



Colonial Williamsburg[®]

Chief Financial and Operations Officer

Leadership Profile

Spring 2024



WittKieffer

Executive Summary

The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation (CW) is America's premier living history institution and the world's largest U.S. history museum. Located at the birthplace of American democracy, CW advances knowledge and provides education through historical interpretation, intellectual research, archaeology, and historic preservation and restoration for some of the country's most important treasures and is a convener of conversations about how the nation's past is a prologue for its present and future. The institution seeks a chief financial and operations officer (CFOO) to play a central role to its continued and future success and is deeply committed to its mission.

Reporting to the president and CEO Cliff Fleet, the CFOO is a pivotal member of CW's diverse and dynamic [leadership team](#). This executive oversees the offices of financial management, information technology, and operations management, a team nearly 250 professionals, and acts as key advisory to the [Board of Trustees](#) including responsibility for the Finance, Investment, Buildings and Grounds, and Audit committees. The CFOO will represent in word-and-deed an empathetic, supportive, and inclusive environment for staff and visitors, CW's commitment to sharing the complete history of America and enabling the broadest audience to connect the past without barriers – real or perceived – is only possible if there is commitment throughout the organization.

The CFOO will also shepherd the operation of the Colonial Williamsburg Company, a wholly-owned subsidiary of CW which includes hotels, golf courses, a spa, and many food, beverage, and retail outlets. In total, the portfolio accounts for a consolidated \$200 million fiscal enterprise with both a non-profit and a for-profit operation consisting of hospitality and real-estate assets. CW has endowment and pension assets of nearly \$1 billion and is the second largest employer and largest taxpaying landowner in the City of Williamsburg.

As Colonial Williamsburg prepares to celebrate its centennial and the country celebrates its 250th birthday in 2026, CW launched a transformational \$600 million [Power of Place Campaign](#). The campaign recently passed the \$350 million mark in its growth. The CFOO must be able to speak passionately on behalf of the campaign and its initiatives, share the mission of CW, and connect with donors and other supporters when the opportunity arises.

Candidates must possess the necessary skills to lead a financial and operational system of similar size and complexity. The ideal candidate will have demonstrable experience in endowment management, implementation of financial information-technology systems, and/or involvement in real-estate development transactions. Most importantly, candidates must be mission-focused leaders who have a passion for working within a nonprofit environment within a board governance environment. Success in this work requires a leader with significant and sophisticated executive experience in an education, cultural, museum, or similar organization and a strong history of innovation and collaboration.

The CFOO will have a record of accomplishment catalyzing growth and transformation and will be an experienced manager who will understand how to lead effectively through influence and inspiration. The CFOO will be a fully engaged colleague throughout the organization and member of the Williamsburg, Virginia community.

For information on how to apply or to submit nominations, please refer to the section "Procedure for Candidacy" at the end of this document.

Role of the Chief Financial and Operations Officer

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Responsibilities

Operational Oversight and Fiscal Responsibility

- Work closely with the chief executive officer and other members of the executive team to consistently review services being offered. Identify opportunities to optimize the performance of the enterprise through process efficiency, elevated service standards, and establishing best practices to enhance operations across programmatic areas.
- Be responsible for all activities pertaining to continuous quality improvement.
- Provide strategic oversight for the implementation of a new comprehensive fiscal management system.
- Manage effectively within the budget, and report accurately on progress made and challenges encountered.
- Ensure the continued financial viability of CW's programs and services through oversight of sound fiscal management.
- Appropriately allocate human capital and other resources between divisions.
- Ensure an appropriate level of operational controls and high quality of services.

Strategic Growth Planning

- Partner with the CEO and the executive leadership team to proactively plan for growth, including efficient scaling of talent and building infrastructure and resources.
- In collaboration with the divisional executives, translate the organization's strategic plan into an operating budget and support the team's development of individual plans that clearly tie into the overall organization's strategy and budget.
- Identify opportunities for CW to leverage cross-program strengths and opportunities and address organizational challenges.

- Monetize real estate through the development and sale of land and assets.

Leadership Performance and Accountability

- Regularly engage with and interact with the board regarding primary areas of responsibility, including Finance, Investment, Buildings and Grounds, Audit and Colonial Williamsburg Company. Will attend all other committee meetings as well as general Board sessions.
- Provide inspiring and effective operational leadership. Mentor and lead the finance, IT, and operations team, both developing the team as professionals and holding them accountable for achieving strategic plan goals and operational priorities.
- Lead a continuous quality improvement process throughout the program and service areas, focusing on systems/process improvement. Promote ongoing opportunities for all staff to provide feedback on program operations.
- Work with the chief human resources to develop and implement training and succession strategies. Lead a team of executives in a manner which inspires high performance and accountability.
- Respect what works well and refine areas that need improvement.
- Balance being there for a team of direct reports, while allowing/enabling them to lead their respective teams and reach agreed upon goals. Remain accountable for all program operations.

Consulting, Collaboration, Communication, Community and Mission Support

- Develop a vision and goals in strategies, in partnership with the executive leadership team. Support a successful partnership with the human resources team, given the critical role that talent plays in this high touch, caring, service organization.
- Represent CW (in partnership with the CEO) with external constituency groups, including donors, community, governmental and private organizations, as well as business partners.
- Ensure that all program activities operate consistently and ethically within the mission and values of CW.
- Drive messaging of the alignment of strategic direction with CW's mission that is easily understood, can be translated into specific accountabilities, and inspires support and commitment to reach goals.
- Negotiate positive outcomes in a complex environment while maintaining productive relationships with all stakeholders, exercise diplomacy, professionalism, and confidentiality in the process.



Opportunities & Expectations

Working alongside the CEO and the executive team, the CFOO is pivotal in implementing the organization's strategic priorities. This role significantly shapes the ongoing development of organizational culture by uniting diverse stakeholders and translating Colonial Williamsburg's mission and strategic objectives into action. The following goals and objectives have been identified as priorities for this position:

Assess operational practices to ensure the highest levels of effectiveness: The new CFOO will act as an agent of transformation by reviewing the current administrative and operational infrastructure from a fresh perspective with the goal of identifying opportunities for operational efficiencies and ensuring best practices are in place in all areas. The new leader should have the experience and sophistication to prioritize updating organizational structures and processes in a manner that advances the organization most effectively.

Lead with transparency, inclusive values, and open communication: A top priority for the CFOO will be to serve as an exemplar for inclusive and equitable team management, modeling Colonial Williamsburg's core and IDEA values in managerial practices. To do so, the leader will strengthen trust by operating with the highest level of integrity and openness. The CFOO must be committed to transparent and straightforward communication to create strong, enduring, and collaborative relationships with multiple key constituents within and across the organization. The ability to communicate information clearly and to create buy-in despite differences will be important for long-term success. The CFOO will play a leading role in bridging the operational and financial aspects of the organization to the Colonial Williamsburg mission.

Provide strong leadership and establish a customer-oriented culture: The CFOO will oversee dedicated and experienced unit leaders and staff across the functional areas of finance, operations, and information technology and is charged with creating a customer-oriented team culture, focused on providing timely and accurate information, along with robust finance, IT and operations support to the Foundation's mission-aligned function areas. The new leader will inspire, motivate, and provide unit leaders with guidance and strategic direction to independently support their teams in a way that ensures their teams' continued growth, development, and ability to perform at the highest level. The CFOO will ensure a culture of collegiality, respect, and service in support of each other and the CW's many constituents. The CFOO will ensure that investments are being made in staff training and development so that staff leaders can best support their units.



Professional Qualifications and Personal Qualities

Central to the Colonial Williamsburg's desires in its CFOO are the superior personal qualities that typify the successful executive leader, including unimpeachable integrity, outstanding judgment, a commitment to excellence, perseverance, trustworthiness, an open mind, a direct and transparent communication style, creativity, courage of convictions, a willingness to take calculated risks, tolerance for ambiguity and a sense of humor.

In addition, the ideal candidate will have the following professional qualifications and personal characteristics:

- **Academic Credentials:** A bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university is required, and a graduate degree is preferred.
- **Experience:** Evidence of executive level leadership roles with a mission-focused organization; experience managing complex financial and operational systems, preferably both for-profit and non-profit organizations; evidence of driving process improvement and efficiencies across a large organization; proven experience working highly-collaboratively in a complex organization; experience leading, managing, and developing high performing and diverse teams. Prior experience with endowment management, implementation of financial information technology systems, and real estate development preferred.
- **Commitment to mission:** Evidence of a deep commitment to and passion for the mission; absolute commitment to the pursuit of the highest academic standards, and intellectual openness across the organization's diverse constituencies.
- **Vision and leadership:** Demonstrated experience leading a complex, multi-faceted unit; experience in helping to shape and drive ideas forward while simultaneously managing a staff and organizations toward desired outcomes; ability to lead with vision, an entrepreneurial outlook, and an eye to new possibilities and emerging challenges; ability to build, mentor, and motivate a diverse team; proven experience as a problem solver; demonstrated ability to focus and lead an organization to achieve the elements of a strategic plan and to continuously assess and refine the organizational plan, structure, and operations as the plan evolves; experience in leading change;
- **Collaborative nature:** Ability to relate to people at all levels of the organization, demonstrating excellent communication and active listening skills; ability to work well with and invite feedback from a variety of constituents; a consensus builder who can be flexible when appropriate yet firm and decisive when necessary.
- **Commitment to diversity and inclusion:** An appreciation of difference and inclusiveness, understanding of nuance and an awareness of the various ways in which the workplace and other environments are experienced differently by different people; and proven skill in interacting with complex and diverse cultures, backgrounds, and perspectives.

- **Organizational change management:** A record of designing, leading, implementing, and communicating large-scale change management initiatives; ability to energize constituents and sustain their commitment to changes in approaches, processes, and strategies.
- **Exceptional personal qualities:** A sense of urgency and engagement; honesty, integrity, persuasiveness, and a strong internal moral compass; strong work ethic; personal generosity toward one's staff and colleagues; optimism, confidence, and excitement about change; strong listening skills; the ability to observe, listen, learn, and clarify needs while engendering trust quickly among various constituencies; and a good sense of humor.



About Colonial Williamsburg Foundation

Overview

Williamsburg was the thriving capital of Virginia when the dream of American independence was taking shape, and the colony was a rich and powerful land stretching west to the Mississippi River and north to the Great Lakes. From 1699 to 1780, Williamsburg was the political, cultural, and educational center of what was then the largest, most populous and most influential of the American colonies. It was here that the fundamental concepts of our republic — responsible leadership, a sense of public service, self-government, and individual liberty — were nurtured under patriots such as George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, George Mason, and Peyton Randolph. It was also here that African Americans, Native Americans and other men and women struggled to survive against the backdrop of revolution.

Founded in 1926, the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation is a private, not-for-profit educational, historic, and cultural institution that receives no regular state or federal funding. It owns and operates one of the

largest and best-known museum complexes in the world. CW's mission is "that the future may learn from the past" through preserving and restoring 18th century Williamsburg, Virginia's colonial capital, and by engaging, informing, and inspiring people to learn about this historic capital, the events that occurred there, and the diverse peoples who helped shape a new nation. Today, it is the largest living history museum in the U.S., with annual paid visitation of more than 550,000 people (over 30% of whom are 12 or under).

The centerpiece of Colonial Williamsburg is the Historic Area — the 301-acre restored colonial capital with 88 original buildings and 525 buildings reconstructed to how they appeared in the 18th century through extensive archaeological, architectural, and documentary research. The Historic Area is staffed by highly trained, costumed "interpreters" and expert tradespeople who bring the 18th century to life.

CW also owns and operates two world-class museums, the DeWitt Wallace Decorative Arts Museum, and the Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Folk Art Museum (known jointly as the Art Museums of Colonial Williamsburg). The Museums have recently undergone a \$42 million, donor-funded expansion and upgrade to add exhibition spaces as well as a new entrance, shop, and café.

Colonial Williamsburg actively supports history education by engaging in a wide variety of educational outreach programs and activities. Teacher-led visits to Colonial Williamsburg take students back in time nearly 250 years. Initiatives include teacher training programs (both on- and off-site) and summer teacher training programs through the donor-funded Teacher Institute. As of 2019, the Institute has trained 10,000 teachers to inspire their students to learn about the history of our nation's founding.

In addition to its educational initiatives, the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation has created the Bruton Heights School Education Center, a 30-acre research facility within walking distance of the Historic Area. This center serves as the corporate headquarters for the CW and houses Colonial Williamsburg's research and publications departments, Costume Design Center, state-of-the-art conservation laboratories, and the John D. Rockefeller Jr. Library.

Through a wholly-owned, for-profit subsidiary, Colonial Williamsburg offers 826 guest rooms and suites in four distinct hotels — the Williamsburg Inn, the Williamsburg Lodge, the Williamsburg Woodlands Hotel & Suites, and the Griffin Hotel — along with 26 Colonial Houses located in the Historic Area. A 30,000-square-foot spa and fitness center, 45 holes of golf, tennis and other recreational facilities are also offered. In addition, Colonial Williamsburg operates four historic dining taverns (King's Arms, Chowning's, Christiana Campbell's and Shields) and seven hotel restaurants. Colonial Williamsburg also owns Merchants Square, a popular outdoor shopping area with more than 40 restaurants and retail shops, adjacent to the Historic Area and the College of William & Mary.

Colonial Williamsburg is accredited by the American Association of Museums, governed by a 23-member Board of Trustees. Colonial Williamsburg's 2021 net revenue reached \$200 million with total assets of \$1.2 billion. Annual revenues derived from an endowment fund totaling nearly \$781 million and from admission ticket sales, product sales, hotel and restaurant revenues, charitable gifts and grants, and disposition of real property.

Leadership



Cliff Fleet, The Colin G. and Nancy N. Campbell Distinguished Presidential Chair

Effective Jan. 1, 2020, the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation appointed Cliff Fleet, then president and CEO of 22nd Century Group, business professor at William & Mary, and former president and CEO of Philip Morris USA, to serve as its ninth president and CEO. Fleet has strong ties to the Williamsburg community. He had served as president of the Jamestown-Yorktown Foundation since 2014 and as a board member since 2009. He also serves as chair of the board of trustees of the William & Mary Foundation. Fleet earned a bachelor's degree in history and religion as well as graduate degrees in history, business administration and law from William & Mary.

Williamsburg, Virginia

Today, the City of Williamsburg is an independent city with an estimated population of 15,299. Williamsburg sits along Interstate 64 corridor midway between Richmond and Norfolk/Virginia Beach — at the center of the Eastern Virginia region, which has a population of more than 2.5 million.

Greater Williamsburg, with its population of more than 94,000, has remained one of the fastest growing regions in Virginia over the past three decades.

Living in Williamsburg offers residents a dense suburban feel and most residents own their homes. In Williamsburg there are a lot of restaurants and parks. Many young professionals live in Williamsburg. The public schools in Williamsburg are highly rated.

For information about living and working in Williamsburg, Virginia visit:

<https://www.visitwilliamsburg.com/>

<https://www.greatamericancountry.com/places/local-life/what-its-like-to-live-in-williamsburg-virginia>

<https://www.niche.com/places-to-live/williamsburg-va/>



Procedure for Candidacy

All applications, nominations, and inquiries are invited. Applications should include, as separate documents, a CV or resume and a letter of interest addressing the themes in this profile.

WittKieffer is assisting The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation in this search. The search process is currently underway and will continue until the position is filled.

Applications and nominations are invited. Application materials should be submitted using the WittKieffer [Candidate Portal](#). The Candidate Portal is a secure, easy way to nominate a colleague, express confidential interest, or apply for this position.

Applications should include, as separate documents, a resume and a letter of interest addressing the themes in the leadership profile.

Inquiries can be directed to WittKieffer Consultants:

Melissa Fincher, Sarah Palmer, and Kim Migoya
ColonialWilliamsburgCFOO@wittkieffer.com

Universal acceptance for everyone, everywhere is at the heart of the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation. We promote diversity & inclusion of thought, culture, and background, which connects our entire team. As such, Colonial Williamsburg is proud to be an Equal Opportunity Employer. We do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, ancestry, national origin, religion or religious creed, mental or physical disability, medical condition, genetic information, sex (including pregnancy, childbirth, and related medical conditions), sexual orientation, gender identity, age, marital status, military or veteran status, citizenship, or other characteristics protected by state or federal law or local ordinance.