



# Position Specification

**Independent Television Service**  
President & Chief Executive Officer

## Our Client

Since 1991, Independent Television Service (ITVS) has worked with independent filmmakers, public television, and community partners to bring documentary storytelling that is vital to contributing to democratic agency, to local, national and international audiences. Unique in combination of scale, scope, diversity focus and public interest mission, ITVS funds and co-produces these Emmy- and Peabody- award-winning documentaries and then airs or streams them for free on television, online and in face-to-face activities. ITVS produces the PBS primetime series *Independent Lens* and regularly provides programming for all PBS series and channels, such as *Frontline*, *American Masters* and *POV*. Building on its public media platforms, ITVS has also collaborated directly with commercial broadcasters and digital platforms. Building on its annual funding from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, ITVS has also won support from the National Endowment for the Humanities, the MacArthur Foundation, Ford Foundation, Hewlett Foundation, and other philanthropic partners. In 2017, ITVS received both the Peabody Award for Institutional Excellence and the Television Academy Governors Award for its major contributions to equity, diversity, and inclusion in media.

ITVS takes risks on filmmakers as they begin their journeys and its alumni include some of the most celebrated storytellers of our times. ITVS has funded and co-produced early and/or recent works by: Barry Jenkins, the director of Oscar-winning *Moonlight*; Laura Poitras, the director of Oscar-winning *Citizen Four*; Gita Patel, the co-director of Emmy-winning *Meet the Patels*; Raoul Peck, the director of Oscar-nominated *I Am Not Your Negro*; Nanfu Wang, the director of Sundance U.S. Grand Jury Prize-winning *One Child Nation*; Bing Liu, the director of Oscar-nominated and Peabody-winning *Minding the Gap*; and RaMell Ross, the director of Oscar-nominated *Hale County This Morning, This Evening*.

Founded to champion diversity, inclusion, creativity, and dialogue, ITVS' work spans the full lifecycle of bold artistic work by diverse makers, as well as the complex distribution ecosystem of public media and beyond. This includes outreach to, cultivation of, investment in, and field-building for diverse and excluded storytellers, with a focus on makers of color, artists with disabilities, and other producers whose identities, cultures, and geographies are underrepresented in the mainstream media. In addition, ITVS provides transparent, open funding initiatives to support makers in R&D and production for work intended for public television; production services to support makers and maximize programming quality; multiplatform distribution and marketing services to find and maximize viewers focusing on underserved audiences; engagement services, thematic initiatives; research and evaluation to maximize impact; and more.

## HOW ITVS WORKS

ITVS strives to help gifted storytellers tell stories whose value is measured not by commercial potential, but in social significance, artistic achievement, and civic relevance—and to offer every American, regardless of income, geography or identity, a chance to experience these stories in ways that enrich lives, connect communities in civic dialogue, and promote understanding and positive action. This work is dynamic and ongoing, requiring ITVS to coordinate many functions and adapt to continuous changes in documentary filmmaking, the media marketplace, the public media system, and community engagement practices. ITVS core activities to achieve these goals span three strategic pillars:

- 1) **Content.** To bring the largest slate of diverse independent documentary work to public television and beyond, ITVS solicits and selects submissions for funding, provides professional development convenings, co-produces, and delivers content to broadcast and streaming distributors. Each year, it provides early-stage support for filmmakers of color, supporting R&D funding and veteran filmmaker mentors through

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its Diversity Development Fund; provides open competition for significant production funding through Open Call; supports digital and multiplatform content production; produces the prime-time series *Independent Lens*; supports innovation and impact through limited series, journalism co-production shorts, and thematic initiatives; and ensures distribution across all funded and acquired programming, providing production management services and delivering all projects to public media series including *Independent Lens*, *POV*, *Frontline*, *American Masters*, *America ReFramed*, and *DocWorld*.

- 2) **Audience Development and Civic Engagement.** To bring this content to the largest and most diverse audience possible, and to spark civic dialogue that inspires understanding and action, ITVS works to maximize audience reach, engagement, impact and measurement. Each year, it markets and distributes 20-24 *Independent Lens* broadcasts, averaging 1.6 million viewers per broadcast and attracting one of the most diverse audiences of any PBS primetime series. Additionally, it engages communities in face-to-face dialogue. These offerings include hosting Indie Lens Pop-Up, featuring free screenings and discussions in 50+ markets, totaling 300-400 screenings with, on average, 25,000 annual participants. Maximizing impact, ITVS also creates multi-year, multi-program thematic initiatives in response to the groundswell of urgent independent documentary work on specific issues — in essence, combining individual yet complementary works to engage people and partners.
- 3) **Organizational Development.** To conduct this work, ITVS develops integrated data and project management systems; prepares strategic annual plans; dedicates time and resources to measurement, learning, and evaluation; develops multicultural leadership development programs, and empowers staff to drive effective strategies.

## The Role and Candidate Profile

The next ITVS President & Chief Executive Officer (CEO) will take the organization, with 70+ staff, on a transformational and ambitious journey. The ideal President & CEO will be a visionary leader with a strong strategic and operating acumen and a track record of transforming and leading high-performing teams and businesses. The President & CEO is the principal spokesperson for ITVS, responsible for developing and maintaining positive relationships with its constituencies, including the field of independent producers, public television stations, PBS, the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, the U.S. Congress, partner organizations, philanthropic partners, and underserved audiences. In addition to negotiating ongoing multi-year contracts from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, the President & CEO will secure new lines of financing to ensure the fiscal health of the organization and build upon its unique strengths and assets, entrepreneurial spirit, and drive to lead in a dynamic media landscape. Working closely with and reporting to the Board of Directors, the President & CEO will implement the mission and goals of the organization, with responsibility for its organizational capacity (i.e., staffing, systems, processes), competencies, culture, and continuous future growth.

The person in this role will build upon the talent of its staff and ITVS' leadership in co-producing documentary storytelling for a stronger democracy, with diversity as its top priority; in creating multi-platform content; in reaching and engaging diverse audiences at the local, national, and global levels; and in stewarding the ethical values and practices at the core of ITVS' philosophy and practice. All of this must be achieved in the context of ITVS' mission to contribute to democratic public discourse, leveraging and strengthening the role of public media in doing so; its unwavering commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion; and its need to compete effectively in the media landscape.

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## KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

### Overall

- Invest in and manage relationships with key internal and external stakeholders to ensure the relevance and evolution of the ITVS mission and vision.
- Direct all fundraising strategies and efforts, ensuring that ITVS has the resources and team to lead and break new ground in the future of public media.
- Navigate the dynamic media landscape and ensure that best practices are incorporated into ITVS work at all levels.
- Build upon existing data-driven strategies and roadmaps that articulate how ITVS will compete going forward; work with the Board and team to ensure that ITVS reacts in a proactive manner as the field rapidly changes.
- Further establish ITVS as a key thought leader on diversity, equity and inclusion, infusing the organization with a sense of energy, optimism, and pride.
- Be a prominent voice and advocate for independent filmmakers and public media locally and nationally.

### Administration and Management

- Support and facilitate optimal functioning of ITVS' Board of Directors, ensuring a free flow of information, effective working relationships within the Board and between the Board and staff, and an adequate structure of policies and procedures to accomplish the organization's goals.
- Work closely with ITVS executive staff to plan and oversee each of its programs and activities.
- Provide support to department heads in ensuring high performance standards, a positive and productive workplace culture, and efficient use of resources throughout all departments.
- Oversee effective planning and evaluation of ITVS staff, programs, and working relationships, ensuring that the highest standards of effective performance are maintained.
- Ensure that adequate systems of fiscal management are established and maintained. Maintain an overview of the financial status of the organization and its programs.
- Ensure that systems of personnel management and performance review are established and maintained throughout the organization.

### Communications and External Affairs

- Oversee relationships with CPB, PBS, and other funding sources; work with the leadership team to negotiate key contracts, and develop funding partners and allies to ensure ITVS' survival and growth.
- Deeply invest in existing funding relationships while considering best avenues to diversify revenue streams and cultivate new relationships.
- Advocate for ITVS and independent voices within the public television and telecommunications systems, facilitating access for independents and underserved communities.
- In conjunction with ITVS Board and staff, establish and maintain mutually supportive relationships with the independent media and public media field, including with partners like the National Multicultural Alliance and series like *POV*, *World*, *Frontline*, *American Masters*, *American Experience*, and others; documentary organizational partners like Firelight and Kartemquin; industry catalysts like IDA; festivals like Sundance; regional players like Southern Documentary Fund, and others.
- Ensure strong relationships with thematic impact partners like Vera Institute of Justice, a collaborator in ITVS' Stories for Justice initiative, and relevant local and national NGO partners.
- Track current trends, issues, and opportunities relevant to ITVS' mission and services, and communicate these effectively to the Board, staff, and the field.

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## Programming

- Recommend and lead new programmatic directions for ITVS and evolve current practices to stay relevant and continue to serve ITVS' mission.
- Work with staff to maintain fair, efficient, and effective means of soliciting and deciding among proposals, commissioning and underwriting independent programming, and ensuring carriage on public television and other media outlets.

## KEY INTERNAL RELATIONSHIPS AND PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS

### Key Internal Relationships

- The President & CEO's key relationships include the 13-member Board of Directors, the 4-member Executive Leadership team, and the 16-member Senior Management team. Key direct reports include the CFO and two Senior Vice Presidents.
- This position oversees a team of 70+ across Business, Programming and Production, and Audience Development.

### Personal Characteristics

- Integrity, credibility, authenticity, fairness, moral excellence; the ability to inspire trust and create a culture of trust at ITVS.
- Balance of bravery and diplomacy; ability to connect with and inspire individuals from all walks of life.
- Unswerving dedication to ITVS' mission and values and their relevance to the world we live in, coupled with the ability to articulate this connection.
- Deep commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion, both internally at ITVS and in the work that the organization conducts externally.
- Love of organizations and the people who come together for shared endeavors and institution building.
- Strategic mindset to grasp the essence of any situation, game out scenarios, analyze the pros and cons of each, and choose the best pathway forward to stay clear and focused on desired outcomes.
- Multiple skill sets across business and creative disciplines, including essential management practices such as budgeting, planning, strategic communications, fundraising, and personnel management.
- High levels of political acumen, the ability to engage with multiple stakeholders, and a strong working knowledge of local, state, regional, and national policies and politics.
- Grasp of filmmaking technique, storytelling strategies, and production and industry trends. Above all, the President & CEO needs to be nimble in order to deploy that range of skills (or others who possess those skills) in a wide set of activities in any one day.
- Systems and enterprise thinking, connecting the dots to "see around corners" as much as can be reasonably expected. It is vital for the President & CEO to understand how systems work to be able to create "systems change," both internally and externally.
- Pursuit of excellence through measurable and sustained results.
- Curiosity, deep listening, discerning, prioritizing, synthesizing, framing—the ability to absorb information from disparate sources, understand and objectively evaluate that information, and elevate the messaging that help teams and stakeholders take action.
- Courage and resilience; the next President & CEO must be a principled risk taker who can act boldly and swiftly; must be able to pivot and adapt to changing circumstances, either internally or externally.

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**Compensation:** The compensation available for the role considers a variety of factors including, but not limited to, individual skill set, previous/applicable experience, education and/or certifications, and other organizational needs. The estimated base salary for this position is \$325K annually.

**AAP/EEO Statement:** ITVS is an Equal Opportunity Employer dedicated to a policy of non-discrimination in employment on any bias including race, color, age, sex, sexual orientation, religion, disability or national origin. Diversity, Equity, inclusion and Belonging are deeply held values of ITVS, and it is committed to creating a welcoming environment for all employees.

## Contact

Russell Reynolds Associates has been exclusively retained for this search. Given the need for confidentiality throughout this process, prospective candidates are invited to reach out directly to our search consultants at [ITVSCEO@russellreynolds.com](mailto:ITVSCEO@russellreynolds.com) with a CV and brief explanation of interest.

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