



**AMERICAN FILM INSTITUTE
AFI CONSERVATORY
POSITION OVERVIEW**

TITLE: Dean, AFI Conservatory
REPORTS TO: President and CEO
SUPERVISES: Executive Vice Dean; Discipline Heads; Vice Dean, Academic Affairs; Associate Dean and Director, Production Services; Director, Thesis Production
LOCATION: Los Angeles, California

INTRODUCTION:

American Film Institute (AFI) seeks a passionate, inspirational, collaborative and entrepreneurial leader, steeped in the art, science and business of storytelling through moving images, to lead the AFI Conservatory. The Dean, with input from the AFI President and CEO, AFI Board of Trustees and Conservatory stakeholders, will articulate and expand upon the Conservatory's vision and mission of empowering and training the next generation of storytellers. This Dean has the insight, network and ability to access accomplished storytellers globally, and leverages the Conservatory's distinct Los Angeles location. The Dean will assure AFI Conservatory's continuing positive impact on our storytellers, art and culture worldwide.

ABOUT AMERICAN FILM INSTITUTE and AFI CONSERVATORY:

Created in the White House Rose Garden by presidential mandate in 1965, the **American Film Institute (AFI)** is America's promise to preserve the history of the moving image, honor the artists and their work and educate the next generation of storytellers. A non-profit educational and cultural organization, AFI provides leadership in film, television and digital media. The Institute is dedicated to initiatives that engage the past, present and future of the moving image arts through programs that include AFI Catalog of Feature Films and Archive, an authoritative record of American film in words and pictures; AFI Life Achievement Award, now in its 45th year, honoring a master of the art form each June; AFI Awards, honoring the most outstanding movies and TV programs each year; AFI FEST presented by Audi, a showcase of the most highly anticipated films and performances of the year; AFI DOCS, the largest documentary festival in the U.S.; AFI Silver Theatre and Cultural Center in the Washington, DC area, exhibiting both new and classic films 365 days of the year; and the AFI Conservatory, which is consistently recognized as one of the top film schools in the world, offering a Master of Fine Arts degree in six filmmaking disciplines.

The American Film Institute's Board of Trustees includes leaders of the motion picture and television communities and leaders from global goods and services companies who have devoted their lives to the art of the moving image.

AFI Conservatory at American Film Institute is one of the world's premier film schools. The Conservatory identifies and educates future leaders in the art of the moving image through an intensive two-year Master of Fine Arts degree program. The AFI Conservatory is committed to storytelling as a major influence on our culture and society, and the Conservatory is equally committed to the importance of educating those responsible for creating and producing these stories.

Admission to the AFI Conservatory is highly selective, with a maximum of 140 Fellows per year. Small class sizes ensure Fellows receive one-on-one instruction from a faculty comprised of professionals with decades of experience guiding projects from script to screen. Fellows are encouraged to find and develop a unique voice as they are trained in the art of storytelling – and they learn to make movies by making movies. During their two-year training, Fellows team with classmates to write, produce, design, direct, shoot and edit four to ten films, with classroom training supplementing the hands-on production experience.

Established in 1969 with the mandate to train a small group of Fellows, nearly 5,000 artists have subsequently graduated from the AFI Conservatory, and most continue to make filmmaking their life's work. This year, AFI alums are members of the creative ensemble for ARRIVAL, JACKIE, THE AMERICANS, BETTER CALL SAUL, BLACK-ISH, GAME OF THRONES, HOMELAND, MR. ROBOT, THE PEOPLE V. O.J. SIMPSON: AMERICAN CRIME STORY, VEEP and WESTWORLD. The two-year Master of Fine Arts program provides training in six filmmaking disciplines: Cinematography, Directing, Editing, Producing, Production Design and Screenwriting. Renowned director/producer/writer James L. Brooks serves as the Conservatory's Artistic Director, with a dedicated group of working professionals from the film and television communities serving as faculty to mentor Fellows in a hands-on, production-based environment. Mirroring a professional production landscape, Fellows collaborate to make more films than any other graduate level program.

SCOPE OF POSITION:

The Dean, AFI Conservatory is responsible for the academic vision, daily leadership and financial health of the AFI Conservatory. The Dean leads the faculty, staff and Fellows to fulfill the mission of the AFI Conservatory and AFI, including planning and implementation, evaluation and development of curriculum, and other activities related to successful academic operations and filmmaker training.

The Dean is the "voice" of the AFI Conservatory and communicates to a broad audience, including AFI Board of Trustees; faculty, Fellows, alumni and staff; arts, business and philanthropic communities; current and perspective AFI Conservatory donors and sponsors; and other AFI leaders and constituents.

RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Ensure the AFI Conservatory's place at the highest levels of educational effectiveness.
- Develop, articulate and implement annual AFI Conservatory goals in partnership with AFI Conservatory Trustee committees, faculty and staff. Inspire and unite faculty, Fellows and Conservatory staff related to annual goals and actions, and ensure alignment between the Conservatory's goals and the overarching goals of the Institute.
- Oversee AFI Conservatory financial operations, ensuring compliance with overall AFI goals and the financial health of the Conservatory to meet or exceed budget expectations.
- In cooperation with AFI Advancement, participate in a robust ongoing development program that includes donor identification, relationship development and gifts management. Participate in the conception of and make presentations of concepts to support the AFI Conservatory.
- Set goals for Fellow recruitment and retention while maintaining the unique voice of the AFI Conservatory. Oversee and participate in the admissions and selection process for Conservatory applicants and the administration of tuition rates and fees, scholarships and aid, and tuition remission.
- Lead the process to cultivate, hire, retain and develop world-class faculty and staff, including overseeing recruitment, evaluations and personal development activities. Diversity and inclusion with regard to underrepresented groups will be organic to the Dean's leadership and management of the Conservatory.
- Oversee and ensure the establishment and implementation of policies and procedures relating to AFI Conservatory programs and administration as detailed in the Faculty and Fellows Handbooks, and ensure alignment of those policies with AFI administrative policies.
- Work closely with the faculty and collaborate with Discipline Heads, the Executive Vice Dean, and the Vice Dean, Academic Affairs to lead the daily operations of the Conservatory, in areas including:
 - Strategic Planning – Further AFI's mission to educate the next generation of storytellers. This includes developing, implementing and assessing strategies designed to enhance the overall quality of the Fellows educational experience at AFI.
 - Curricular Development/Ongoing Assessment/Institutional Effectiveness – Lead ongoing planning and program reviews, especially in connection with Institutional Effectiveness activities and accrediting body policies and procedures for assessing Fellow learning and enhancing programs and processes. Develop and utilize success metrics for Fellows, faculty and staff related to general Conservatory operations, individual performance and education standards. Liaise with the Conservatory's accrediting organizations and meet expectations to ensure successful accreditation.
 - Program Review – Ensure all programs are assessed annually to advance a culture of continuous academic enhancement. Oversee the development and ongoing review of standardized course syllabi.

- Faculty Organization and Review – Evaluate the effectiveness of the faculty’s teaching style, program content and Fellow learning, making appropriate modifications to maximize instructional effectiveness for both full-time and part-time faculty.
- Staff Organization and Review – Evaluate the effectiveness of Conservatory staff, making appropriate adjustments as warranted, including promotions and terminations.
- Resource Review – Assess appropriate tools and technologies to ensure AFI’s educational opportunities remain state-of-the-art.
- Administrative Planning and Review – Oversee the approval of AFI Conservatory faculty contracts and annual performance evaluations, as well as applicable Conservatory budgets and expenditures.
- Best Practices – Support faculty and staff by sharing best practices of graduate program design, offerings and processes, as well as through individual mentoring to foster a collaborative environment. Develop and communicate performance metrics to faculty and staff, and education expectations to Fellows.
- Organize and participate in the activities of AFI Conservatory Committees including, but not limited to, Curriculum Policy Review Meetings, Fellows Advisory Committee Meetings and Action Meetings.
- Provide academic counsel to Fellows referred by the Director, Fellow Affairs or Discipline Heads and address situations involving Fellows progress, disciplinary action, appeals and complaints. Serve as the final arbitrator of Fellow and faculty disputes, including resolution related to Fellows continuation and academic probation.
- Advocate on behalf of the AFI Conservatory to relevant companies and organizations.
- Perform other duties as needed.

PROFILE:

The successful candidate is a passionate champion of the moving image arts and is dedicated to educating the next generation of storytellers. This candidate recognizes the extraordinary possibilities of this leadership position, the AFI brand and the ever-continuing evolution of the art form. The Dean is an inspirational leader with a record of success in the moving image arts, and an experienced educator with a proven track record. A collaborative leader, excellent communicator and accomplished manager of people, planning, processes and budgets, the Dean inspires all, including faculty, Fellows and staff; builds consensus; and is an informed decision maker. Intuitive by nature and in possession of a high degree of emotional intelligence, the successful candidate’s ability to influence ranges from artists to the business community.

American Film Institute invites nominations for, and expressions of interest in, the position of Dean, AFI Conservatory.

For applications and nominations in confidence please email: afidean@neilfinkassociates.com.