

ATS announces search for director of leadership development and institutional capacity

BY HEATHER CAMPAIN HARTUNG

The Association of Theological Schools (ATS) invites applications for a newly created position: director of leadership development and institutional capacity. This full-time, fully remote role represents an exciting opportunity for a mission-driven leader to strengthen theological schools across Canada and the US by supporting the people who guide them—presidents, deans, faculty leaders, and other key administrators.



As theological education continues to evolve, ATS remains committed to developing leaders who can navigate shifting realities with wisdom, clarity, and compassion, and who are equipped to lead in ways that strengthen collaborative and generative communities. The director will advance that commitment by designing, facilitating, and assessing leadership development programs that support institutional health and long-term sustainability, foster transformative innovation, and strengthen the faithful stewardship of theological education.

A thoughtful, relational, analytically minded leader

The successful candidate will bring a blend of intellectual rigor, strategic insight, relational sensitivity, and a history of successful leadership. Because the role engages regularly with member school leaders, including chief executives, academic leaders, and faculty experts, the director must be able to communicate thoughtfully, synthesize complex ideas, and cultivate trust across a wide range of institutional contexts.

In addition to serving as a thought partner to these leaders, the director will provide strategic and operational leadership for the Association's grant-funded portfolio of

leadership development initiatives, including the Lilly Endowment-funded Leadership Education for Theological Education grant. The role includes ensuring alignment with grant goals, stewarding resources, gathering assessment data, and supporting required programs and financial reporting.

The director will also lead and supervise the ATS Leadership Development team, managing director-level and administrative staff who design, implement, and evaluate a broad range of learning experiences.

Frequent travel will be required, including to monthly, multi-day, leadership development events throughout the academic year across the US and Canada, as well as periodic trips to ATS headquarters in Pittsburgh for staff gatherings and planning sessions.

Key responsibilities

Reporting directly to the senior director of programs and initiatives, the director of leadership development and institutional capacity will:

- Design and implement leadership development programming for presidents, deans, faculty, emerging leaders, and others using diverse instructional models including online, hybrid, and in-person modalities.

- Facilitate learning experiences that strengthen institutional capacity, encourage collaboration, and promote effective governance and administration.
- Develop and steward relationships with leaders across ATS member schools, listening attentively to institutional needs and translating those insights into innovative programming.
- Support data-informed decision making through evaluation processes that assess and enhance program effectiveness.
- Manage grant-supported programs, contributing to proposal development, resource planning, and preparing supporting documentation.
- Contribute to the broader mission of ATS by collaborating closely with colleagues across departments to strengthen theological schools in a rapidly changing ecosystem.

Qualifications and dispositions

The ideal candidate will bring:

- A graduate degree (master's or higher) in a relevant field; a doctorate is preferred.
- At least 10 years of leadership experience in theological education, higher education leadership, organizational development, or a related area; five or more years of experience as a chief executive or chief academic officer in

an ATS member school is encouraged, as is knowledge of and engagement with the ATS Commission *Standards of Accreditation*.

- Strength in leading and managing teams, including experience in hybrid or distributed work environments.
- The ability to navigate complex systems with both analytical acumen and interpersonal insight.
- Exceptional communication skills, including the ability to work gracefully with highly educated, diverse professional groups.
- A collegial spirit marked by professionalism, curiosity, and respect for the diverse traditions represented within ATS membership.

A meaningful opportunity for impact

Serving as director of leadership development and institutional capacity at ATS provides an opportunity to strengthen leadership across theological schools, support those who shape future pastors and scholars, and contribute to the flourishing of theological education for decades to come.

Apply today

To apply, please submit a letter of interest, a résumé, and contact information for three references. Materials should be directed to Elise Sutter at hr@ats.edu.

The deadline for submitting applications is **Wednesday, April 1, 2026**.



Heather Hartung is senior director of programs and initiatives at The Association of Theological Schools in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.