Spiritual Directors International (SDI) seeks a deeply contemplative, seasoned, and visionary leader to serve as their next Executive Director. This position offers the opportunity to build on the existing strengths of this highly respected nonprofit organization whose vision is that spiritual companionship and deepening into the sacred transform individuals, society and all creation.

The Organization

Spiritual Directors International is an inclusive, global learning community of people from many faiths and many nations who share a common passion and commitment to the art and contemplative discipline of spiritual direction, also known as spiritual companionship, spiritual guidance, *anam cara* in Gaelic, and *mashpiah* in Hebrew. For more than twenty-five years, SDI has served this community through educational events, publications, and outreach programs, helping people connect with one another and with the Sacred. As a registered nonprofit charity, our mission is to tend the holy around the world and across traditions.

SDI has a vibrant membership of more than six thousand individuals on six continents that represent more than fifty spiritual traditions, from Anabaptists to Zen Buddhists and many spiritual traditions in between. Everyone is welcome to join this rich learning community.

SDI was envisioned 30 years ago by a group of spiritual directors then working at various institutions around the United States. By most accounts, Mary Ann Scofield, RSM, is viewed as the mid-wife at the birth of SDI, which began as an ecumenical association of colleagues grounded in the Christian faith. Mary Ann served as SDI’s de facto executive coordinator and is also credited with founding the international dimension. During the early years, the ministry and service of spiritual direction was experiencing resurgence. After much consultation and discernment, a volunteer Steering Committee was commissioned to develop the vision of a supportive network which became SDI, and, as of 1990, SDI had over 400 members from 17 countries and five continents. The early vision was to be of service to spiritual directors wherever they were and looked toward a different, larger understanding of spiritual direction. In April, 1991 when SDI filed for its 501(c)3 status, the Steering Committee became the organization’s current governing body, the Coordinating Council. This model was selected in place of a bureaucratic structure and has remained the model.

SDI has a long and deep history of symposia and conferences, many of which served as the catalyst for the next period of growth for the organization.

SDI, based in Bellevue, WA, USA, is currently overseen by a 7-member Coordinating Council and is guided by a 4 - person staff, including the Executive Director. The publications, events and finances of SDI are managed through a pool of consultants and contractors. The organization’s current operating budget is approximately $1M. For more information about SDI, its offerings and its rich history, please visit [www.sdiworld.org](http://www.sdiworld.org)

The incoming Executive Director will succeed Liz Budd Ellmann who became Executive Director in 2002, and who left SDI in December 2015 following its very successful 25th anniversary year. Liz’s vision, skills and business acumen positioned SDI well for the next Executive Director. Because of
her leadership, SDI now has sound finances and many creative processes and systems to support excellent programming. Liz strengthened the global ministry and service and brought SDI into the 21st century with online publications and webinars. Her leadership has been greatly appreciated and highly valued. SDI is currently being led by an Interim Executive Director, Larry Pennings.

As a membership organization, SDI seeks to support its members, who join to take advantage of the following benefits:

- Participation in an inclusive, global learning community
- Presence: An International Journal for Spiritual Direction, published quarterly
- Connections, a newsletter for members published tri-annually
- Listen: A Seeker’s Resource for Spiritual Direction, published quarterly
- Discover newsletter, published monthly via e-mail
- Annual multi-day conference, and events about spiritual direction
- Annual Leadership Institute for the formation of program directors and faculty
- Spirituality and Health Care Institute
- Men’s Institute
- Contemplative retreats, interfaith pilgrimages and webinars
- Spiritual Directors International’s Guidelines for Ethical Conduct
- Many resources on our expanding website
- Member discounts on publications and programs

**Leadership Opportunity and Key Responsibilities**

SDI has a powerful foundation and a strong history and is looking at a new chapter in its growth. Spirituality is ever-changing, SDI’s constituency is aging, and attracting new members and continuing to meet the needs of an international community remains a focus.

The Strategic Initiatives, as developed by the Coordinating Council and Executive Director are:

- Communicate the value of spiritual direction
  - SDI raises awareness of spiritual direction in diverse populations through a wide variety of publications, on multiple platforms.
- Nurture the spiritual direction community
  - SDI offers a range of contemplative educational experiences and connections for those interested in spiritual direction.
- Advance spiritual companionship through collaboration with others
  - SDI actively partners with spiritual directors, formation and training programs, and retreat centers to develop new resources and learning opportunities.

The next Executive Director will work closely with the Coordinating Council on a number of initiatives to:

- Continue the dialogue between and among different religious traditions
- Articulate and clarify vision and values as they naturally evolve
- Determine how SDI is in relationship with its community(ies)
- Develop a structure to work collaboratively with a geographically dispersed Coordinating Council that includes clear roles and responsibilities
- Explore a process that addresses the desire for local networking of members while maintaining consistency with SDI policies and practices
With the Coordinating Council, the Executive Director provides direction and leadership for the organization’s mission and strategic direction, represents and speaks for the organization and its work, and oversees the day to day operations.

The Executive Director’s primary responsibilities include:

**Strategic Vision and Leadership**
- Provide inspirational leadership and direction
- Ensure that the budget, staff, and priorities are aligned with the mission
- Cultivate a strong and transparent working relationship with the Coordinating Council

**Relationship Management and Community Relations**
- Oversee the formation and execution of all communications vehicles, including publications and the website
- Cultivate, maintain, and maximize relationships with members and subscribers, donors, and other organizations and institutions with similar missions
- Speak officially on behalf of the organization

**Resource Development**
- Provide overall leadership and responsibility for developing and managing all resource development and related fundraising efforts
- Assure adequate operating funds annually

**Administration**
- Hire and supervise staff with a strong commitment to professional development
- Ensure that the fiscal, operations, fundraising, marketing, administration, technology, and publication strategies are effectively implemented
- Oversee operations and contracts
- Oversee the financial status of the organization and development of annual budgets

**Near-Term Priorities**

The Executive Director plays a variety of leadership roles both inside and outside the organization. Toward these ends, the Executive Director will focus on the following priorities for the first 12 to 18 months of her/his tenure:
- Listen, observe and discern where SDI is as an organization, and develop a firm understanding of its values, operating principles and business model in order to better understand opportunities for its future;
- Maintain and build on the positive relationships that have been established with staff, the Coordinating Council and members;
- Establish her/himself as the face and leader of SDI in the spirit of servant leadership;
- Work with the Coordinating Council to unpack the work of the three strategic initiatives and their implementation;
- Lead the planning and execution of the annual conference;
- Learn to manage the tensions inherent in the nature of SDI, such as serving both spiritual directors and seekers while addressing needs of those who seek connections with those of their own traditions;
- Explore and discuss what may be newly emerging structures for SDI, including the types of membership and attracting new members;
- Focus on internal office culture and workload to determine and address capacity;
- Connect with donors and maintain their connection or re-establish their connection to SDI;
- Develop a firm understanding of the financial and operational side of the organization; and
• With the Coordinating Council, collaboratively develop the structure of the relationship between the Coordinating Council and Executive Director as it continues to evolve.

Experience and Attributes

The ideal candidate for this position will view their application as a response to discerning a call to this ministry and service and will share a commitment to, and enthusiasm for SDI’s mission and vision. The candidate will bring a variety of experiences and attributes to SDI, including:

• Ability to provide visionary and strategic leadership based in a contemplative stance, and translate that vision into measurable strategies that advance the mission;
• A depth of awareness of and experience in spirituality balanced with management and business experience and acumen;
• Proven networking ability, exceptional interpersonal skills, with well-developed written and oral communications skills;
• Well-honed collaborative servant leadership skills and style, including openness to where the organization is being called, and willingness to dream big while attending to details;
• Experience working on an international level and a comfort level working with people of different faith traditions;
• A pastoral and calm presence with the capacity to hold a wide level of perspective and respect a diversity of experience and opinion while navigating with grace;
• Experience with change management and the effects of change;
• Passion for developing and maintaining relationships with individual donors;
• Motivated to grow SDI’s development function and fundraising approach;
• Proven experience with fiscal management, budgeting, and operations, including responsibility for developing and managing at least a $1M budget;
• Past success supporting a board of directors in its governance role, fostering its ongoing development, and keeping it informed about internal conditions and external developments;
• Significant professional experience of progressive leadership and management responsibility, preferably in a spiritually based or nonprofit organization; and
• An advanced degree preferred.

Application Process

Salary is competitive for organizations of similar mission and size. SDI offers a desirable and unique working environment. Interested candidates should email a cover letter detailing your fit with SDI’s mission and the position’s requirements, a resume, and salary requirements to: SDI@raffa.com.

Please direct all inquiries to Raffa, which is conducting the search. Contact: Ginna Goodenow: ggoodenow@raffa.com.

Spiritual Directors International is an equal opportunity employer and is committed to maintaining a non-discriminatory work environment, and does not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, veteran status, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or any other characteristic protected by applicable law.