



WISCONSIN
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

SEARCH FOR THE CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICER AND VICE PROVOST FOR INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY Madison, Wisconsin

The University of Wisconsin–Madison invites applications and nominations for the position of Chief Information Officer and Vice Provost for Information Technology.

THE SEARCH

The University of Wisconsin–Madison (“UW–Madison” or “the university”)—among the nation’s most renowned and impactful public research universities—seeks a collaborative and visionary leader to serve as the next Chief Information Officer & Vice Provost for Information Technology (CIO-VP). This position plays a pivotal role in advancing UW–Madison’s mission of public service—as articulated in the “Wisconsin Idea”—by providing vision and senior leadership to establish and execute an enterprise-wide information technology (IT) strategy that aligns IT resources with the university’s strategic goals.

The university is embarking on transformative initiatives that promise to elevate its research, teaching, and public service missions. Key programs, such as the [RISE](#) (Research, Innovation, and Scholarly Excellence) initiative, are set to drive increased demand for research computing infrastructure in areas like AI, health, sustainability, and data sciences, positioning UW–Madison at the cutting edge of discovery and innovation. In tandem, the [Administrative Transformation Program](#) (ATP) is reshaping the university’s digital landscape, bringing streamlined processes and advanced enterprise systems that will drive efficiency and collaboration across campus and the broader Universities of Wisconsin (formerly known as the UW System). At the same time, the university is undertaking efforts to more deeply understand how Zero Trust architecture can assist with lowering [cybersecurity](#) risk in order to safeguard sensitive research data and protect the university’s digital infrastructure. These forward-looking initiatives and [others](#) provide an extraordinary platform for the next CIO-VP to make a lasting impact on the institution.

The successful candidate will have a proven ability to mobilize resources, foster innovation, and leverage core infrastructure services for research, teaching and learning, and service. The individual must be a team builder with demonstrated success in developing and nurturing collaborative relationships and providing direction to senior leaders across the institution. The next CIO-VP will be adept at identifying emerging

trends in IT—including research computing, artificial intelligence and machine learning, academic technology, and cybersecurity—and will position UW–Madison as a leader in these fields. A minimum of ten years of information technology leadership experience in a complex and decentralized environment is desired. Experience in a higher education, research-oriented IT environment (or similar) is strongly preferred. Exceptional communication skills, a record of visionary and strategic leadership, and experience navigating a strong shared governance environment are also essential.

UW–Madison has retained Isaacson, Miller, a national executive search firm, to assist in the search. Full details on applying to the position can be found at the end of this document.

ABOUT UW–MADISON

As a public land-grant university and one of the most prolific research institutions in the world, [UW–Madison](#) is home to those who are driven by a desire to explore new worlds and apply new ideas to real-world problems. With a total annual budget of over \$3.9 billion, including more than \$1.52 billion in annual research expenditures, UW–Madison has been in the top ten for national research spending every year since 1972. Few institutions match UW–Madison’s incredible depth and remarkable breadth. The university’s 23 schools, colleges, institutes, and divisions include an academic medical center; a college of engineering; schools of veterinary medicine, pharmacy, and nursing; a school of computer, data, and information sciences; a land-grant agricultural research program and extension program; and an excellent array of physical and natural science, social science, humanities, and arts programs. Ranked 35th overall and 12th among the nation's public institutions by *U.S. News and World Report*, UW–Madison is one of the nation's preeminent research universities and has recently been named a “new Ivy” by *Forbes*. UW–Madison generates \$15 billion annually in economic impact.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AT UW–MADISON

Serving over 50,000 undergraduate and graduate students and over 26,000 faculty and staff, UW–Madison has a large IT infrastructure that requires performance at a significant scale. It serves administrative, education, research, and outreach needs with distributed facilities that produce millions of CPU hours of computing cycles each year and provide huge amounts of data storage, retrieval, transmission, and analysis.

The [Division of Information Technology](#) (DoIT) —the university’s central IT organization—has an annual budget of approximately \$130 million and a team of more than 800 full-time and student staff members. DoIT manages core IT infrastructure, network services, enterprise applications, and cybersecurity operations. Approximately 40% of IT support and resources are centralized within DoIT, while the remaining 60% is managed by distributed IT teams embedded in schools, colleges, divisions, research centers, and administrative units across the university. The CIO-VP will play a key role in bridging central

and distributed IT functions, fostering collaboration and innovation across these diverse units to ensure a seamless and responsive IT environment.

The university's IT landscape is guided by a set of [Strategic Priorities](#) that outline key initiatives through 2025. These priorities span key initiatives focused on expanding research computing capabilities, strengthening cybersecurity, ensuring a vibrant and inclusive workforce, supporting learner success, enhancing digital accessibility, and championing administrative transformation and modernization. The CIO-VP will have the opportunity to build on this foundation by setting an ambitious and forward-looking agenda for IT that supports the university's broader strategic priorities.

LEADERSHIP

Dr. Jennifer L. Mnookin

The 30th leader in UW–Madison's history, Chancellor Mnookin is a top legal scholar dedicated to advancing the university's mission in research and education. She launched the Wisconsin RISE initiative, the university's largest cross-campus effort, aimed at expanding research and tackling complex challenges affecting Wisconsin and the world. Previously, she was the dean of the University of California, Los Angeles School of Law and has also held positions at the University of Virginia and Harvard. She holds degrees from Harvard, Yale Law School, and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and is an elected member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

Dr. Charles Lee Isbell Jr.

Appointed as Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs in 2023, Dr. Isbell brings a strong focus on interdisciplinary research, academic innovation, and access to higher education. He has championed bold and creative initiatives, including RISE, to build on UW–Madison's legacy of impact on research, teaching and learning, and service. Prior to his appointment at UW–Madison, Isbell served as the dean and John P. Imlay, Jr. Chair of the College of Computing at Georgia Institute of Technology. He is credited with being an architect for Georgia Tech's MOOC-supported MS in Computer Science, which currently reaches 12,000 students.

Robert Cramer

As Vice Chancellor for Finance and Administration at UW–Madison, Cramer oversees the university's financial and operational health. He leads efforts in budgeting, capital planning, facilities management, and human resources, ensuring that these areas support the university's strategic goals. His leadership supports both day-to-day operations and long-term financial stability, providing a foundation for the university's growth and innovation.

Dr. Dorota Grejner-Brzezinska

As Vice Chancellor for Research, Dr. Grejner-Brzezinska leads one of the largest and most diverse research programs in American higher education with a portfolio comprising \$1.5 billion in annual research expenditures and activities in nearly 20 cross-campus research offices and interdisciplinary centers. She is a member of the National Science Board and the National Academy of Engineering, as well as a fellow at the Institute of Navigation and the Royal Institute of Navigation. She was previously vice president for knowledge enterprise at the Ohio State University.



THE ROLE OF THE CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICER

As the university's highest IT leadership role, the CIO-VP will lead a complex and dynamic computing- and data-intensive organization. The CIO-VP serves as the chief executive officer for the university's central IT organization, a member of the senior administrative councils of the university, and a key leader in support of IT for the entire Universities of Wisconsin. The CIO-VP reports to the Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, with a dotted line to the Vice Chancellor for Finance and Administration.

The responsibilities of the CIO-VP are as follows:

- Determines long-term institutional information needs and develops overall strategy for information needs and approach to integration ability, including systems development and hardware acquisition.
- Serves as a leader to assure integrity of organization data, proprietary information, and related intellectual property through information security and access management.
- Develops and directs strategic information technology planning initiatives and establishes objectives to ensure appropriate use of financial, administrative, staffing resources, and alignment with the strategic plan.
- Develops operating policies and procedures to comply with regulations, institutional policies, and objectives.
- Exercises supervisory authority, including hiring, transferring, suspending, promoting, managing conduct and performance, discharging, assigning, rewarding, disciplining, and/or approving hours worked of at least 2.0 full-time equivalent (FTE) employees.
- Develops and audits the budget.
- Serves as the liaison representing the interests to internal and external stakeholders.
- Develops IT strategic plans and ensures alignment with non-IT mission.
- Advises institutional or divisional leadership on information technology operations and business models.
- Performs manager functions and typically manages through subordinate managers.
- Promote adaptive and technical change across the university through effective collaboration and with a focus on organizational innovation and improvements in efficiency.
- Engages an IT governance structure that will be able to provide input to decision making at a university level.

KEY OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR THE CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICER

Establish a Strategic Vision and Alignment for a Diverse, Eclectic Campus

The CIO-VP will develop a cohesive IT strategy that aligns with UW–Madison’s overarching goals in research, education, and service. Developing a roadmap for both immediate and long-term IT priorities will enable the university to adapt quickly to meet critical technology needs, anticipate emerging challenges, and remain agile in a rapidly evolving academic and technology landscape. The CIO-VP will identify benchmarks for measuring success, provide regular updates to the campus community, and implement policies that position UW–Madison as a model for integrated, mission-driven IT at a top-tier research institution. UW–Madison has traditionally been a highly decentralized structure. The CIO-VP must work effectively with both central and distributed IT units within schools, colleges, divisions, and

research centers. They will participate in strategic discussions of how best to foster strong partnerships across campus as the environment evolves. The CIO-VP will align central IT initiatives with the unique needs and perspectives of individual units while creating a cohesive and supportive IT environment that serves the entire university community.

Expand Computing Infrastructure to Support AI and Data-Intensive Computing Demands

In alignment with the RISE (Research, Innovation, and Scholarly Excellence) initiative, the CIO-VP will oversee the expansion of computing infrastructure, including increased computing power and data storage. As UW–Madison grows its faculty in data-intensive fields like AI, the CIO-VP will ensure the availability of scalable, secure, and sustainable research computing resources. This includes enhancing data storage capabilities, high-performance computing clusters, cloud computing resources, and network infrastructure to support large-scale data analysis and interdisciplinary collaboration. Collaborating closely with faculty and research units, the CIO-VP will proactively anticipate emerging needs and build the infrastructure required to support world-class research. In expanding these resources, the CIO-VP will also be mindful of the environmental and physical resource impacts of increased computing demands.

Oversee Implementation of the Administrative Transformation Program

The CIO-VP will play a critical leadership role in overseeing UW–Madison’s implementation of the Administrative Transformation Program (ATP). ATP represents a comprehensive modernization effort across the Universities of Wisconsin, transitioning from legacy systems to a unified platform powered by Workday. This transformation is aimed at streamlining administrative processes, enhancing data accessibility, and improving operational efficiency for faculty, staff, and students throughout the system. At UW–Madison, the CIO-VP will play a key role in guiding the technical and change management aspects of this transition to a successful outcome. They will serve as a key advisor and liaison for the campus to the Wisconsin Enterprise Systems Team (WEST). This effort will require clear communication with campus stakeholders and close collaboration with other institutions in the Universities of Wisconsin to coordinate policies, address shared challenges, and support a seamless transition across campuses.

Advance Significant IT Priorities, Including Cybersecurity and Digital Accessibility

The CIO-VP will lead essential initiatives to address additional major IT priorities, including digital accessibility and cybersecurity. With the 2026 deadline for Title II Digital Accessibility compliance, the CIO-VP will champion efforts to create inclusive digital environments across campus. This involves securing resources, partnering with various units, and integrating accessibility standards into daily operations to ensure all members of the UW–Madison community can engage with the university’s digital resources.

fully and equitably. In addition to accessibility, cybersecurity and data governance will be top priorities. The CIO-VP will oversee proactive cybersecurity measures to protect the university's digital assets from evolving threats. This includes making progress towards a zero trust architecture for a contemporary approach to security, overseeing robust data governance frameworks, and administering clear policies for data protection. These initiatives will secure sensitive information, ensure compliance with federal regulations, and build a culture of security awareness across the campus.

Foster a Positive and Supportive Culture of Collaboration and Inclusivity

Building on a foundation of open communication, the next CIO-VP will prioritize relationship-building across centralized and distributed IT units and with key stakeholders across campus. By creating open forums for transparency and feedback, the CIO-VP will reinforce UW–Madison's collaborative culture, ensuring that IT services meet the needs of students, faculty, and staff. The CIO-VP will cultivate a culture where diverse perspectives are valued and IT initiatives are shaped by broad campus input, fostering a sense of community and shared purpose. Additionally, the CIO-VP will promote an inclusive work environment that supports remote and flexible work, addresses work-life balance, and strengthens recruitment and retention efforts. By prioritizing staff well-being, development, and engagement, the CIO-VP will help ensure that the university continues to attract and retain top IT talent.

Address Resource and Budget Constraints

With limited state funding and an administrative staffing cap, the CIO-VP will need to make strategic decisions on resource allocation, employing creative solutions to optimize IT resources across campus. The CIO-VP will serve as a strong advocate for IT's critical role in supporting UW–Madison's operations and mission, actively seeking partnerships and funding opportunities to supplement existing budget limits. Balancing resource constraints with institutional priorities will require exceptional skill in strategic planning, fiscal stewardship, and innovative thinking. By working closely with campus leaders, the CIO-VP will explore new funding models, cost-sharing initiatives, and partnerships that maximize IT's impact. This approach will help ensure that the university's IT resources remain both impactful and sustainable, enabling the university to adapt to evolving technology needs and support its academic and research goals.

QUALIFICATIONS AND CHARACTERISTICS OF THE CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICER

While no one person will embody each one of these qualities in equal amounts, UW–Madison seeks the following criteria in the next Chief Information Officer:

- Minimum of ten years of information technology leadership experience in a complex and decentralized environment is desired. Experience in a higher education, research-oriented IT environment (or similar) is strongly preferred.
- Exceptional communication skills, including the ability to interact at the highest levels of any organization, including the Universities of Wisconsin, and with university offices that engage government and legislative bodies.
- Record of visionary and strategic leadership in information technology, with the ability to think innovatively and anticipate future trends in technology.
- Experience navigating a strong shared governance environment and effectively coordinating central and distributed IT teams to provide cohesive, responsive IT services across a complex landscape.
- Proven experience in setting, sequencing, and managing priorities and resources effectively in a complex organizational environment.
- A deep and demonstrated commitment to fostering and maintaining a service-oriented culture within IT, ensuring that services are responsive, reliable, and supportive of academic and administrative needs.
- Strong capacity to lead and oversee IT governance, establishing transparent processes that incorporate diverse perspectives from across the university community.
- A proactive management approach and demeanor, with a focus on addressing challenges before they arise and creating a culture of continuous improvement.
- Demonstrated expertise in leading large-scale, campus-wide IT projects and managing change effectively across multiple departments, ensuring transitions are smooth, well-communicated, and supported by stakeholders.
- Strong track record in expanding and maintaining computing infrastructure to support AI applications, data-intensive research, high-performance computing, and secure data storage.
- Comprehensive understanding of cybersecurity and information security needs in complex academic settings, with expertise in implementing scalable, proactive solutions that safeguard data and ensure resilience across a decentralized IT landscape.
- Skilled at fostering collaborative relationships with an ability to communicate transparently with diverse stakeholders.
- Committed to creating a positive and inclusive work environment, with experience building strong teams, supporting professional development, and promoting a culture of respect and belonging.
- An appreciation for the unique academic culture of a major public research university and the role of IT in enhancing its research, teaching and learning, and outreach missions.

THE COMMUNITY

Located in a beautiful natural environment and on an isthmus between two lakes, Madison is the capital city of the state of Wisconsin. Madison's technology economy is growing rapidly, and the region is home to the headquarters of Epic Systems, Exact Sciences, American Family Insurance, Sub-Zero, and Lands'

End, as well as many biohealth, biotech, healthcare IT, and health systems startups. Madison is the second largest city in the state, with a city population of approximately 260,000 and a regional population of over 1 million. Madison is primed for additional population and business growth over the next ten years. It ranks as one of the leading cities for net migration of Gen Z and young talent, outperforming larger cities like Austin, Nashville, and Atlanta. The city is within easy driving range of Chicago and Milwaukee.

The community celebrates its native nation roots and takes pride in the vibrant diversity of the city and surrounding region. The university occupies the ancestral Ho-Chunk land, a place their nation has called Teejop (day-JOPE) since time immemorial. In 2019, the university created the Tribal Relations office, one of more than 20 such offices located at universities in the United States today. The Black Business Hub—a 4-story, 80,000 square foot, state-of-the-art center of commerce and entrepreneurship—is devoted to incubating, accelerating, and networking Black and other BIPOC entrepreneurs. Additionally, the Center for Black Excellence and Culture brings a cultural gathering space to support attracting Black talent to the city and giving Black professionals a reason to keep their skills in Madison. The Centro Hispano of Dane County, which celebrated its 40th anniversary in 2023, serves the multifaceted needs of the region’s Latinx community, one of the fastest-growing populations in the state of Wisconsin.

The city also has a dedicated athletics fanbase centered around the university. Sports venues include Camp Randall Stadium, the Kohl Center, LaBahn Arena, Wisconsin Field House, and the Alliant Energy Center. Madison is home to one of the strongest local food scenes in the country, with several James Beard Award winners, gastropubs, and farm-to-table restaurants. The city is rich with cultural offerings such as the Dane County Farmers’ Market, Overture Center for the Performing Arts, Orpheum Theatre, Concerts on the Square, Jazz at Five, UW–Madison Mead Witter School of Music and Hamel Music Center, Madison Symphony Orchestra, Madison Opera, Madison Ballet, UW–Madison Chazen Museum of Art, Madison Museum of Contemporary Art, Wisconsin Historical Museum and Madison Children’s Museum, along with many small music and arts venues. The city also has a number of programs directed at youth and the arts, including Madison Youth Arts, a dedicated and purpose-built youth arts center for young people to inspire and be inspired, discover the arts, make connections, and explore their creativity.

APPLICATIONS, INQUIRIES, AND NOMINATIONS

Screening of complete applications will begin immediately and continue until the completion of the search process with a priority application date of January 10, 2025. Inquiries, nominations, referrals, and CVs/resumes with cover letters should be sent via the Isaacson, Miller website link [here](#). Electronic submission of materials is required.

Dan Rodas, Raul Bernal, and Nicole Sancilio
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Important information regarding confidentiality: Unless confidentiality is requested in writing, UW–Madison is required by Wis. Stat. sec. 19.36(7) to release the names of all applicants to anyone who requests that information. If you would like to request confidentiality, please indicate that via this survey: <https://www.research.net/r/UW-Madison-CIO-VP-Confidentiality>. All candidates who advance to the finalist stage will be announced publicly prior to their campus visits.

The University of Wisconsin is an Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action Employer. We promote excellence through diversity and encourage all qualified individuals to apply. Please visit <https://apps.diversity.wisc.edu/questionnaire.aspx> to complete voluntary self-identification information.
PVL #306606

If you need to request an accommodation because of a disability, you can find information about how to make a request at the following website: <https://employeedisabilities.wisc.edu/disability-accommodation-information-for-applicants/>

Employment will require a criminal background check. It will also require you and your references to answer questions regarding sexual violence and sexual harassment.

The Annual Security and Fire Safety Report (<https://jobs.wisc.edu/asr>) contains current campus safety and disciplinary policies, crime statistics for the previous 3 calendar years, and on-campus student housing fire safety policies and fire statistics for the previous 3 calendar years. UW–Madison will provide a paper copy upon request; please contact the University of Wisconsin Police Department.

