What about Tribal Museums Day or Red Hoop Talk? Then you know the work of the Association. Many Native Nation leaders tell us that if it wasn't for the longstanding, ongoing work of the Association, that sovereignty and self-determination may not exist today.

Throughout our more than 100-year history, the Association has provided national advocacy on watershed issues that support sovereignty and culture, while working at a grassroots level with Native Nations to support the implementation of programs that make real change on the ground. The Association's offices are all virtual - located wherever we need to be in Native Country and supporting a healthy life-work balance.

The Association is governed by an all-Native Board of Directors and CEO. The Association is a membership organization and any individual - Native or non-Native - can be a member of the Association if they agree with our vision, mission, and goals. Our Board of Directors and membership provide oversight and governance to the Association. The Association acknowledges the 574 Native Nations recognized by the U.S. Department of the Interior, and other Tribes, Bands and Communities that have retained their inherent sovereignty despite the acts of genocide, assimilation, and removal perpetrated by colonization and U.S. actions.

Every step we take on this Turtle Island is the land and mother of those Native Peoples we work for and we walk forward together and with respect for those that have gone before us.

VISION, MISSION, GOALS & CORE VALUES

Our **vision** is to create a world where diverse Native cultures and values are lived, protected and respected.

Our **mission** is to lead the grassroots fight to protect Native Cultural Sovereignty.

Our **goals** are to protect sovereignty, preserve culture, educate youth and build capacity.

Our **values** include *Fortitude*: We are brave, courageous and resilient warriors for our cause. *Capability*: We possess knowledge, expertise, and passion to achieve our vision, mission and goals. *Accountability*: We are accountable to Native Nations and Peoples, our members, donors, and one another. *Advocacy*: We use our hearts, guts, brains, ears, and voices for change, healing, and education.

THREE PROGRAMS AREAS

Each of our three program areas has several initiatives.

A. Cultural Sovereignty

This is the Program that the Cultural Sovereignty Director will oversee. Cultural Sovereignty means simply returning control over the things that make us who we are as Native Peoples. Over the course of history, colonial powers have forcibly removed us from our homelands, looted our graves and sacred places, outlawed our languages and religions, and kidnapped our children. The Association's Cultural Sovereignty program works to develop infrastructure - such as federal, state and Native Nation laws and policies that will support the return of our stolen lands, Ancestors, religious practices, languages, identity, and bringing home our children who died at boarding schools. In addition, the Association develops training, strategies and technical support to build capacity within Native Nations, and works to change perspectives of those who wish to hold onto our culture without free, prior and informed consent.

B. Next Generations

The Next Generations Program promotes strong, resilient youth, families and Nations through advocacy, education, cultural connections, healing and wellbeing. Next Generations initiatives include protection of the Indian Child Welfare Act, adoption investigation project, Native Youth Summer Camp Grants and the developing National Native Youth Summer Camp program, Native Youth Justice, and scholarships for Native undergraduate and graduate students. A new initiative is being developed to interrupt cycles of intergenerational trauma with resilience and holistic personal and organizational wellbeing strategies.

C. Become an Ally

The Association on American Indian Affairs has over 100 years of providing meaningful public education on issues that affect Native Country. The Association believes that a society that understands Native Peoples, their sovereign Nations and diverse cultures will make better decisions about the environment, the economy, education, healthcare, and how we can all exist together on one planet. The Becoming an Ally program is about building relationships that will support allyship, education and accountability for our world and each other.

This program utilizes our various social media platforms to deliver public education, create productive dialogue, and encourage action from our supporters about Native Nation issues. Becoming an Ally is our public affairs and communication arm that works to lift Native Country by sharing information about our program successes and how you can help support our vision, mission, goals and values. Become an Ally and our public education work includes all of our programs and initiatives, as well as the Association's 100 years of history, our Indian Affairs journal that has been published since the 1930's, our internships, fellowships, and volunteer programs, Murdered and Missing Indigenous Relatives, Red Hoop Talk podcast, among other public education initiatives.

WHAT IT'S LIKE TO WORK WITH US

As cultural sovereignty protectors for Native Nations, we understand the importance of our vision and fostering a workplace where each member feels respected, valued, heard, and empowered to make a difference. In a virtual environment, opportunities for communication and team engagement must be proactively planned, and every team member participates in weekly Team meetings and individual

check-ins to develop relationships within the organization and with their supervisor. The Association has weekly virtual social gatherings to support relationship building and offers travel for in-person work sessions at different times of the year.

We are a small and reliable team of advocates – every role has an important part to play in our advocacy. We cultivate an environment where passion ignites action, where every person is empowered to speak truth with compassion and skill, to grow as an advocate, to learn from mistakes, and to challenge and encourage others to do the same. Open and transparent communication is not just encouraged, it is a vital cornerstone of our virtual workplace.

BENEFITS

We are flexible and all virtual. Embracing a 100% virtual work environment, we ensure flexibility so that each team member can develop a schedule that will support work-life balance. Team members have flexible schedules and a generous paid time off package, including 13 holidays, 12 vacation days, and 12 sick days annually. (Vacation and sick leave cannot be used until after the team member successfully passes their 90-day review.) Recognizing the importance of cultural observances, employees can swap federal holidays for Native Nation events, ceremonies, or religious observances close to their hearts.

The Association further pays for individual medical and dental premiums and provides at least a 1% matching contribution to your savings plan at the end of every year. The Association also offers varied opportunities that will support accountability, confidence, and building skills that reinforce intergenerational healing. The Association is in the process of growth, with plans to increase benefits.

Alongside competitive pay, we regularly review salaries to ensure they reflect successful performance and the cost of living. We provide computer equipment (laptop) and other required software or tools for the virtual work environment.

Join us at the Association on American Indian Affairs, where your well-being and cultural values are honored and celebrated. The Association is growing and we hope you will grow with us!

JOB POSITION DESCRIPTION

Fully review the job position description attached to this document to understand the expectations and responsibilities for the position. If you do not meet the required qualifications, your application will not be considered.

HOW TO APPLY

The deadline for applications is on or before Friday, May 15, 2026. To apply for this position, email your resume, cover letter and writing sample to general@Indian-Affairs.org. Your application should feature how your skills and expertise align with the position's qualifications and responsibilities. The writing sample should be no more than 5 pages, be 100% drafted by you, and should have a sentence to describe where the writing sample came from and when it was written.

The Association values strong writing and editing skills for this position and your application should reflect that. Please include your experience working in Native Country with Native Peoples and Native Nations, and your understanding of the laws and regulations that apply to this work.

LEARN MORE ABOUT THE ASSOCIATION

This position requires a comprehensive understanding of non-profits, non-profit organizations in Native Country, and what it means to work with Native Nations and Native Peoples on issues of cultural sovereignty. Review our website and social media to better understand our work and what drives the organization. Check out our website at Indian-Affairs.org, and look for links to our social media at the bottom of our website.



CULTURAL SOVEREIGNTY DIRECTOR

Position Description

The Association on American Indian Affairs is the oldest national Native non-profit serving Native Country protecting sovereignty, preserving culture, educating youth and building capacity. The Association was formed in 1922 to change the destructive path of federal policy from assimilation, termination and allotment, to sovereignty, self-determination and self-sufficiency. Throughout our more than 100-year history, we have provided national advocacy on watershed issues that support sovereignty and culture, while working at a grassroots level with Native Nations to support the implementation of programs that affect real lives on the ground.

Job Purpose

This position is a key employee (exempt) position overseen by the Chief Executive. The Cultural Sovereignty Director shall be responsible to develop, lead, grow, and implement the organization's programmatic activities under the Association's Cultural Sovereignty Program, which includes, but is not limited to the following initiatives: Repatriation (which includes the Repatriation Conference, NAGPRA, domestic and international repatriation outside of NAGPRA, illicit trafficking, and the return of other tangible and intangible cultural heritage), Protecting Sacred Relationships (which includes work to protect sacred places, lands, waters, and ecosystem relationships), and Recognition of Relatives (which includes issues related to federal acknowledgment and identity). The employee works collaboratively with other staff, contractors and volunteers to achieve the vision, mission and goals of the organization. This is an outstanding opportunity for a highly motivated professional to assume a pivotal role in the evolution of a highly respected 104-year-old organization.

Duties and Responsibilities

- Develops and implements strategic/business plan strategies for each initiative area and works toward carrying out those strategies successfully;
- Ensures successful growth, development and implementation of all initiatives within the Cultural Sovereignty program;
- Responsible for day-to-day program activities;
- Develops and finalizes appropriate processes and reporting for the Cultural Sovereignty Program and its initiatives, including compliance and reporting for grant funded initiatives;
- Grows, develops and maintains partnerships with Native Nations and other organizational partners that are important to the Cultural Sovereignty Program and its initiatives;
- Nurtures meaningful relationships with Native Nations, Indigenous Peoples, Native and non-Native organizations and the public;

- Creates and facilitates training and technical assistance for initiative areas, and is an adept speaker in these areas;
- May provide supervision or guidance for other staff, contractors, and volunteers for initiative areas;
- Engages with staff, contractors, and volunteers to collaborate and carry out organization priorities, including public education, and supports delivery of all efforts in line with our Intergenerational Healing principles;
- Performs public speaking, lectures, training, media interviews and the like in support of the Cultural Sovereignty program;
- Works professionally with strong organizational skills and is considerate and respectful of all people;
- Works in partnership with the Chief Executive to carry out the organization's vision, mission and goals; and
- Other duties as assigned.

Qualifications

1. At least a Bachelor's degree in relevant fields such as history, sociology, public policy, law or organizational development required.
2. Minimum of five years of demonstrated experience managing programs of similar subject matter, size and demographics.
3. Expertise in subject matter areas of this position is required, including federal Indian law and policy, protecting sacred places, lands and ecosystem relationships, repatriation, federal acknowledgment and Native identities, and other areas of culture revitalization.
4. Minimum of two years of demonstrated experience supervising staff.
5. Experience working with Native Nations and Native Country issues is required.
6. Strategic vision and agility that enables the organization as a whole to think strategically, anticipate future consequences and trends, and incorporate them into holistic program/initiative plans.
7. Credible, confident and articulate with proven written and verbal presentation and negotiation skills.
8. Team-player who can build rapport with various groups and organizations.
9. Computer experience working with spreadsheet and word processing software programs, especially Office 365.
10. Responsible for the preparation and timely submission of all program, contract and grant reports, including monthly, quarterly and/or annual reports to the Chief Executive.
11. Able to meet tight deadlines and remain calm under pressure.
12. Works with transparency and integrity, and shares the values of the organization.

Working Conditions

This is a virtual employment opportunity with a national Native-led nonprofit. This job operates in a professional office environment. This role routinely uses standard office equipment such as computers, phones, photocopiers, filing cabinets, etc. Employee will be provided appropriate equipment. The physical demands required for the position are representative of those that must be met in an office environment. This position requires the ability to occasionally lift office products and supplies, up to 30 pounds. The position will require travel at least 4 times per year.

Term of Position

The Cultural Sovereignty Program Director is overseen and evaluated by the Chief Executive on at least an annual basis based on elements of the Association's Strategic Plan and other professional and non-profit standards. The term of the position is permanent and at will.