

THE OPPORTUNITY

The President & CEO leads [SSTI](#), a national nonprofit organization focused on strengthening initiatives to create a better future through science, technology, innovation and entrepreneurship, and works with the SSTI Board of Trustees and staff to set the vision and direction for the organization. The President & CEO serves as both the voice *for* and *to* the technology-based economic development (TBED)¹ field, advocating for the field, and encouraging effective action by TBED organizations and personnel.

The President & CEO has the ability to shape the nation's economic competitiveness, work closely with states and regions as they plan for our innovation-focused economy, and guide the field to operating with maximum impact and efficiency. This opening comes as there is increasing interest at the federal, state and local level in the U.S.'s technological competitiveness and ensuring the benefits of the technology economy reach all regions and people.

The new President & CEO has the chance to take the impact SSTI has had in its first 28 years and magnify that for the new opportunities ahead. The field is continually evolving as new technologies develop, new approaches are created, and societal needs change.

ABOUT SSTI

A national nonprofit organization with 501(c)(3) status, SSTI offers to its more than 150 member organizations information and services that are needed to succeed in today's innovation economy. We strive to maximize the capacity of our members to deliver successful outcomes within the context of the complex innovation communities in which they participate.

Since its inception in 1996, SSTI has shared with its members and the larger community the lessons learned from a nationwide network of practitioners and policymakers dedicated to creating a better future through science, technology, innovation and entrepreneurship. SSTI conducts research on common performance standards, identifies best practices, analyzes trends in and policies affecting the innovation economy, and fosters greater connection and cooperation among and between all public, private and nonprofit organizations encouraging prosperity.

As the most comprehensive policy, education, advocacy, and applied research resource available for those involved in technology-based economic development, SSTI offers the services that are needed to help members build thriving tech-based economies.

Current activities include:

- Hosting, organizing, and administering an annual conference that attracts 300-400 people
- Leading the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA)-funded TBED community of practice, which works with the 31 Regional Technology and Innovation Hubs ([Tech Hubs](#)) designees and other organizations interested in entrepreneurship and commercialization
- Conducting original research on topics of interest to the field, including trends impacting our members and a tech-based economy

¹ TBED is defined on the SSTI website as: "Technology-based economic development, or TBED, is the approach used to help create a climate where an economic base composed of firms that constantly innovate and maximize the use of technology in the workplace can thrive." It involves the economic transformation of the nation as it moves to an economy driven by technology and innovation—through the creation of new industries and the application of technology in traditional industries.

- Advocating on Capitol Hill for programs that help SSTI's members create a better future through science, technology, innovation and entrepreneurship and for successful implementation of those programs with federal agencies;
- Providing technical assistance to SSTI members and undertaking special projects for them
- Serving as a strategic partner to RTI International on the implementation of the EDA-funded Building Better Regions community of practice;
- Publishing two weekly newsletters, one available to anyone at no charge, the other focused on funding opportunities that is distributed just to SSTI members;
- Connecting SSTI members with each other.

PRESIDENT & CEO'S ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The primary role of the CEO is to lead the organization's efforts to help members deliver successful outcomes and to shape a better future for science, technology, innovation, and entrepreneurship. As chief strategist and spokesperson, this CEO will combine internal business management with a strong external focus, including organizational strategy, program delivery, budgeting, and execution with the talented staff and external partners. The President & CEO will:

- Speak *for* the field as an advocate;
- Speak *to* the field to encourage it to act;
- Manage, provide direction and support a staff of 9 FTE, five of whom currently report directly to the President & CEO;
- Work with the SSTI Board of Trustees to ensure the ongoing success of the organization and plan for its future;
- Provide leadership in identifying revenue sources, developing strategy to pursue funding opportunities, and securing the resources to achieve SSTI's mission and operations;
- Support the membership director's goals to broaden membership;
- Serve as the lead/principal investigator for technical assistance projects for members' research projects;
- Supervise staff's efforts to fulfill membership programming plans and goals.
- Advocate for programs that create a better future through science, technology, innovation and entrepreneurship on Capitol Hill and for the successful implementation of those programs with federal agencies; and,
- Ensure the efficient administrative functioning of the organization, which currently has an operating budget of \$2 million, personnel in six states, and funding from federal agencies and members across the country.

BACKGROUND AND QUALIFICATIONS OF IDEAL CANDIDATES

As the voice both *for* and *to* the tech-based economic development community, the successful candidate must have deep knowledge of the TBED community and ideally at least five years' experience as a practitioner/policymaker.

In order to speak *for* the field, the President & CEO must have:

- An understanding of the issues practitioners/policymakers face and how those stakeholders are likely to react to proposals;
- Knowledge of the variety of approaches employed across the U.S. and the difference in viewpoints, conditions, and challenges those practitioners have;
- Strong communication and presentation skills.

To speak to the field, the President & CEO must be able to:

- Speak with knowledge and authority on issues confronting practitioners/policymakers;
- Listen to the concerns and needs of practitioners/policymakers and be empathetic;
- Distill the concerns and needs of members to actionable policy recommendations;
- Be seen by practitioners/policymakers as someone who understands their issues and is doing a good job representing their interests;
- Use various means of persuasion to encourage practitioners/policymakers to act or change their approach.

The ideal candidate will have direct experience with SSTI, and understand its ethos and the value the community sees in it. Additionally, the candidate should have excellent writing skills, with the ability to write or edit in a variety of styles—from promotional copy to journalistic articles, and from research briefs for members to articles for academic publications. Finally, the candidate should have experience managing and encouraging an experienced staff, overseeing budgeting and administrative functions, and a minimum of a bachelor's degree.

Among the personal characteristics the ideal candidate will possess are:

- Committed to public service;
- Roll-up-your-sleeves mentality;
- Collaborative style, with ego in check;
- Bright, articulate, and compelling speaker;
- Transparent communicator, able to interact with academia, industry, and government;
- Politically astute;
- Highly productive and driven to succeed;
- Persuasive;
- Inclusive and respectful;
- Highest personal and professional standards and integrity.

LOCATION AND COMPENSATION

While SSTI is incorporated in Ohio and has small physical offices in Columbus, full-time staff are located in California, Indiana, New Jersey, North Carolina, Ohio, and the state of Washington. The President & CEO can be located anywhere in the U.S., but must be able to manage a staff located across the U.S.

The current budget supports a salary of \$180,000-\$220,000 based on experience and qualifications. The SSTI Board of Trustees may consider a salary above that range if warranted. Employee benefits are competitive.

ROLE OF CURRENT PRESIDENT & CEO MOVING FORWARD

The current President & CEO, Dan Berglund, has been leading the organization since its inception. He recently notified the SSTI Board that he wanted to step down from the President & CEO role and for the Board to start a search for a new President & CEO. He will be staying on for a one-year trial on a part-

time position as Senior Fellow and President Emeritus to conduct research, write, and work on projects and provide assistance to members, as well as supporting the President & CEO as requested. All work will be overseen by the President & CEO and done with their approval. He will also be available to provide counsel to the President & CEO as requested.

SEARCH PROCESS

The SSTI Board of Trustees has delegated two of its members to serve as the search committee. They will review applications, conduct interviews with an initial pool of candidate, and select no more than four candidates as finalists. The search committee will serve as the points of contact for candidates. The finalists will interview with the full Board. In order to accommodate the schedules of board members, finalists may be required to interview separately with different sets of Board members. It is anticipated that finalists may be requested to make a presentation as part of the interview process.

TIMELINE

Applications will be accepted until June 23, 2024. Ideally, the Board would like to select the new President & CEO by the middle of August, with the person starting in mid-September to late October; however, scheduling conflicts may result in alterations to this timeline.

HOW TO APPLY

SSTI values diversity, equity, and inclusion and encourages women, people of color, individuals with disabilities, veterans, and candidates from all backgrounds to apply for the position. A cover letter, a resume, and the names and contact information for three references should be submitted to: <https://ssti.applytojob.com/apply/OSDVL6j7zk/President-CEO>