



Chief Information Officer
The American University of Paris
Paris, France

THE SEARCH

The American University of Paris (AUP), a liberal arts institution that is American by tradition, French by location, and global in both intake and outlook, seeks an experienced, motivated, and visionary technologist to serve as its next Chief Information Officer (CIO). The incoming CIO will join a distinctive liberal arts university poised to undergo comprehensive digital transformation across academic and administrative functions. The CIO will provide critical leadership, implementing pressing enterprise-wide system upgrades and developing and executing a new, forward-looking technology roadmap that runs alongside and advances the university's Strategic Plan.

Chartered in 1962 and located in the prestigious 7th *arrondissement* of Paris, AUP provides a student-centered, academically rigorous, and career-enabling education to degree-seeking students, both undergraduate and graduate, from around the world. AUP's permanent faculty and staff of just under 250 engage with a student body of around 1,400, enabling students to cross cultural barriers and academic disciplines with ease and to assume their places as responsible global citizens. The size of the student body combined with the institution's pedagogical philosophy creates an intimate, engaging, and stimulating educational environment. Classes are conducted in English, though most students and faculty speak more than one language.

Having recently welcomed a new Provost and CFO and under the strong leadership of President Sonya Stephens, AUP is at an exciting and critical moment, one marked by clarity of strategic priorities and an unwavering commitment to enterprise-wide digital transformation. Reporting directly to the President, the CIO will support the university's academic mission and strengthen overall operational effectiveness by developing and executing a vision and strategy for Information Technology Services that modernizes technology; proactively harnesses technology to support learning, teaching, and research; builds strong internal IT business practices, systems, processes, and policies; and cultivates a culture of tech and data literacy across the AUP community. The CIO will provide critical leadership and support to ongoing efforts related to ERP implementations, data governance, and AI. This is an outstanding opportunity for a collaborative leader with a deep understanding of the transformative possibilities that information and technology bring to education in the 21st century, as well as a nuanced appreciation for the traditions, culture, and requirements of a liberal arts institution.

The American University of Paris has retained Isaacson, Miller, a national executive search firm, to assist in conducting this important search and to help identify outstanding candidates. All inquiries, applications, and nominations for this opportunity should be directed to the search firm as indicated at the end of this document.

THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF PARIS

Having recently celebrated its 60th anniversary, AUP enjoys prominence as a private, urban university and a global center for interdisciplinary research and teaching. Throughout its existence, AUP's mission has been to provide students from all over the globe with a transformational educational experience that crosses disciplines, cultures, and borders. The university achieves this mission by providing students with a curriculum that combines liberal arts inquiry, preparation for professional life, and interactive, student-centered learning in small classroom settings. An AUP education supports cultural fluency, a sense of global engagement, and a capacity to negotiate differences that emerge from diversity.

AUP is incorporated under the laws of the State of Delaware in the US as a non-profit corporation, registered with the US Internal Revenue Service as a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) organization, and registered in France as a non-profit association. It is licensed by the Board of Education of the State of Delaware as an institution of higher learning, accredited by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools, and authorized by the French *Rectorat* as an *établissement d'enseignement supérieur*.

Academic Programs and Faculty

AUP educates its students to think critically, communicate in a world of many languages, develop creative, interdisciplinary approaches to important contemporary challenges, and be technologically and culturally literate in a world of rapid change. Central to the undergraduate experience at AUP is its flagship Global Liberal Arts Core Curriculum. Eight academic departments administer undergraduate and graduate programs, which include 25 majors and 40 minors. Seven graduate programs offer Master of Science or Master of Arts degrees. Interdisciplinary programs flourish across all departments, driven by faculty research and student interests.

The AUP faculty includes 110 full-time and 89 part-time professors, as well as adjuncts from 29 different nations. Three-quarters speak three or more languages, and three-quarters hold terminal degrees. All permanent faculty members who teach at the graduate level also teach in the undergraduate program.

Information Technology Services

ITS, led by the Chief Information Officer and consisting of 13 IT professionals, provides the highest level of technology support and services to the AUP community. The team leverages technology to achieve the

university's academic and administrative goals. ITS supports all university constituencies – including current and prospective students, faculty, staff, alumni, trustees, and AUP friends – by anticipating client needs and delivering IT services and solutions.

THRIVE: Strategic Plan 2024-2029

AUP recently completed its newest five-year strategic plan after over a year of collaborative efforts. To support the university's ambitions and achieve the most tangible parts of AUP's transformation, three arcs have been developed to serve as thematic thrusts and to group the institution's priorities and most critical goals in a way that will focus efforts and resources over the next five years:

Amplification through a Distinctive, Recognized Global Education

The ambition is to elevate AUP's educational experience and global academic reputation by enhancing the quality, diversity, and recognition of the educational offering, ensuring that AUP students become vibrant and confident independent thinkers with the curiosity to explore, the passion to engage, and the capability to lead.

Progress through Multidimensional Partnerships

The ambition is to expand and deepen partnerships that enhance AUP's reach, reputation, and impact, fostering reciprocal relationships that drive innovation in education and growth in professional development and deliver a wide range of new opportunities for all members of the university.

Transformation through Connections, Collaboration, and Community

The ambition is to create a vibrant, interconnected community that thrives on collaboration, leveraging the diverse perspectives and experiences that are inherent to AUP's global community to drive transformative change and growth within and beyond AUP and, most critically, for every member of its global community.

The plan also calls out four overarching goals:

1. Learn and practice mutual respect and effective communicative relationships to reach mutual understanding.
2. Rigorously maintain the norms for an inclusive, welcoming and empathic culture.
3. Promote and deliver digital transformation and support the use of contemporary technologies across the university.
4. Foster a sustainable campus environment and integrate sustainable practices into academic, operational, and communication practices.

Leadership: President Sonya Stephens

Professor Sonya Stephens began her duties as the American University of Paris' 13th President on September 1, 2022.

Professor Stephens is an exceptional academic leader and an internationally recognized scholar of 19th-century French literature. She has long devoted herself to advancing liberal arts education and is a highly skilled academic, fundraiser, administrator, and community builder in the context of higher education.

Prior to joining AUP, Stephens was the 19th president of Mount Holyoke College in South Hadley, Massachusetts, from 2016 as acting President and from 2018 on a permanent basis. Her presidential tenure coincided with the successful implementation of an ambitious strategic plan. Stephens joined Mount Holyoke in 2013, when she was appointed as Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean of Faculty. In this role, she worked closely with offices and departments across the college as well as with partner institutions in the Five College Consortium to enhance the college's reputation and increase support for faculty research and curricular innovation.

Professor Stephens speaks fluent French and has traveled extensively in France. An expert in 19th-century French literature and its relation to visual culture, she is the author of *Baudelaire's Prose Poems: The Practice and Politics of Irony* and has also edited several books, including *A History of Women's Writing in France* and *Translation and the Arts in Modern France*. She holds a doctorate in French from the University of Cambridge and a master's degree in French studies from the Université de Montréal, where she was a Commonwealth Scholar. She earned her bachelor's degree in modern and medieval languages from the University of Cambridge.

Her previous roles highlight her deep commitment to furthering liberal arts education. Before joining Mount Holyoke, Stephens served as chair of the Department of French and Italian and Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education at Indiana University Bloomington. There, she led the campus-wide development and implementation of new general education requirements, the establishment of an integrated Center for Innovative Teaching and Learning and was responsible for assessment and reaccreditation efforts. She began her career as a faculty member at Royal Holloway, University of London, where she chaired the Department of French and led the creation of the School of Modern Languages, Literatures and Cultures. A full bio can be found [here](#).

Campus in the Heart of Paris

Situated on the banks of the Seine, AUP's urban campus occupies seven buildings in Paris' 7th *arrondissement* between *Les Invalides* and the Eiffel Tower. The university's intellectual and cultural endowment has always been its location at the center of a bustling, cosmopolitan European and world capital. AUP has successfully shaped its curriculum and extracurricular life to Paris' many centuries of art,

history, literature, politics, and music. The city's monuments, libraries, neighborhoods, demographic shifts, and cultural and linguistic plurality make it a true "living laboratory." AUP students come to Paris for the city's cultural and linguistic heritage as well as for the internships and capstone experiences possible in the international public and private institutions located there.

In recent years, every space on campus has been built or renovated to enhance student learning and to achieve a heightened sense of community. As of 2023, AUP has substantially completed a master plan to create an architecturally eclectic, modernized, and consolidated urban campus. A recently built Learning Commons overlooking the Quai d'Orsay connects via a glass archway to the Combes Student Life Center, forming the heart of the expanded campus. A new Montessuy Center for the Arts, with its Olivia de Havilland Theatre, opened in fall 2021 at the foot of the Eiffel Tower.

ROLE OF THE CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICER

The Chief Information Officer (CIO) reports directly to the President, supervises all aspects of information technology operations, provides advice and analysis, and participates in long-term strategic planning in close coordination with their peers on the Leadership Team. The CIO serves as a central senior management figure in AUP's ongoing digital transformation and proposes, demonstrates, and (after validation) supervises the implementation of innovative solutions using information technology. The CIO is responsible for the digital transformation of the university.

The CIO is also responsible for IT throughout the university, including academic and administrative functions, and anticipates and supports the strategic needs of all campus constituencies.

Responsibilities

Leadership

- Envisions and provides strategic leadership for achieving technological innovation in academic and administrative functions and anticipates and supports the strategic needs of all university constituencies.
- Exercises responsibility for all aspects of planning, budgeting, and execution; workforce planning and management, purchasing, systems evaluation, capital budget management, policy administration, customer services, and operational processes of ITS.
- Develops effective relationships with all campus constituents, including student organizations, to ensure activities and services are aligned with university priorities and campus needs.

Management

- Supervises and directs decision-making, time management, department budget, and future developments.
- Conducts needs assessments and develops plans to meet the university's IT needs.

- Provides expert technical advice and recommendations in conjunction with the ITS Manager on the development of policies, procedures, and long-range strategic plans for IT.
- Chairs the Data Governance Committee.
- In coordination with the President, plans, organizes, directs, and manages the activities of the IT operation including external consultants and license agreements. Ensures that agreements are properly recorded and signed by the EVP.

Strategy

- Defines the IT transformation plan and roadmap, identifies and evaluates IT opportunities, and aligns IT with business strategy and value analysis.
- Transforms IT function: develops and implements organizational models and HR impact study. Identifies target organizations, defines sourcing strategy, and supports partner selection.

Operational Efficiency

- Evaluates the maturity of processes and organizations (benchmarking, defines and implements efficiency plans), cost management, and prioritization of the investment portfolio.

Supervision

- Exercises responsibility for all aspects of staffing and workforce management for ITS including interviewing, selecting, and training employees; planning, assigning, and directing work; appraising performance; addressing disciplinary issues with the assistance of the Director of HR; and handling complaints and resolving issues in accordance with University Policies.
- Assesses current and future staffing needs and, subject to approval, plans for acquires, manages, and ensures effective integration of ITS staff.
- Identifies professional development needs of staff and managers and provides appropriate training, mentoring, on-the-job experiences and other development opportunities wherever possible to align the evolution of the IT organization in relation with the technology changes and needs of the university.
- Ensures that managers and staff in areas of responsibility have a customer-service focus.
- Builds and maintains positive working relations, fosters overall morale, and upholds the customer-service focus within ITS.

Representative/Liaison

- Serves as an active member of the Leadership Team. Communicates all campus IT strategy initiatives and provides progress reports.
- Makes occasional reports to the Board committee overseeing IT's area of responsibilities.
- Represents IT and the university as a member of professional organizations in areas of expertise and responsibility.

KEY OPPORTUNITIES + CHALLENGES

Over the last few years, AUP has dedicated a great deal of time and resources to advance a complete digital overhaul and modernization of data integration, referred to as the Integrated Resource Information Systems “IRIS” Project. While IRIS achieved several successes, notably in the implementation of Slate for admissions, PowerFAIDS for financial aid, and in the expansion of technology solutions (ADP) in Human Resources, key projects to implement a new Financial Information System (FIS) and Student Information System (SIS) were paused in June 2024 after the need emerged to reevaluate their suitability for AUP. Working closely with the President, Leadership Team, and the Board of Trustees’ Digital Transformation Committee, the CIO will join AUP as the university reembarks on FIS and SIS upgrades and plays a leading role in ensuring upgrades are successful. More comprehensively, the CIO will be expected to create a vision and roadmap for comprehensive digital transformation at AUP that supports and advances the university’s teaching and research missions, harnesses the potential of emergent technologies, and strengthens the effectiveness and efficiency of administrative functions.

It is within this context that the CIO will work to address the following opportunities and challenges:

Address existing technological debt and upgrade existing systems where possible

AUP’s legacy FIS (Microsoft AX) and SIS (CAMS) have not been upgraded in years. To move the IRIS Project forward following the previously unsuccessful FIS and SIS implementations, the university has decided to migrate existing legacy systems to the most current versions to reobtain vendor support, address various usability issues, and identify potential new features or functionality. The incoming CIO will likely join AUP midway through this process and will be expected to see the project through to successful completion. The CIO will provide leadership and oversight for the system upgrade processes. Leveraging a nuanced understanding of campus needs, resource parameters, and IT capabilities, the CIO will actively engage leadership in discussions about and evaluations of possible new features or add-ons that may add significant value to software stakeholders and users. In collaboration with the ITS team and constituents across the campus, the CIO will lead the implementation of any selected new features.

Craft a technology vision and roadmap in support of key strategic initiatives

As a leading technology executive, the CIO will determine short- and long-term priorities by evaluating the current state of IT infrastructure and functions on campus, identifying approaches that are in harmony with AUP’s culture, and recommending solutions that maximize effectiveness and minimize costs. The CIO will develop a technology roadmap that aligns with the university’s new strategic plan – creating a vibrant, technology-rich, service-oriented culture; developing a state-of-the-art student learning hub; and realizing the potential of emerging technologies, including AI, to enhance learning and ensure the university’s future is supported by forward-thinking, ethical practices and policies. The CIO will work collaboratively across the AUP community to enact the culture change needed to move initiatives forward.

A critical first piece of any ITS strategy will be to investigate, evaluate, and select new FIS and SIS systems and then launch new implementation project(s) with clear timelines, milestones, and deliverables. The CIO will play a leading role with the President, Provost, CFO, and IRIS Core Team to realize these critical systems that will serve as a technological foundation for the university for years to come, improve administrative and academic functionality, and provide seamless integration and accurate data. Across this work, the CIO will pay careful attention to the constraints, regulations, and laws that shape this work given AUP's orientation as an American-style liberal arts college situated in Europe.

Support teaching and learning across AUP

The CIO will lead the integration of technology into teaching, learning, and research to facilitate student success and to provide the best possible learning environment for a diverse academic community. To achieve this goal, the CIO will develop an academic technology unit under ITS that is highly integrated with the faculty. Under the direction of the CIO, the academic technology unit will be highly service-oriented and customer-focused, proactively and collaboratively working across campus to address problems and offer solutions, positing ITS as a high-quality, value-add partner to academic affairs. Working in partnership with faculty and colleagues in the Academic Resource Center (ARC), the Library, and the Teaching & Learning Center, the CIO and the academic technology unit will identify needs and opportunities across units and support the design and implementation of technology and multimedia that support pedagogy and curriculum.

Looking to the future, the CIO will also play a critical role in reimagining the role of the Library in the digital age. As the Library at AUP moves away from a physical collection and towards digital acquisitions and databases, a wide range of possibilities emerge associated with staffing, physical space, software contracts, programming related to digital humanities and information literacy, and potential external partnerships. It will be critical for the incoming CIO to bring a strong understanding of the liberal arts academic program and experience working with faculty and academic leadership to develop and realize, in consultation with the President and Provost, an overall vision for academic support at AUP.

Effectively lead, mentor, and develop the ITS team

The next CIO will inherit a small yet high-performing, dedicated, and talented team of 13 professionals with a wide range of responsibilities, knowledge, and experience. The CIO will build on existing frameworks and efforts to foster a greater sense of shared purpose and provide a vision for a cohesive organization that is innovative, responsive, flexible, and committed to excellent customer service. Upon arrival, the CIO will be expected to evaluate the team to determine the most effective organizational structure, staffing levels, resource allocations, and training needed to accomplish the university's mission and goals. The CIO will be a leader with a passion for fostering professional development pathways, mindful of opportunities for growth and succession planning.

Of particular importance, the ITS team is made up of professionals with both French and American backgrounds. The CIO will need to be a strong intercultural communicator, able to bridge different perspectives, norms, and expectations, both within the ITS division and externally across campus.

Build technological capacity and tech-savvy culture within AUP

To best achieve the university's technological strategic goals, the CIO must serve as an educator and capacity builder within the AUP community. Leading with strong communication, patience, and genuine curiosity about the diverse technological needs and preferences that exist across faculty, staff, and students, the CIO will develop processes, trainings, tools, and resources that encourage and facilitate technology adoption and use. The CIO will create a culture that prizes technology as a partner, not just a service, establishing the transformative potential of technology and data to transform academic, research, administrative, decision-making, and communication capabilities. Building partnerships with constituents across the university, the CIO will proactively identify opportunities to provide education and training related to emerging technology and software, communication platforms, AI, data usage and literacy, and project management.

Provide leadership and support for ongoing efforts related to data governance and AI at AUP

A critical component of the IRIS Project is to create a data warehouse at AUP. A Data Governance Committee has been formed to develop a data dictionary, maintain authority and responsibility for data integrity, and ensure the appropriate movement of data across software packages – all foundational pieces for the creation of a data warehouse following the successful implementation of the FIS and SYS systems. The CIO will continue the important work of the Data Governance Committee, providing leadership that instills the Committee with focus and authority, guiding the selection of data warehouse tools, and beginning a pilot at the appropriate moment.

The CIO will also support and provide expertise to [AI@AUP](#), a faculty-led, campus-wide project aimed to study, assess, and reflect upon the use and potential of AI tools across the university, particularly the classroom. The goals are to develop a coordinated community response to generative AI in teaching, scholarship, and work at AUP.

THE SUCCESSFUL CANDIDATE

AUP seeks a strategic information technology leader who brings significant experience in an academic environment with broad knowledge across the full spectrum of technology issues spanning infrastructure, administration, and digital learning. This person will be a collaborative leader with strong team management skills, able to establish and sustain productive working relationships with a range of constituents and the capacity to drive change through collaboration, diplomacy, and influence. While few individuals will embody all of them, the successful candidate will bring many of the following experiences and qualities:

- Senior leadership experience across a complex organization with multiple levels of stakeholders, encompassing strategic planning, project management, visioning, and process transformation;
- Proven knowledge of state-of-the-art information technologies and new media and experience implementing major IT initiatives and new systems across complex environments;
- Experience managing large and complex ERP outsourcing contracts, contract administration experience, and vendor management;
- An understanding of the full spectrum of IT activities within a higher education setting, including technological and administrative infrastructure, academic and research computing, instructional technology, telecommunications, and user support services;
- Track record of outstanding management demonstrative financial acumen, organizational sophistication, and high emotional intelligence;
- Orientation toward the future demonstrated by staying abreast of IT trends in higher education. Demonstrated track record of investment in professional development for self and staff;
- Exceptional communication skills, particularly the ability to explain, simplify, and build unity around complex and often technical issues;
- A strong customer-service orientation and the ability to build and sustain a culture defined by excellence and responsiveness. A manner that conveys confidence, warmth, and accessibility;
- A very good listener with the ability to relate well to a wide variety of constituents and members of the University community;
- Devotion to the highest ethical standards; personal and professional integrity;
- Experience living/working abroad;
- At least ten years of increasable and broad-based responsibility in Information Technology;
- An advanced degree is preferred.

APPLICATIONS, NOMINATIONS, AND INQUIRIES

Confidential inquiries, nominations/referrals, and applications (including resumes and letters of interest responding to the opportunities and challenges outlined above) should be sent electronically to the Isaacson, Miller executive search team via the link below.

Dan Rodas, Partner
Amble Ryan, Managing Associate
Nicole Sancilio, Senior Search Coordinator
Isaacson, Miller

<https://www.imsearch.com/open-searches/american-university-paris/chief-information-officer>

We invite and encourage members of underrepresented populations to apply. The University is an equal opportunity employer and we view diversity as an essential source of our vitality and strength.