The Ohio State University

Search for
Executive Vice President and Provost
The Ohio State University
Columbus, Ohio

THE SEARCH

The Ohio State University seeks a strategic, collaborative, values-driven, and innovative leader to serve as its next Executive Vice President and Provost (provost). As part of a new administration, the provost will join a team that is committed to leading changes, nurturing interdisciplinary opportunities, and working as one university to further Ohio State’s 150-year history of excellence. Ohio State’s enviable scale and disciplinary breadth present a special opportunity to transcend traditional boundaries and create lasting impact in the world at this moment of transformation for education. The university is poised to build on innovative education and research programs that lead the nation and exemplify the role of a modern land-grant university by furthering an excellent learning environment, preparing students from all backgrounds for active citizenship in the 21st century, expanding the research and innovation enterprise, and strengthening engagement with community, government, and private partners to foster a sustainable economy in a socially just and environmentally sustainable way.

With a new president, Dr. Kristina Johnson, who arrived on September 1, 2020, the next provost will arrive at a time of tremendous opportunity and optimism. The provost will work with the president and the academic community to develop a strategic vision for the future of OSU that further elevates its academic excellence and role as one of the preeminent public research universities in the world while making a profound impact on the State of Ohio. The university seeks an outstanding scholar, leader, and administrator who is collaborative, consensus-building, visionary, and decisive. The provost will inspire a dynamic, dedicated, and talented team of colleagues to propel Ohio State forward to meet the pressing needs of the state, nation, and world and serve as an engine for societal good and equity. The provost must be an innovative leader who is committed to faculty and student success, a passionate champion to lead the university’s commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion, an exceptional communicator who is skillful at building relationships with internal and external partners, and a savvy and insightful organizational leader.
Ohio State is a world-class flagship, land-grant public research university with a nationally renowned academic medical center. It is at once urban and rural, focused on advancing its land-grant mission by providing access to an excellent and affordable education, groundbreaking research and creative expression, and outstanding healthcare delivery. Ohio State is one of the largest universities in the U.S. and enrolls nearly 68,000 students, employs approximately 7,600 academic and 38,000 administrative staff, and has an annual operating budget of about $7.2 billion. The university’s annual research expenditures exceeded $968 million in FY 2020. The university boasts more than $150 million in annual industry-sponsored research, ranking fifth among all universities nationwide. Additionally, with one of the largest alumni populations in the world, the generosity and philanthropic spirit of this community has resulted in incredible private support for Ohio State.

Ohio State’s Columbus campus sits within the nation’s 14th largest city, which has been recognized not only as the fastest growing city in the Midwest, but also as an emerging hub for high-tech companies, and a center for education, healthcare, and the arts. Approximately 6,500 students attend Ohio State’s regional campuses in Lima, Mansfield, Marion, and Newark, and the Agricultural Technical Institute which is co-located with the Ohio Agricultural Research and Development Center in Wooster.

ROLE OF THE EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT AND PROVOST

The Executive Vice President and Provost reports directly to the president and is the chief academic officer of the university. As such, the provost oversees a broad portfolio in the Office of Academic Affairs that spans the entire university and advances initiatives that drive excellence in the academic mission and support faculty success.

Given the scale of the university, the provost is responsible for a massive enterprise. The deans of all fifteen academic colleges report to the provost as well as the deans of the four regional campuses. Currently, the provost oversees 12 vice provosts and directors who are organized roughly into the following portfolios:

- Academic Policy and Faculty Resources; Academic Programs; Student Academic Success;
- Graduate Studies; Outreach and Engagement; University Libraries; Diversity and Inclusion; Global Strategy and International Studies; and Information Technology.

The provost, in close collaboration with the president and in active consultation with the University Senate, has responsibility for ensuring the academic prominence and impact of Ohio State by guiding academic planning efforts, promoting campus-wide initiatives, recruiting and retaining a diverse and outstanding faculty, and formulating academic policies. In order to do so, the provost must collaborate with all key leaders across the university, especially the Chief Financial Officer, the Senior Vice President for Student Life, and the Executive Vice President for Research, Innovation and Knowledge Enterprise, the Executive Vice President and chancellor for
Health Affairs/CEO of Ohio State Wexner Medical Center, among others. The health sciences colleges report to the provost, who in turn, collaborates closely with the Executive Vice President and Chancellor for Health Affairs to align strategic efforts of the Wexner Medical Center with academic affairs.

Specific duties of the role include, but are not limited to:

- **Academic Planning, Programs, and Policies**: The provost guides campus-wide academic planning; leads the development, implementation, assessment, and improvement of academic programs and supporting infrastructure, including facilities and information technology; and drives student success and strategic enrollment growth.
- **Academic Personnel Administration**: The provost leads planning processes for faculty recruitment, retention, and renewal; oversees faculty appointment, development, complaint resolution, tenure, and promotion processes.
- **Academic Support and Outreach Programs**: The provost is responsible for campus-wide integration of international academic programs, and academic support programs for graduate and undergraduate students.

**THE OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR THE EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT AND PROVOST**

To achieve its bold ambitions and plans, Ohio State requires a provost with a keen understanding of the higher education landscape and an entrepreneurial mindset to leverage the considerable resources of the university in pursuit of an even higher level of excellence, impact, and recognition. First and foremost, the provost should be a community builder who engages and listens to the numerous stakeholders, bringing together people and programs across the entire university. At the same time, the provost will need to communicate frequently with all stakeholders as they steward the university forward to embrace the changes of these dynamic times. In particular, the provost will address the key opportunities and challenges, which are detailed below:

**Inspire, co-create, and promote the academic vision for the future**

As the most visible champion for Ohio State’s academic enterprise, the provost will develop a collaborative vision for the academic goals of the university. With the current strategic plan winding down and new institutional leadership, the provost will lead the next planning effort. Like all universities, the challenges and opportunities resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic have pressed Ohio State forward to adapt and respond quickly. The university is also poised to implement new general education curricula and requirements, the first comprehensive revision in 30 years. The provost will seize on this momentum and guide the institution to learn from the innovations that have occurred as well as meet the challenges related to the delivery of high-quality education programs and enrollment trends. It is expected that the university will continue its leadership in student access, affordability, equity, and success, while also recognizing and
supporting cocurricular, non-curricular, and extracurricular programs that make vital contributions to the academic goals and support experiential learning for students.

The new provost will bring energy to the task of engaging, inspiring, and motivating leaders across campus in both curricular and non-curricular units, including deans, chairs, faculty, and staff across the university to align their respective academic missions to help the university fulfill its bold aspirations. To do so, the provost will successfully integrate academic operations with long-term planning and strategic goal setting. As the chief academic officer, the provost plays a key role in making the academic excellence of the university visible nationally and internationally.

**Integrate diversity, equity, and inclusion into all of Ohio State’s efforts to achieve inclusive excellence**

The university has been intentional in its efforts to increase representation and foster a deeper culture of belonging. Undoubtedly, a major emphasis in the next strategic plan will be to enhance the diversity of the university across administration, faculty, staff, and students, and the president has articulated a bold plan to double the number of faculty of color at Ohio State. The provost will bring personal and direct experience institutionalizing a culture that advances diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). The provost will lead with personal commitment and dedication and by supporting forward-thinking recruitment and retention initiatives. The provost must not only communicate the value and importance of DEI but also provide resources and create the policies, programs, and structures that will achieve results and further a campus culture that values inclusive excellence where faculty, staff, and students from all backgrounds can reach their full potential.

**Integrate seamlessly OSU’s multiple campuses and health sciences into “One-University”**

Ohio State encompasses multiple campuses, a comprehensive healthcare system, and academic activities that are global in scale. In a highly decentralized environment, the provost must drive cohesion among the units and inspire a one-university culture, setting forth shared objectives for knowledge generation, scholarship, transformational education and student success, and service to the state, nation, and world. While drawing on the collaborative culture of the university to promote innovative and inclusive pedagogy and motivating interdisciplinary collaborations, the provost must recognize differences across units and empower them to develop plans that are relevant and applicable to their own domains. Wherever possible, the next provost should evaluate and reduce bureaucratic constraints that impede collaboration and may be limiting the full potential of the university.

**Inspire, empower, and support faculty and deans**

The quality of Ohio State’s academic programs and disciplines is essential to the university’s scholarly mission and to its identity as a top-tier public research university, and that relies on the caliber, diversity, and success of the faculty. As the leader of a talented and committed team of
deans and vice provosts, the provost will build upon the existing excellence, knowledge, and skills of the academic and non-academic leaders, that are committed to the “One-University.” The provost will nurture a teamwork culture, mentor and support colleagues to achieve their goals, and bring a consultative and partnership-oriented approach to moving the academic mission forward in order to have a greater impact on Ohio and the world.

Ohio State boasts nationally and internationally recognized faculty across all fields. The provost should be focused on faculty recruitment, development, and retention, with special attention to the development and retention of faculty of color, and proactively addressing any differential impact of the pandemic on promotion and tenure across different groups. As chief academic officer, the provost is accountable to assess the quality and rigor of programs, support inclusive excellence, and hold faculty as well as academic leadership to the highest standards in teaching, research and scholarship, and service.

**Strengthen and advance student success**

The profile of Ohio State’s student population is changing as the university strives to admit and support students more inclusively. An increasing number of first-generation students, students with children, veterans, and students with food and housing insecurity are part of the campus population. The educational success of these students is important, and their challenges are often different from those of many entering freshmen, which has become even more apparent through the COVID-19 pandemic.

Ohio State is committed to providing all students, regardless of background and/or financial means, exceptional experiences, tools, and opportunities to succeed throughout their entire academic journey. As OSU provides opportunities for lifelong learning, leadership, and success in a global society, the provost will ensure a firm commitment to academic excellence and innovation. This includes the development of novel degree programs, the advancement of student retention and completion efforts, and the creation of highly engaged and positive learning environments and experiential opportunities for all students, which draw on adaptive learning and innovative delivery tools and platforms.

**Align complex financial enterprise for 21st century strategic impact and growth**

Ohio State operates under a responsibility-centered management (RCM) budget model that has incentivized the development of innovative programs and resource-generating activities. Ohio State has also taken significant steps to leverage assets (e.g., parking and energy) and to control costs. Working in concert with colleagues, the provost must provide leadership to the effectiveness of strategic resource management measures relative to the pursuit of academic excellence and student success. In collaboration with the president, the Chief Financial Officer, and the Senate Fiscal Committee, the provost will need to examine the budget model to ensure it supports all of Ohio State’s ambitious academic, research, and outreach goals.
QUALIFICATIONS & EXPERIENCE

To build on this foundation of strength, Ohio State seeks a values-driven and thoughtful leader with an outstanding record of scholarly achievement, high integrity, justice orientation, ambitious vision, and a collegial and transparent leadership style. Candidates should demonstrate significant leadership in a large, highly complex enterprise. While no single candidate will have all the ideal qualifications, Ohio State seeks candidates with the following qualifications and abilities:

- National or international distinction as a scholar, researcher, and educator with a record appropriate for a position as full professor at Ohio State
- Demonstrated success in implementing diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives that achieved significant outcomes related to recruitment, retention, and campus climate, in addition to a continued vision for meeting ambitious DEI goals for the future
- Proven record of achievement in recognizing, building, enhancing, and sustaining excellent academic programs
- Profound understanding of the academic, organizational, and financial issues facing a world-class research university
- Respect for and demonstrated experience in working collaboratively in a shared governance environment
- Demonstrated ability to lead complex resource allocation processes and achieve academic and administrative priorities through strong financial management
- Excellent communication skills with a demonstrated ability to listen to a variety of constituent groups, synthesize input, make decisions, and share information broadly and succinctly to build consensus and support for actions
- Ability and experience in leading broad intellectual activities and tackling the most challenging and complex societal issues (i.e., climate change, racial injustice, health disparities, etc.)
- Profound understanding of the mission of a land-grant academic institution.
More About The Ohio State University

Founded in 1870 as the land-grant and state flagship university, and subsequently receiving designations as a sea- and space-grant university, The Ohio State University is one of the world’s finest institutions of higher education. A member of the distinguished Association of American Universities, it is consistently recognized among the most innovative and far-reaching universities in the world. It is an engine of innovation and discovery with annual research expenditures of approximately $968 million. The central campus is located in the state capital of Columbus with regional campuses in Lima, Mansfield, Marion, Newark, and ATI in Wooster that extend its reach and provide access to students throughout the state. The Ohio State University boasts 570,000 living alumni, and its endowment stands at nearly $5.3 billion.

The university is home to approximately 68,000 students and 45,000 faculty and staff. With 15 academic colleges, a nationally renowned academic medical center, and hundreds of undergraduate and graduate programs as well as dozens of centers and institutes, the university has an astonishing intellectual range. It is an institution with enormous ambition and potential to achieve even greater heights. The 2017 strategic plan, *Time and Change*, moved the university forward on many dimensions and established Ohio State as a national leader in programs to support affordability and access for students. Today, the university is poised to embark on a new plan that will lay out its next phase of growth and innovation.

Students at Ohio State are exposed to a vast array of ideas, experiences, and cultures. Inclusive excellence is a central tenet of the institution. While historic highs in applications, academic excellence, diversity of students, first-year retention rates, and graduation rates demonstrate that the university’s momentum has never been greater, the university is committed to making investments and innovations to ensure more success in recruitment, retention, and a truly inclusive campus culture. In 2018, the university launched the Digital Flagship, a comprehensive university-wide digital learning initiative, representing a ground-breaking approach to utilizing technology to support and enhance educational access and opportunity for students. These efforts prepared the university to respond quickly and thoughtfully to the changes brought on by the pandemic.

The university’s location is a major asset. With a metropolitan area population of approximately two million, Columbus encompasses a diverse community across many dimensions including race, ethnicity, culture, political affiliation, and socioeconomic status. It has an immigrant population that is over twice the state’s average. It is home to an array of corporate headquarters across many sectors of the economy. The university enjoys a close collaboration with the business community through the innovative Columbus Partnership, which furthers the economic and social well-being of the region. Ohio State is the primary research partner for Smart
Columbus, an initiative born out of the city’s winning application in the U.S. Department of Transportation’s Smart City Challenge.

More information about The Ohio State University can be found at https://www.osu.edu/.

TO APPLY

All inquiries, nominations/referrals, and resumes with cover letters should be sent electronically to the following via www.imsearch.com/7838. Nominations and inquiries must also be submitted to the same web address with correspondences addressed to the search firm representatives noted below. Application reviews will begin immediately and continue until the completion of the search process. Please note that all applications, nominations, emails, and other inquiries are subject to Ohio Public Records Law (Ohio Revised Code, chapter 149.43).

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