Executive Vice President for Research
Rice University
Houston, Texas

THE SEARCH

Rice University, among the nation's most ambitious and renowned private research universities and a long-standing member of the American Association of Universities (AAU), seeks a transformative and visionary scholar-leader and deft administrator to serve as its next Executive Vice President for Research (EVPR). As the University's chief research officer, the EVPR oversees the institution's internal and external research enterprise and serves as chief advocate for Rice's scholarly and societal impact locally, nationally, and internationally. The EVPR will set the strategic direction and vision in close partnership with the Provost while collaborating with other members of the University's senior leadership team as a member of the President's Cabinet. The Office of Innovation, the Office of Technology Transfer, the Office of Research Integrity, the Office of Sponsored Projects, and the Animal Resources Facility are all housed with and managed by the Office of Research. The EVPR also has responsibility for the Office of Research Security. The EVPR will work closely with the deans, faculty, and staff throughout the institution to strengthen the University's research and innovation infrastructure and propel Rice's research productivity to new heights. The EVPR will join the Rice community at an exciting inflection point in the University's history, as President Reginald DesRoches seeks to evolve the institution through his ambitious strategic plan, Momentous, all while devoting considerable resources to transforming Rice into a center of impactful and broad-based interdisciplinary research while retaining a deep commitment to pedagogy and the student experience.

Rice is in the midst of ambitious plans to grow the student body by approximately 30% while significantly growing the faculty to maintain a historically low student-to-faculty ratio while adding talent in key areas that are aligned with the strategic plan and will elevate the research mission.

Centrally located in America's most diverse city with the 3rd largest number of Fortune 500 companies in the country, the energy capital, and proximate to the Texas Medical Center — the world's largest academic medical complex — Rice University is a tier-one research university dedicated to scholarship addressing the world's most urgent problems, rigorous undergraduate and graduate education, and professional training in selected disciplines. Rice's community comprises over 1,000 faculty who are devoted to the instruction and training of approximately 4,800 undergraduate students and 4,100 graduate and professional students across eight schools of academic study. In 2024, *U.S. News & World*

Report ranked Rice 18th among national universities and 7th for undergraduate education. Forbes recently ranked Rice as ninth among America's top colleges and put Rice on its list of "New Ivies." *U.S. News* also ranked six graduate programs in the top 10 and 22 graduate programs in the top 25 among their peers in 2024. Rice faculty conduct world-class research across a breadth of disciplines and numerous research groups, centers, and institutes and have grown sponsored research awards significantly over the past few years, bringing in $218 million in sponsored research in FY2024. The preponderance of Rice's research funding derives from the National Science Foundation, the National Institutes of Health, the Department of Defense, corporate partners, and various foundations. The University has recently made key capacity-building investments to expand its funding base and revenue streams under the next EVPR, who will promote the development of new projects, contracts, and grants at an unprecedented scale and who will advocate for the resources, infrastructure, and staff needed to catalyze and sustain this growth. A key goal for the next EVPR will be to expand the agencies, foundations, and companies that support and partner with Rice's research.

As a cabinet-level position reporting directly to the President, the Executive Vice President for Research will work closely and collaboratively with key University leaders to advance Rice's research mission while supporting faculty in their individual and collective research aspirations across disciplines. Together with the University's communications and federal relations team, the EVPR will take on a robust external role in promoting the University's research capacity with external partners, including federal funding agencies in Washington, D.C., federally-funded research and development centers (FFRDCs) with whom the University may be in consultation, state agencies in Austin, TX, other academic institutions aligned with Rice's overarching research goals, and major industrial partners. To aggressively grow and diversify Rice's federal funding portfolio, the EVPR is expected to be deeply connected with Washington, D.C., and the national capital region and will position Rice more prominently before external funding agencies. The EVPR will have a deep understanding of how IP, policies, and funds influence or constrain a future-oriented and pioneering academic research enterprise and will make tactical and strategic investments to position Rice ahead of its peers in terms of its scalability and its highest scholarly ambitions.

Rice University has retained Isaacson, Miller, a national executive search firm, to assist with this important search. Confidential applications, inquiries, and nominations should be directed to the search firm as indicated at the end of this document.

ABOUT RICE UNIVERSITY

Rice University aspires to pathbreaking research, innovative pedagogy, and contributions to the betterment of humanity and the world. It seeks to fulfill this mission by cultivating a diverse community of learning and discovery that produces leaders across the spectrum of human endeavor.

Located in the heart of Houston, Texas, Rice opened its doors in 1912 and has consistently deepened and broadened its research, education, and service missions ever since. Rice is a member of the Association of American Universities, the organization of the 71 leading North American research universities.

The University's eight schools — Architecture, the George R. Brown School of Engineering and Computing, Humanities, Jones Graduate School of Business School, the Shepherd School of Music, the Wiess School of Natural Sciences, Social Sciences, and the Susanne M. Glasscock School of Continuing Studies — attract a diverse group of highly talented students from around the country and internationally. Renowned faculty are devoted to excellence in teaching and research. Sponsored research awards totaled $218 million in FY2024; in the last decade, Rice has consistently outperformed federal budget increases for research spending. Nearly two-thirds of undergraduate students participate in research during their time at Rice, concomitant with Rice's dedication both to research and pedagogical excellence.

These activities take place on Rice's tree-shaded campus, which features many buildings designed in a neo-Byzantine style and occupies nearly 300 acres as a designated arboretum and is often listed as one of the most beautiful campuses in the country, only a few miles from downtown Houston. The University has eleven (and soon to be 13) residential undergraduate colleges and boasts excellent campus facilities and amenities, including a robust public art collection. Rice's community includes about 8,900 undergraduate and graduate students, over 1,000 faculty, and over 2,600 staff.

A mile from campus is the Ion, Houston's innovation district, which Rice University established and leads. The Ion brings the city's entrepreneurial, corporate, and academic communities into a collaborative space that will allow ideas to grow, partnerships to flourish, and accelerate the commercialization of research and company formation. Built over 12 square blocks, the Ion has wide-ranging capabilities such as a prototyping lab, an investor studio, an accelerator hub, venture firms, and a network of corporate and academic partners, including Rice, tailored for collaboration. The Ion also joined a new partnership with Greentown Labs to support climate tech solutions with the goal of being the most innovative institution aimed at advancing sustainable solutions to energy, climate, and the environment.

Rice also occupies part of the Helix Park, a district located in the Texas Medical Center that joins top medical talent, cutting-edge research, and academic institutions to fuel innovation. This includes the Rice Biotech Launchpad, which will enable Rice to tackle some of the most pressing healthcare challenges by working with partners in the Texas Medical Center to make therapeutics more affordable and biotech innovation stronger.

Rice has an endowment of $8 billion market value as of June 30, 2024, and reported an operating budget of $1 billion for the year ending June 30, 2025. The University's resources have permitted Rice to offer an intellectually ambitious yet financially affordable education. The University has been nationally acclaimed by Kiplinger's as the "best value" in private higher education, with an undergraduate net tuition price consistently lower than other leading private institutions.

Beginning in the Fall of 2019, Rice University instituted The Rice Investment, one of the nation's most generous need-based financial aid initiatives to provide an affordable, quality education for low- and middle-income students from families with income of up to $200,000 and typical assets. The income bands were raised in fall 2021 so that, effective with the 2022-23 academic year, domestic degree-seeking students qualifying for need-based aid with family incomes below $75,000 receive grant aid covering at

least full tuition, mandatory fees, and room and board. Students from families with incomes between $75,000 and $140,000 will receive at least full tuition scholarships. Students with family incomes between $140,000 and $200,000 will receive scholarships covering at least half their tuition. Loans are not required as part of financial aid packages. These changes reflect Rice's ongoing commitment to broaden access and diversity across the student body.

Houston and the Community

The fourth-largest city in the U.S., Houston is the energy capital of the world, home to vibrant performing and visual arts communities, and boasts more Fortune 500 company headquarters than any city except New York and Chicago. Rice is part of the Texas Medical Center, the world's largest medical complex, employing more than 65,000 people and located across the street from Rice's main campus. NASA's Lyndon B. Johnson Space Center, where human spaceflight training, research, and flight control are conducted, is only twenty-five miles from the heart of the city.

Houston is one of only six American cities with resident professional companies in all four major performing arts: ballet, opera, theater, and symphony. Houston's Museum of Fine Arts houses an extensive collection containing more than 51,000 artworks dating from antiquity to the present, and the city's Museum of Natural Science is an impressive five-venue complex that houses the Burke Baker Dome Theatre, Wortham IMAX Theatre, Cockrell Butterfly Center, and four floors of natural science exhibits. Additionally, Houston is home to the Menil Collection art museum, a 30-acre neighborhood of art.

Houston's 52,912 acres of park space ranks first among the nation's 10 most populous cities. Thanks to mild year-round temperatures, 300 miles of interconnected bikeways, and the 2012 introduction of the Houston B-Cycle share program, biking is one of the best ways to see the city. The Armand Bayou Nature Center, Hermann Park, the Houston Zoo, Cypress Trails, and the Mercer Arboretum and Botanical Gardens are just some of the many serene and beautiful outdoor landmarks to explore.

Houston is the most diverse city in North America, both ethnically and culturally: its population is 37% Hispanic, 31% European-American, 25% African-American, and 7% Asian-American. Such diversity not only makes Houston an exciting place to live but also represents a great strength for Rice, as people of different backgrounds and interests work together in virtually all local, political, educational, professional, and social contexts. The city continues to grow and is one of the five main destinations for immigrants to the United States.

Rice has made it a priority for students and faculty to engage actively with the city of Houston and the myriad opportunities it offers. Rice's 2024 Volunteer Impact Report details the vast volunteer representation from students, faculty and staff, alumni, parents, and friends of the university. It demonstrates the university's successful pivot to virtual volunteer engagement events during the pandemic. The university also builds community engagement through educational outreach programs that are a natural outgrowth of the research, teaching, and service of faculty.

Momentous Strategic Plan

Rice University President Reginald DesRoches stated in his inaugural address that his vision for the university is that Rice be a premier research university with much greater visibility and with graduate programs of the same distinction as the university's undergraduate program, all while maintaining Rice's commitment to excellence in undergraduate education and the values of access and excellence.

A 15-member strategic planning committee of faculty, staff, students, and alumni was selected to provide insight, gather diverse perspectives from their areas of expertise, and create a strategic plan. The committee—along with Rice's deans and vice presidents—led the planning process. The broader Rice community also had ample opportunity to lend their voices to the plan, which eventually became Momentous.

As part of an updated vision for the university included in the strategic plan, Rice will be the world's premier teaching and research university, delivering unparalleled personalized education and propelling breakthrough discovery to transform lives and better humanity.

More information about the plan can be found at momentous.rice.edu.

RESEARCH AT RICE

Rice University's 1,008 outstanding full- and part-time faculty are active scholars, researchers, and collaborators who have made significant contributions to the advancement of knowledge and culture for the betterment of society. They are distinguished by their efforts to combine research and teaching with community engagement. As of 2025, the faculty boasts more than 24 members of the National Academy of Sciences, National Academy of Engineering, and National Academy of Medicine; numerous American Academy of Arts and Sciences members; and two past Nobel laureates. In addition, Rice University faculty have won several high-profile awards, including MacArthur Genius Grants, Pulitzer Prizes, and 22 NSF CAREER Award winners since 2023.

Rice also features world-class teaching and research facilities. It recently opened the 250,000-square-foot O'Connor Engineering and Science Building, which is now home to several key research centers and institutes (opened in 2023). The University also recently completed a $150 million Brockman Opera House for the top-ranked Shepherd School of Music. The William T. Cannady Hall for Architecture is a 22,000 square foot addition to Rice School of Architecture, designed to foster architectural production, research, and exhibition. Cannady Hall enhances the university's research capacity with spaces dedicated to architecture, construction, digital fabrication, sustainability, and urban design. In September of 2021, the Moody Foundation granted Rice University $100 million to build a transformative new student center designed by one of the world's premier architects and to create endowments supporting student opportunity and success, both as part of the center and in other areas of the University. Construction on Sarofim Hall, Rice's new student and faculty arts building, is bringing to life a space that bridges the rich legacy of the arts at Rice with an exciting future. Sarofim Hall will be a cornerstone of this growing arts

hub, home to talented students and supported by the vision and generosity of our donors. Rice also recently broke ground on a new $54.5 million building for the Jones Graduate School of Business, unveiling the innovative design of a facility that will support the school's growing graduate and undergraduate student and faculty population. This remarkable new building embodies the evolution of Rice Business over the past five decades and its commitment to equipping graduates who are not only integral to organizations around the globe but are also poised to lead them. Rice's Shared Equipment Authority (SEA), overseen by the EVPR, provides advanced facilities, instrumentation, and technical expertise for Rice's faculty, including a $20 million clean room, a $12 million advanced animal resources facility, and imaging and characterization equipment.

The breadth of research at Rice is impressive in both its focus and its diversity. In recent years, Rice scholars have advanced frontiers of knowledge in fields from diverse local and global architecture, arts, and humanities; to the computer-aided molecular sciences; to exploring race and gender in relation to religion; to open-source, data-driven education initiatives; to advanced rapid-antigen testing in response to the global COVID-19 crisis. Roughly 26% of Rice's annual federal research awards derive from the NSF; another 17% derive from the NIH; 8% from the DoD; 4% from the Department of Energy; and about 4% of Rice's research funding is connected to NASA and other federal funding sources. Rice also receives a significant amount of non-federal funding through a combination of state and local awards, including grants from the City of Houston and the State of Texas. This includes 20 scholars who have received CPRIT funds over the past six years. Rice also receives about 25% of its research funding from industry and non-profit partners.

ROLE OF THE EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT FOR RESEARCH

The Executive Vice President for Research is a direct report to the President of Rice University and a member of the President's Cabinet. As the chief advocate and evangelist for the University's broad research enterprise, the EVPR will have a demonstrable understanding of and appreciation for all facets of the University's scholarly endeavors, including the STEM fields, the social sciences, humanities, and the liberal and performing arts. The EVPR oversees the Office of Research (OR), leading a staff of nearly 100 exceptional individuals. The critical internal functions that fall under the scope of the Office of Research include technology transfer, innovation and commercialization, the Animal Resources Facility (ARF, and related policies), the Shared Equipment Authority (SEA, responsible for research instrumentation cores), Research Security, the University's seed funding programs, centers and institutes, and the core support functions of Sponsored Projects and the Office of Research Integrity which includes: IRB, IBC, IACUC, COI, SCRO. The EVPR must ensure the effective and efficient internal functioning of Rice's research and innovation infrastructure across all disciplines at a tactical level while partnering strategically with leadership and Rice's talented faculty to envision the future of the OR and the University. The EVPR will work to reshape the resourcing and orientation of the Office of Research to build a sustainable and scalable University research infrastructure and create a cohesive ecosystem within the innovation community. Undergirding this internal evolution will be a new and deliberate focus on positioning Rice aggressively in Washington, D.C., and at the state level in Austin, TX, by an EVPR deeply connected to

federal and state funding agencies and adept at navigating their diverse cultures and mechanisms. Where applicable, the EVPR will also serve as a key partner in advancing the university's strategic fundraising and philanthropic goals, using the value of the research at Rice to position the university as a key partner in the minds of donors and potential funders.

KEY OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR THE EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT

The successful candidate will focus on the following key opportunities and challenges:

Build and expand on the ambitious and collaborative vision for research excellence across Rice University that spans disciplines and leverages Rice's unique strengths and ecosystem in Houston

Situated in the heart of the world's energy capital, adjacent to one of the nation's singularly powerful health sciences campuses, and with a deeply held tradition of fundamental inquiry married to powerful, translational impact, Rice University is poised for tremendous research growth in the years ahead. Through key strategic investments from the Board of Trustees, an evolving leadership posture driven by an enterprising President, and a renowned faculty eager for cultural transformation in research, the University aspires to surpass expectations and build a holistic, impactful research enterprise equal to the most powerful institutions in the country. The EVPR will come aboard at this inflection point, will seamlessly integrate into a new and empowered leadership team, and will connect across the University — from Deans to the faculty senate to staff and students—in order to drive that transformation forward.

Deepen and strengthen connections with external research partners nationally and internationally, in Washington, D.C., in Austin, TX, and within and across Houston's considerable ecosystem

The EVPR will be a tireless supporter of and advocate for the pathbreaking scholarship of Rice University near and far. They will champion the University externally, exploring new research areas and garnering further support via new federal and industrial partnerships, foundation funding, and with the TMC and other academic institutions aligned with Rice's goals. Rice University is a member of the non-profit Universities Research Association (URA) and has had deep connections with the Fermilab National Accelerator since the 1970s; Rice is home to the pioneering Houston Education Research Consortium (HERC), using a research-practice partnership model leading to collaborations with the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD); taken altogether, Rice's renown spans domains and geographies, and the EVPR will carry the message of Rice's ambitions before diverse funding agencies, foundations, non-profits, and industries that can broaden the University's funding base and open further avenues for Rice's faculty to acquire new support and push forth new areas of inquiry across the humanities, social sciences, and STEM fields.

Strengthen Rice's efforts around artificial intelligence and establish Rice as a hub for defining responsible AI and advancing our understanding of the impact of emerging technologies

The EVPR will help sustain and grow Rice University's position as a global leader in the development, application, and understanding of responsible AI, advancements in computing, and disruptive

technologies. This position, in collaboration with faculty and departments on campus, will do this by helping foster cutting-edge research on foundational AI and machine learning, developing interdisciplinary applications of AI to create innovative solutions that integrate behavioral and societal impacts in collaboration with industry and nonprofit organization partners, leading in ethical advancement and understanding of these applications, and creating distinctive, cross-disciplinary educational programs in responsible AI to guide ethical advancements from technological disruptions.

Serve as a thought leader across campus for collaboration in research and for cross-pollinating transformational ideas that address present and future challenges

Rice University has a strong tradition of grassroots scholarly achievement that addresses fundamental quandaries facing society and the world at large. Rice's achievements span past and present: from pioneering work in energy economics to new priorities in sustainable and renewable energy; from foundational excellence in condensed matter physics; from the strengths in the broader fields of Health and Medicine, including Global Health, Synthetic Biology, and Neuroengineering to the strengths in Urban Research and Disparities, and from Rice's strong tradition of undergraduate pedagogical excellence to the creation of new fields of study in learning technologies and data science. The pandemic and the climate crisis, among other tidal forces, will continue to shift federal funding emphasis toward new areas of focus at the nexus of disciplines, and Rice's expertise, renown, and intimate culture position it well to seize on these opportunities and catalyze a major expansion of funding across its manifold strengths. The EVPR will ensure that Rice remains in the vanguard of institutions addressing the most vexing challenges facing society today and in the future. The EVPR will draw on their ability to set a compelling vision, their credibility and record of accomplishment, and their persuasive skills to bring together investigators, staff, and students from across the University around big ideas and initiatives for the betterment of the world.

QUALIFICATIONS AND CHARACTERISTICS

The ideal candidate will be a distinguished scholar and research leader who embodies the mission, vision and culture of Rice. A doctoral degree and a distinguished record of excellence in scholarship, research management, and external engagement are required. Strong candidates will have some combination of the following qualifications and characteristics:

- A visionary and catalyzing leader who exercises superb judgment, evaluates trends, anticipates emerging areas, and defines adaptive and collaborative strategic priorities;
- A demonstrated commitment to access and excellence;
- A proven record of achievement in building, enhancing, and sustaining research infrastructure;
- Demonstrated experience in securing fundamental and translational research funding, particularly for interdisciplinary projects;
- Deep ties to and experience in engaging with senior leadership in government, business, and industry communities; demonstrated experience in securing major research funding from multiple sources;

- Effective management of a complex organization within a large university or comparable public or private sector research organization;
- A record of leading organizational and cultural change in a complex research environment, and the empathy and presence to nurture an organization through such transformation;
- A noted scholar with the ability and credibility to provide intellectual leadership to Rice's broad research community; a champion for programs outside of their domain of expertise, who can inspire and galvanize others around large-scale and multidisciplinary efforts;
- Excellent communication skills to represent the University persuasively and compellingly to a broad range of internal and external audiences, including strong listening skills;
- Knowledge and understanding of the current legislative, regulatory, and public policy environment impacting research

APPLICATIONS, INQUIRIES, AND NOMINATIONS

Screening of complete applications will begin immediately and continue until the completion of the search process. Inquiries, nominations, referrals, and CVs with cover letters should be sent via the Isaacson, Miller website: https://www.imsearch.com/open-searches/rice-university/executive-vice-president-research. Electronic submission of materials is strongly encouraged.

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