



**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
ADDGENE
WATERTOWN, MA**

THE SEARCH

Addgene is a thriving nonprofit organization founded in 2004, dedicated to facilitating scientific discoveries by operating a plasmid library for researchers. Plasmids are DNA-based materials, and the access to and the reliability of these materials are fundamental to all molecular biological work. Addgene's collection contains 100,000+ plasmids contributed by research labs from around the world, and more recently, over 600 ready-to-use Adeno-Associated Virus (AAV) and lentivirus preparations of commonly requested plasmids. This greatly enables the research community and is a model for successful open and democratic science.

From the beginning, Addgene was built for long-term success through a stable, sustainable business model. It uses modest fees for distribution to cover the costs of manufacturing, quality control, and distribution. The company benefits from the business rigor and efficiencies of a for-profit company, while enjoying the ability to make decisions based on its nonprofit, mission-driven goals of advancing discoveries and serving scientists.

The rapid growth in biological discovery has provided the impetus for Addgene's growth, and in return, Addgene has played an outsized role in accelerating advancements in research. Over time, it has become a singularly trusted partner for thousands of researchers worldwide. Today, the company is one of the world's foremost repositories for bioscience reagents; on plasmids especially, Addgene stands alone. The firm is a global leader in facilitating access to research materials and generating and distributing educational content, through which the more than 100 employees - the Addgenies - generate revenues in excess of \$20 million per year.

The company became the gold standard for supporting open science very early in its 17-year history because of the scientific depth and rigorous quality control that was and continues to be applied to all products. Addgene has distributed over 1.5 million plasmids to 106 countries, with 200,000 items distributed annually. To highlight the organization's contribution to and reach within science, the highest requested plasmids from all labs are CRISPR plasmids. Addgene has been able to distribute these key materials to more than 5000 institutions in the world, effectively fueling the boom in CRISPR innovation. Additionally, they made COVID-19-related plasmids available within days of deposit for use all over the world in the development of diagnostics, vaccines, and therapeutics.

In addition to the plasmid base business, five years ago, Addgene decided to offer a second product line: adeno-associated viral vectors. This choice was made by observing the research community's exponentially increasing interest, coupled with a paucity of reliable, available, or affordable sources. Following a dedicated internal research and development effort, the introduction of AAVs

was a marked success, and this product line now accounts for nearly 25% of the company's revenue.

The company has also turned to another product class, which it intends to offer as a third product line: antibodies, which are essential to the field but difficult to reproduce with quality. Addgene is pursuing recombinant antibody production and distribution, funded initially and for the first time with external funding by the NIH. This new offering will provide well-characterized and affordable antibodies to map the brain. Addgene will accelerate neuroscience by providing standardized antibodies to tens of thousands of researchers across the globe, affordably and efficiently.

Addgene was also on the forefront of innovation on the digital enterprise side for life sciences reagents. The company created one of the first all-digital ordering platforms, and they remain state-of-the-art, evolving to interact with scientists to solve problems in the use of reagents. Their systems also provide avenues for digital education to reach a vast audience of site visitors, most of whom are customers.

Addgene's success depends on Addgenies – from the founders to the latest hires – who all joined the organization because they are fundamentally attracted to its mission and want to advance bioscience research to help humanity. They stay and grow in the organization because of the mission and because of the culture, a deep source of pride for all Addgenies. Addgene fosters collaboration, emphasizes transparency, and values openness, and this mission-aligned culture contributes tremendously to employees' engagement, high performing teams, and tenure.

Addgene seeks an Executive Director to champion its mission and to lead the organization into its third decade of existence. The new Executive Director should have a direct understanding of basic and translational research in the biological sciences, combined with exceptional organizational leadership experience and visionary business acumen. Addgene has the opportunity to dramatically increase its reach and impact, and the Executive Director should be prepared to embrace this opportunity. A collaborative, empowering leadership style must be supported by strong communication skills and a passion for Addgene's mission of scientific sharing. Proven financial (P&L) management experience and a history of sound organizational and management practice are essential.

Isaacson, Miller, a national executive search firm, has been retained to assist in the recruitment of the new Executive Director. Please direct applications, nominations, and inquiries in confidence to the search firm as indicated at the end of this document.

ADDGENE

Addgene was founded by Melina Fan, Ph.D., Benjie Chen, Ph.D., and Kenneth Fan. The organization was established as a 501(c)3 nonprofit to reflect its mission-driven values and to facilitate easy sharing of materials with the research community. One of the most important scientific resources the company enjoys is its relationship with laboratories around the world: over 4,500 laboratories distribute research materials through Addgene. This has created unparalleled access to research materials across all fields of bioscience research and has resulted in distributions to more than 5,000 institutions on six continents.

Company headquarters occupy 30,000 square feet of space in a modern biotechnology building in Watertown, MA. The space includes a secure 14,000 square foot BL1/BL2 lab, including space for production, sample storage, and shipping. Addgene is currently subleasing an additional 10,000 square feet and will have the option to reclaim that space at the end of 2022.

Addgene primarily serves academic research scientists, and its collection is used to advance research in a wide variety of disciplines, including cancer, heart disease, and neurodegenerative disorders. Some of the more popular tools are the CRISPR tools for gene editing, fluorescent proteins for visualization, and AAV for neuroscience studies. Addgene is also proud to have assembled a collection of 4,000 COVID-19/SARS-CoV2 plasmids, which resulted in 15,000 distributions to scientists conducting research on COVID-19.

Addgene is growing its market in a number of ways: by emphasizing international distributions, which account for just over 50% of total, by reaching out to more industry scientists who account for less than 1% of total distributions, and by expanding its catalog, adding approximately 15,000 new items annually.

While Addgene is a nonprofit organization, it has operational overlap with e-commerce companies, making software an integral part of mission fulfillment. Addgene's custom-built software platform consists of a robust Laboratory Information Management System (LIMS) and a user-friendly web portal. The LIMS platform manages sample tracking information, quality control data, literature references, purchasing information, and any legal agreements that accompany plasmid distribution. The primary way that scientists interact with Addgene is via its web portal, and the website typically receives three million pageviews from over 350,000 unique users each month.

Addgene has a philosophy of excellence and is continuously improving its operations based on automation, process improvements, and manufacturing and quality control research and development. This allows the company to provide better service while maintaining affordable pricing.

To supplement its product lines, Addgene is also committed to providing educational resources, including e-books, protocols, videos, and guides to further scientific knowledge and technical skills. These are accessed 100,000+ times per month and are an important aspect of mission fulfillment, while adding materially to the company's brand.

As part of the infrastructure of its service, Addgene has created processes to streamline the legal paperwork required to transfer plasmids between research institutions. They have developed close relationships with institutional Technology Transfer Offices (TTOs) to ensure the proper documentation for every deposit and request, and to minimize agreement execution time. TTOs with outstanding material transfer agreement turnaround time are recognized with Addgene's Golden Stopwatch award. The company treats its legal and administrative partnerships as fundamental to science development, and it invests the same precision in its relationships and its processes that it does with its science.

Organizational Culture

For the past six years running, Addgene has been recognized as one of the best places to work in Boston, crediting its people as the key to success. Addgene truly puts its Addgenies first, with a focus on personal and professional development and wellbeing through mentorship, generous benefits, and learning opportunities. All the company's initiatives benefit from the diverse and open worldwide scientific community, and Addgene believes that the best innovations and discoveries come from diverse teams. The company will continue to do the hard work of examining how diversity, equity, and inclusion can be meaningfully woven into the organization and always to combat bias of all kinds.

Additionally, Addgene is dedicated to the development of its staff, providing new opportunities and promoting internally whenever possible. A hallmark of the organization is the ability to contribute ideas to advance the mission from any position in the company, without the need for intermediates or hierarchy. This free flow of ideas has enabled the organization to stay at the forefront of innovation in services provided, customer experience, and operational excellence. Addgene's focus on creating this supportive and inclusive environment, alongside a willingness to adapt to the personal and professional needs of its employees, fosters an energetic team dedicated to making a difference within the organization and in the larger scientific community.

Finances

Addgene is financed entirely through the distribution fees for shipped materials. With no charge to depositors, the company has built a large network of contributing scientists who continue to provide new genetic materials for research. This self-sufficient model has allowed the organization to grow without the need of fundraising or reliance on grant support. Revenues exceed \$22 million per year, while the operating budget accounts for approximately \$20 million. The company consistently produces a net surplus, which is retained for future investment. As a nonprofit entity, Addgene is conscientious in its pricing and compensation structure, streamlining operations to keep costs low and serve the widest possible network of scientists.

In the last two years, the organization experimented with external funding and developed internal programs that are responsive to grant and foundation funding. Their first grant was awarded by the Chan Zuckerberg Initiative, and they received a second from the NIH. Together, these two funding vehicles comprise \$3 million in non-dilutive funding over a period of three years to fund the initial development of Addgene's antibody line.

The company is in an admirable position: core philanthropy and government funders know Addgene, respect its mission, and accept that this relatively small organization has an outsized impact on the acceleration of science. As Addgene imagines new strategic and mission-driven possibilities to influence the field, there are funders who will rise to the occasion and provide developmental capital.

The Role of the Executive Director

The Executive Director will join a senior management team consisting of co-founder and Chief Scientific Officer Melina Fan, Ph.D., Chief Technology Officer Daniela Bourges-Waldegg, Ph.D.,

Chief Operating Officer Andy Baltus, Ph.D., Chief Financial Officer Michael Lohnes, and Senior Director of Human Resources Tracy Kiernan. The senior management team brings immense institutional knowledge, with a collective 45 years of experience at the company. The successful Executive Director will collaborate and leverage the experiences of the team to guide Addgene as it continues to develop and thrive.

The Executive Director reports to the volunteer Board of Directors, composed of scientific and business leaders from both academia and industry, the co-founders, and legal, human resources, and financial experts. Addgene also maintains a Scientific Advisory Board, with 13 members who provide insight on the needs of research labs and how Addgene can best serve its customers.

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

To ensure Addgene's continued position as a leader in open science and a key facilitator for research worldwide, the next Executive Director will be expected to maintain and improve current operational activities, as well as address the following opportunities and challenges:

- **Focus on and expand the fundamental mission: to champion open science, to democratize science, and to accelerate research discovery.** Addgenies join the company for its mission. Depositors trust Addgene because of its mission, and recipients trust the products the firm provides. The mission comes first: Addgene promotes science without borders and accelerates research discovery around the world. The organization must look ahead to the newest technologies that drive scientific discovery, ensuring it can continue to act as a distributor and accelerator of adopting these new technologies. The Executive Director will be front and center of this mission-driven effort, serving as the guiding light to expand access and opportunity across the globe.
- **Collaboratively envision and lead the execution of a new impact strategy.** The company was built on the collection and distribution of plasmids. Responding to scientific need, Addgene has expanded its services to include viral vectors and will soon expand into antibody production and distribution. The next Executive Director will support the growth and development of these product lines and will lead an active exploration into other avenues critical to research worldwide. The Executive Director will prioritize initiatives and invest appropriately to develop high-impact products and services, to expand the reach of Addgene to underserved markets, and to aid the needs of emerging science.
- ***Seek out partnerships and opportunities to expand Addgene's impact.*** Addgene is among the most lauded and respected brands in academic research. As the organization looks to the future, there will be opportunities to combine the strengths and mission of Addgene with other like-minded organizations. This includes potential producers of research materials, international partners, grant-makers including the NIH, and other prominent institutions in the biomedical research space. The next Executive Director will strengthen existing partnerships at Addgene and build new ties to organizations that share in the goal of advancing scientific discovery.

- **Grow Addgene's global footprint.** Addgene has a strong presence in America and Europe and a growing presence in Asia. They maintain a team in London to better serve their European customer base, and it has distribution partners in China, Japan, Korea, and India. The next Executive Director will seek out ways to best engage with domestic and international clients, assessing all possible options to grow the company's global reach.
- **Assess the opportunities for external capital to advance the mission.** Addgene's operations are funded entirely by its service fee for shipping materials. This model has allowed for the organization to thrive independent of the priorities of foundations, philanthropists, or granting agencies. The company has used the excess revenue to invest in new product lines, improve infrastructure, and fund other mission-critical operations. However, Addgene's mission, combined with its status as a trusted provider of high-quality research materials, position it to pursue infusions of capital through grants and philanthropy. The next Executive Director will have remarkable opportunities to access philanthropic and government capital, to build the bandwidth and infrastructure of the organization, and to serve the Addgene mission with ever greater precision.
- **Enhance the culture of collaboration and engagement that powers Addgene.** Addgene was created with the goal of improving connections between scientists, facilitating the transfer of plasmids between labs, and thereby accelerating science. This mission has naturally fostered a company culture where collaboration and engagement are central to success: Addgene is nothing without its Addgenies. The next Executive Director will be a champion of company culture, ensuring that employee experience drives strategic and mission-aligned growth.
- **Assess the organizational structure of Addgene.** Addgene has grown organically since its inception, building departments and business lines to fill the roles created in an expanding company. Staff are continuously challenged to push beyond their roles and develop new skills. This model has produced a highly functional organization with strong employee engagement and satisfaction: Addgene has been in *The Boston Globe's* Top Places to Work every year since 2016. However, the structure of the company is at times inefficient, and a keen eye towards optimizing the roles, responsibilities, and reporting lines will pay dividends as the company continues its upward trajectory. The next Executive Director will bring a critical perspective to organizational structure, assessing and preserving its unique strengths while working to ensure that the organization can continue scaling up without creating the bureaucratic entanglements that often accompany such growth.
- **Connect to the broad scientific community.** As a trusted supplier and educator, Addgene has access to the most important conferences, leading publishers, and leadership of science worldwide. Through its data collection, website, and personal contacts, the organization can stay close to scientific development across highly varied fields. Addgene has the opportunity to learn emerging trends, often before they are fully recognized. These connections have obvious business implications, but they have even larger mission implications. The next Executive Director will see the inherent value of the company's

position and use all available resources to maintain its status as a leader in open science. In sensing trends and publishing insights, Addgene has yet another opportunity to democratize and accelerate science.

QUALIFICATIONS

Addgene seeks an organizational leader who combines an understanding of and commitment to its mission with the ability to inspire, collaborate, and lead. While the Search Committee is open to a variety of professional backgrounds in candidates, it expects that the new Executive Director will bring the following skills and experience:

- A deep commitment to open science and a dedication to accelerating research worldwide.
- Exceptional strategic acumen, ranging from planning processes through assessment and implementation.
- Extensive experience supporting the life sciences and biological research environments.
- Success in leading the strategy and development of a high performing organizational unit, such as a company, research team, department, or division.
- Experience promoting diversity in the workplace.
- A history of sound fiscal, organizational, and managerial practice.
- An empowering leadership style, informed and transparent decision-making, and the ability to work closely with an experienced leadership team, including a company founder and a supportive board.
- A passion for building strong teams and supporting career development, growth, and an open, caring, diverse, and inclusive culture.
- The ability to receive constructive feedback and leverage it to benefit the organization.
- The capacity and commitment to be an engaging ambassador and advocate, with a proven track record of establishing partnerships and collaborations.
- An advanced degree (e.g. Ph.D., MBA) is preferred.

TO APPLY

Inquiries, nominations, referrals, and resumes with cover letters should be submitted on the Isaacson, Miller website:

John Isaacson, Chair
Nick Strand, Senior Associate
Isaacson, Miller
www.imsearch.com/8123

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