

Position and Candidate Specification



Airports Council International - North America

Chief Executive Officer

PREPARED BY:

Ellen Pennow
Thomas Rajan
Katherine Stellato

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About the Organization

Airports Council International-North America (ACI-NA) represents local, regional, provincial, and state governmental entities that own and operate commercial airports in the United States and Canada. ACI-NA has 275 airport members that operate approximately 400 airports in North America, accounting for over 95 percent of the domestic passenger traffic and virtually all of the international airline passenger and cargo traffic. In addition, some 480 aviation-related businesses that provide goods or services to airports are “associate” members of ACI-NA.

Mission and Vision

In 2025, the ACI-NA Board adopted a Strategic Plan including a refreshed mission statement with a unique mandate and identity: “Passionately supporting, inspiring, and advocating for North American airports.” The organization strategic vision is to be “a valued voice, a trusted advocate, and an airport champion,” striving to further increase its profile and effectiveness as the leading Voice of Airports® within Canada and the United States. The association aims to be known as the preeminent and trusted advocate for the airport community through partnerships, thought leadership, innovation, and creativity. The association’s five strategic priorities center around advocacy, partnerships, connectedness, workforce, and being future-focused.

History and Structure

ACI-NA is part of a federation of airport associations under the umbrella of Airports Council International. ACI World (as it is commonly known) focuses primarily on international aviation issues and supports the services and programs of members in each of the five Regions: Africa, Asia-Pacific & Middle East, Europe, Latin America/Caribbean, and North America. However, the five regions are independent of each other, each with its own corporate structure, board of directors, strategic goals, and staff.

ACI-NA was founded in 1948 as Airport Operators Council by 19 large U.S. commercial-service airports. The association was rebranded as ACI-NA when the ACI federation was created in 1990. In January 2012, ACI-NA merged with its Canadian counterpart, the Canadian Airports Council (“CAC”), to form a single, North American airport trade association. While the CAC corporate entity was dissolved at that time, the CAC name continues to be used as the trade name for ACI-NA’s Canadian Division.

Further Information

ACI-NA currently has over 40 FTE staff members, an annual budget of approximately \$22 million, and financial reserves and investments of approximately \$20 million. ACI-NA also manages three philanthropic foundations: the ACI-NA Relief Foundation (U.S.), the ACI-NA Relief Foundation Canada, and the ACI-NA Educational Foundation. ACI-NA is headquartered in Washington, DC. For more information, please visit: <https://airportscouncil.org/>.

Position Summary

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of ACI-NA provides strategic leadership, operational oversight, and visionary guidance to support the interests of North America's airports. This role is responsible for ensuring effective delivery of programs, services, and advocacy efforts that advance the association's mission: *passionately supporting, inspiring, and advocating for North America's airports*. As the steward of a \$22 million annual budget, the CEO oversees all financial, administrative, and programmatic functions, ensuring operational excellence, fiscal responsibility, and measurable impact. The CEO serves as the public face and voice of the association, representing its members to policymakers, industry stakeholders, and the broader public. This position creates and drives a future-focused, innovative vision that energizes stakeholders and positions the organization for long-term relevance and resilience for the aviation industry.

KEY RELATIONSHIPS

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| Reports to | ACI-NA Board of Directors and its Executive Committee |
| Direct reports | Executive Vice President President, Canadian Airports Council Chief Administration and Operations Officer General Counsel Chief Political and Congressional Strategy Officer Senior Executive Assistant and Events Coordinator |
| Other key relationships | Current and prospective members Related trade associations and professional associations and other industry stakeholders Relevant legislative and regulatory leaders |

DESIRED OUTCOMES

- Build alignment around a clearly defined strategic direction, mobilizing the Board and membership behind a focused set of priorities, and establishing clear accountability for delivering and demonstrating sustained progress against them.
- Shape the national conversation on airport funding and industry evolution, advancing credible, actionable solutions for policymakers and industry stakeholders.
- Deliver a unified and cohesive member experience, with strong alignment across airport constituencies and cross-border (U.S.–Canada) integration.
- Strengthen ACI-NA's position as the leading voice for airports, evidenced by continued influence in legislative and regulatory outcomes and sustained credibility with key decision-makers.
- Develop expanded non-dues revenue sources, supporting investment in advocacy, innovation, and member services.
- Streamline internal operations, with clear organizational design and efficient processes that enable staff to focus on high-impact work.
- Retain ACI-NA's strong culture while building the next generation of leadership, ensuring continuity of expertise and sustained staff engagement through a period of transition.

The next CEO of ACI-NA will be a dynamic, seasoned executive with experience in complex, member-driven organizations, bringing strong business judgment, operational discipline, and the ability to represent the association with credibility and energy to policymakers, industry partners, and a diverse membership. This leader will combine strategic orientation with practical execution, and will lead collaboratively to strengthen organizational effectiveness, culture, and long-term sustainability.

IDEAL EXPERIENCE

The successful executive demonstrates the ability to balance agility and flexibility to respond to the changing needs of the industry while maintaining the established principles of the association. They have the capability to collaboratively guide the association to be a leader in advocacy and responsive to policy, political, economic and societal shifts. Ideal candidates will possess many of the following attributes, characteristics and experience:

Senior executive leadership experience

Has held accountable leadership roles in a global, complex organization, with responsibility for strategy, operations, and organizational performance. A strategic thinker with strong execution skills and results orientation.

Mission commitment

Strong commitment to values-based leadership and member service. Experience advancing a clear organizational mission, with a track-record of aligning strategy, culture, and operations to deliver against it.

Public policy and regulatory experience

Politically astute; able to assertively advocate for airport members with a commitment to advancing the aviation industry. Demonstrated experience operating in policy-driven environments, with the ability to engage credibly with government, regulators, and industry stakeholders domestically and internationally.

Organizational and financial management

Track record overseeing a large-scale enterprise, with strong business judgment and understanding of financial sustainability, including revenue models relevant to associations. Ability to lead the organization to stay at pace or ahead of developments in policy, technology, sustainability, and other key areas.

Experience serving as the “face and voice” for an organization or industry

Comfort and effectiveness in high-visibility spokesperson roles, shaping narrative and elevating the organization’s profile across public and policy forums domestically and around the world.

Passion for aviation

Avid traveler with a keen interest in aviation. Ability to quickly build credibility and sector insight through engagement with members and association partners.

CRITICAL LEADERSHIP CAPABILITIES

Acting Strategically

- With the Board of Directors, defines and advances a future-focused, innovative vision and strategy positioning ACI-NA for continued impact towards the association's mission: Passionately supporting, inspiring, and advocating for North America's airports.
- Anticipates and responds to emerging industry shifts—including policy, technology (e.g., AI), and sustainability—translating them into actionable priorities for members and the organization across diverse geographic and cultural contexts.
- Balances near-term operational demands with longer-term strategic priorities, further elevating the organization in proactively leading the industry.

Collaborating and Influencing

- Positions the association as a leader in advocacy for the aviation industry; effectively collaborates with the Board and team to advocate for legislative, regulatory and legal priorities.
- Serves as a credible, visible ambassador, effectively representing member interests with policymakers, regulators, and industry stakeholders across complex and shifting political environments; is seen as a thought leader by relevant constituent groups.
- Builds alignment across a diverse membership base, navigating competing priorities to present a unified industry voice.
- Strengthens strategic partnerships across the aviation ecosystem, advancing shared priorities while maintaining ACI-NA's distinct positioning.

Leading People

- Sustains and evolves a strong, mission-driven culture while ensuring continuity of institutional knowledge and leadership.
- Leads and develops a high-performing, collaborative team, ensuring effectiveness, alignment, and strong execution.
- Models an inclusive, relationship-oriented leadership style that builds trust, encourages open dialogue, and reinforces commitment to member service and organizational values.

THE SEARCH PROCESS

Spencer Stuart, a global executive search and leadership advisory firm, has been retained by ACI-NA to help identify and recruit the next CEO. For confidential nominations and expressions of interest, please contact Spencer Stuart at ACI_NACEO@spencerstuart.com.

The base salary range for this position is expected to be within the range of \$900,000 - \$1,200,000, with additional potential incentive compensation. The actual salary and compensation package offered may vary based on job-related knowledge, skills, and experience.