

American Documentary

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR POSITION PROFILE

October 2020



ORGANIZATION PROFILE



American Documentary (AmDoc), a national nonprofit media arts organization, strives to make essential documentaries accessible as a catalyst for public discourse. We collaborate with passionate and diverse storytellers to amplify their voices and to nurture the nonfiction community.

Founded in 1987, AmDoc has presented more than 650 independent nonfiction and interactive films and supported over 500 filmmakers around the world through our flagship series **POV**. Broadcast nationally on PBS, one of the most respected and trusted media brands, POV films reach approximately 98% of U.S. households. For over three decades, POV has served as a curator of artful, thought-provoking documentaries that inspire a sense of connection and hope in shared humanity.

POV Engage uses series films to support educators and change makers who use documentaries to initiate bold conversation and connection in local communities. **POV Shorts**, launched in 2018, is one of the first public media series dedicated to independent short-form documentaries. **POV Spark** is the organization's interactive arm, dedicated to interactive nonfiction storytelling and storytellers. AmDoc also co-produces **America ReFramed**, a documentary series which immerses audiences in diverse and personal stories that span the spectrum of American life.

AmDoc has provided a showcase for the early efforts of Jonathan Demme, Lourdes Portillo, Errol Morris, Michèle Stephenson, Marlon Riggs, and Laura Poitras, and premiered films by filmmakers including Bing Liu, Marshall Curry and Nanfu Wang.

42
News & Documentary
Emmy Awards

26
Peabody
Awards

15
DuPont Columbia
Awards

3
Academy
Awards

SIGNATURE PROGRAMS



POV (a cinema term for “point of view”) premieres 14-16 of the best, boldest, and most innovative documentaries every year on PBS. POV has presented more than 500 films on PBS that capture the full spectrum of human experience, with a long commitment to centering women and people of color in front of, and behind, the camera.

During the organization’s early days, POV was seminal in the origination of the field of documentary outreach. In the years since, we have been a leader in civic engagement through our educational resources and campaigns. With 11,000+ partners and 850+ screenings annually across the country, our community network is a robust, yet under-known aspect of our organization. This network, and our partnerships with educators, stations, and community organizations differentiates us from our competition and creates opportunities for connection in a fractured society.

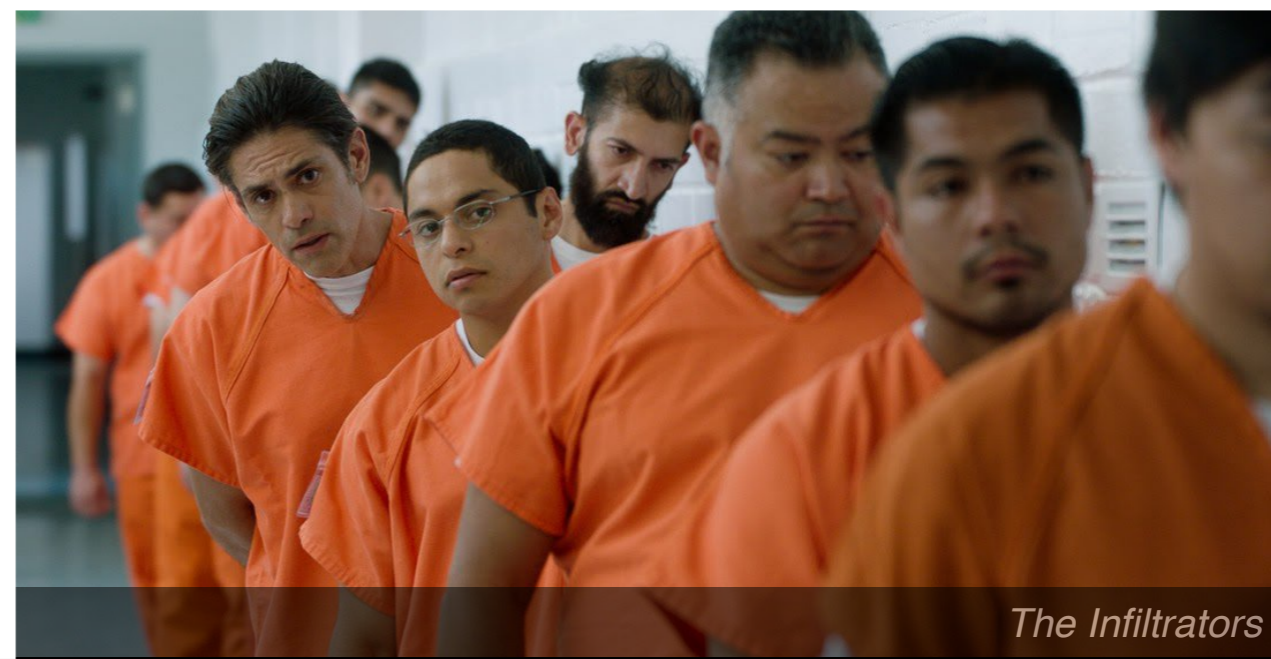
In 2019, we regularly attracted over 1 million viewers per program and appealed to a younger and more diverse audience than PBS primetime. AmDoc also nurtures generations of diverse independent storytellers through direct acquisition funding, mentorship, as well as national distribution and engagement strategies.



And She Could Be Next



The Silence of Others



The Infiltrators

POV ENGAGE



Screening

POV SHORTS



The Barber of Birmingham

POV SPARK



The Queen Versus Godfred

SIGNATURE PROGRAMS

POV Engage takes AmDoc beyond the broadcast by partnering with television and radio stations, community groups, and local and national organizations to spark conversations around issues we present on television and online and by developing educational materials as companions to our broadcasts. Year-round POV Engage activities extend the life of POV films through filmmaker interviews, story updates, streaming video, and community-based and educational applications.

POV Shorts is a PBS series dedicated to bold and timely short-form documentaries. Launched in 2018, the series offers half-hour episodes and featured critically acclaimed titles including the Oscar-nominated *A Night at the Garden*. The second season featured works by artists from around the world, with half of the shorts helmed by a director of color. The third season premiered in July 2020.

POV Spark, the series' interactive arm, creates and advances experiential forms of storytelling. Our work has challenged public media to remain at the digital vanguard with projects such as The African Interactive Art Residency, which grants artists access to national archives with the Smithsonian's National Museum of African American History and Culture; PUBLIC UPDATE, an online platform which features nontraditional nonfiction projects from around the world; and OTHERLY, a series of Instagram Story documentaries created by visionary women, non-binary, and genderqueer storytellers.

SIGNATURE PROGRAMS

AMERICA REFRAMED

Through the lens of independent documentaries, **America ReFramed** brings to national audiences compelling stories that illuminate the changing contours of an ever-evolving America. The documentary series presents an array of personal voices and experiences, as well as social issues through which we learn from our past, understand our present and are challenged to seek new frameworks for America's future.

AmDoc curates, produces, and promotes America ReFramed, now in its eighth season. America ReFramed premieres 15-20 documentaries on WORLD Channel (in partnership with GBH) and is carried by 170 PBS stations via terrestrial and satellite television and online platforms. It has earned a reputation for being the home of award-winning original content from diverse, independent filmmakers that feature viewpoints from different regions, races, religions, sexual orientations, gender identities, and mental and physical abilities to fuel meaningful conversations about the defining issues of our day. The majority of episodes are helmed by filmmakers from under-represented communities.

Acclaim for the series includes a RTDNA Kaleidoscope Award, a GRACIE for Outstanding Series, an Alfred I. duPont-Columbia University Award, a George Foster Peabody Award, as well as News & Documentary Emmy nominations.



Surviving Home



The Unafraid



Saving Brinton



THE OPPORTUNITY

This is a transformative moment for American Documentary. The **new Executive Director** (ED) will have the opportunity to lead an established independent documentary media organization, build upon a rich history, leverage a stellar brand, a deep and diverse network of filmmakers, and set an ambitious strategic direction to further advance the organization's mission and ensure its continued relevance and impact. AmDoc seeks an ED who has the fearless vision, the managerial acumen, and the operational expertise to strengthen a changing organization and to cultivate a more inclusive work culture. The ED will provide rigorous, strategic, and creative thought leadership in collaboration with its Board of Directors, staff, stakeholders, and extended filmmaking community.

AmDoc is building on its commitment to race equity and justice for the diverse artists, audiences, and community partners that we serve. We champion artists from all backgrounds who tell stories of struggle and hope, perseverance and joy, and the quest for justice. We make these documentaries available to all Americans through public media and community partners to open minds, spark connections, and make change.

We recognize that this work is both external and internal. The staff and board have moved to prioritize centering anti-oppressive values as an organizational imperative with a focus on establishing these core values as the foundation of this long term commitment.

THE POSITION

The Executive Director is responsible for overseeing AmDoc, the home of POV and America ReFramed, partner to PBS and WORLD Channel, and supporter of passionate documentary filmmakers. Reporting to the Board of Directors, the ED has editorial accountability for all AmDoc signature programs, plus strategic and general oversight of programming, fundraising, financial, and operational activities. In collaboration with a dedicated, diverse, and creative staff, the ED translates strategic initiatives into a tactical framework that drives results and growth while ensuring that AmDoc has the capacity to thrive.

One of the critical responsibilities for the ED is the financial stewardship of the organization, specifically securing financial support for a \$6 million annual budget and financial planning to ensure its sustainability. As the primary ambassador for the organization, the ED proactively shares its goals with existing and prospective donors to steward relationships and motivate their engagement around a sense of common purpose in AmDoc's work. As a team builder, the ED will attract, retain, and inspire a 23 person staff to optimize innovative ways which improve the organizational culture in the areas of inclusion, communication, accountability, integrity, and excellence.

THE DAILY

Leadership

- Provide the strategic direction and leadership to envision AmDoc's next chapter that builds on and supports the organization's mission, vision, and values; drive its programmatic and operational execution; serve as a creative thought leader to its Board and staff.
- Develop, promote, and implement a transformational race equity plan that embeds the guiding principles of equity and justice organization-wide; create an employee engagement strategy to improve cultural practices for a healthy and balanced organization.

Programming

- Direct and set editorial content and objectives; collaborate with senior leaders in programming; raise the profile of AmDoc's two signature series and its digital and social projects; act as lead curator for all projects under the POV banner.
- Ensure ongoing programmatic excellence by assessing the impact, efficacy, and sustainability of existing programs; establish priorities, processes, and resources to scale programs within budget, timeframes, and capacity while maintaining alignment with the organization's mission.

Operations & Management

- Translate aspiration and strategy into programmatic outcomes and an implementation roadmap; integrate operational plans and timelines for projects and workflows across departments; align the organizational resources, policies, structures, and accountability practices to meet those goals.
- Lead and manage staff and consultants by instilling best nonprofit operating practices and policies; foster a culture of collaboration, team building, and consensus; inspire staff ideas; guide the team to understand and commit to the execution implications of strategic ideas and goals.

- Develop protocols around recruiting, hiring, training, and managing staff to diversify, mentor, and retain talent; ensure consistent staffing structures in support of programming and operations; support professional development opportunities, achievements, and results-based performance.

Board Relations & Financial Management

- Maintain open communication, professional working relationships, and ensure meaningful engagement with the Board of Directors to harness their talents and resources; work collaboratively to ensure strategic objectives are in line with its mission and adherence to governance practices, and build relationships with staff.
- Maintain oversight of the organization's finances to ensure they are managed with fiscal and fiduciary accountability; implement an annual budget process and long term planning; ensure it has the financial resources to realize AmDoc's ambitions.
- Implement a comprehensive revenue plan that progressively grows earned and contributory income; support development efforts to build a strong cycle and pipeline that identifies, cultivates, solicits, and stewards philanthropic giving.

Partnerships & Communications

- Maintain and deepen critical relationships with PBS and CPB; foster strong relationships with system programmers and station representatives; promote community awareness and maximize community presence to reach new audiences.
- Proactively engage with the documentary industry as a leader and advocate for a sustainable, ethical, and equitable documentary ecosystem, including guiding and supporting ethical filmmaking practices for AmDoc creators.

THE ESSENTIALS

- A record of superior accomplishment in building, managing, and scaling effective operation models, ideally in mid- to large-size institutions within the public television, independent film, industry, cultural, or social justice fields.
- Extensive experience setting strategy, articulating that strategy, and rallying an organization around it with the ability to translate broad vision and plans into specific objectives oriented towards results.
- A verifiable record of fundraising success, particularly with foundations and individuals, is essential; experience securing six-figure, multi-year gifts is ideal; experience leading and developing a Board of Directors is essential.
- An elevated understanding of how entrenched challenges and structural inequality affects organizational culture; seeking ideas to resolve and dismantle them through internal and external approaches is highly valued.
- A practitioner of innovative problem-solving who takes the initiative and has the confidence and resourcefulness to mitigate and resolve conflict but also demonstrates a capacity to learn and self-evaluate.
- A leader who shows empathy, emotional intelligence and maturity, and a generosity of spirit who believes in positive intent in people.
- Experience and knowledge of public television, independent film industry, and wider media landscape, including new and emerging technologies, and trends around distribution, engagement, and outreach is preferred.
- An inspirational and persuasive communicator with excellent interpersonal, presentation, and written skills able to represent the organization publicly is required.

COMPENSATION

The salary will be commensurate with experience and will start at \$200,000. American Documentary's comprehensive benefit package includes but is not limited to medical, dental, vision, life and disability coverage, paid time off and public holidays, and a 403(b) retirement/employer matching plan. The position is headquartered at AmDoc's offices in Brooklyn but will be remote until further notice and pending health and safety protocols during the global pandemic.

TIMEFRAME

We seek to have a new Executive Director in place in the spring of 2021.

APPLICATIONS & NOMINATIONS

The Search Committee seeks to develop a diverse candidate pool and welcomes applications and nominations from all qualified candidates. Applications will be accepted until **January 15, 2021** at posting@amdoc.org; early submissions may be given priority consideration. Interested candidates should submit a cover letter and resume with detailed information about professional accomplishments, leadership experience, and names of 5 references (they will not be contacted without advance notice). To make a nomination, please let us know why you are referring a candidate; include their name and contact information.

American Documentary, Inc is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization incorporated in New York. We provide equal employment opportunities (EEO) to all employees and applicants and strongly encourage applications from people of color, persons with disabilities, women, and LGBTQ+, and other underrepresented applicants. We are committed to creating an equitable and inclusive culture at AmDoc that embraces and leverages diversity throughout the organization, the industry, and the communities we serve.