



Director of Compensation  
Rochester Institute of Technology  
Rochester, New York

## THE SEARCH

Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT) seeks a strategic and collaborative thought leader to serve as the next Director of Compensation. The Director of Compensation will lead a critical function at the intersection of workforce strategy and institutional transformation. This leader will drive the evolution of RIT's staff compensation philosophy, steward the integration of a new staff architecture, and play a pivotal role in the upcoming Workday implementation and support executive and faculty compensation initiatives. They will lead a high-performing team, foster a culture of innovation and growth, and ensure alignment with RIT's strategic goals through data-driven insights and forward-thinking practices. As a trusted advisor to the Associate Vice President and Chief Human Resources Officer and other senior leaders, the Director will serve on the HR leadership team and will collaborate across HR and the broader university community to shape equitable, future-ready staff compensation solutions that support RIT's mission and long-term success.

Founded in 1829, Rochester Institute of Technology has a long-standing history of innovation that blends the arts, technology, and experiential learning. In addition to its main campus in Rochester, New York, RIT maintains a strong international presence with over 100 active global partnerships and international campuses in Croatia, Dubai, and Kosovo. As of Fall 2024, total student enrollment across all campuses exceeded 21,000. Nationally recognized for its co-op and internship programs, RIT is supported by more than 4,000 dedicated faculty and staff members committed to student success. Its 1,300-acre suburban campus features cutting-edge facilities that reflect RIT's strengths in applied research, design, and workforce development.

The next Director will have a unique opportunity to make a significant impact by strengthening RIT's staff compensation strategy through the evaluation and enhancement of systems, processes, and operations. Ideal candidates will bring proven experience in compensation and classification, along with a track record of leading high-performing teams. Success in this role will require a collaborative mindset, strong stakeholder engagement skills, and the ability to influence through expertise and thoughtful guidance. The Director must also demonstrate sound judgment, political acumen, and a commitment to fostering a culture of trust, innovation, and continuous improvement. A bachelor's degree and a minimum of seven

years of progressive experience in compensation management are required. An advanced degree or professional certification (i.e., CCP) is strongly preferred.

Rochester Institute of Technology has retained Isaacson, Miller, a national executive search firm, to assist in the recruitment of its next Director of Compensation. Please direct all applications, nominations, and inquiries to Isaacson, Miller, as indicated at the end of this document.

## ABOUT ROCHESTER INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

[Rochester Institute of Technology \(RIT\)](#) is a global, medium-sized, private R2 research university with its main campus in Rochester, New York. RIT maintains a strong international presence, with over 100 active global partnerships and international campuses located in Croatia, Dubai, and Kosovo. As of Fall 2024, total student enrollment across all campuses exceeded 21,000. RIT enrolled a record high of just over 3,600 students across its global campuses, more than doubling its global enrollment over the last decade. The main campus enrolled 17,166 students, comprising 14,305 undergraduates and 2,859 graduate students.

Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT) has a legacy of innovation, creativity, and ingenuity that dates back to 1829, when the Rochester Athenaeum was founded. This literary society offered public lectures and debates and attracted such luminaries as Ralph Waldo Emerson and Oliver Wendell Holmes. In 1891, the Athenaeum merged with the Mechanics Institute, which was established by local business leaders to provide technical training for the region's growing industries. This merger created a unique educational model that combined the arts with applied technology, an approach that continues to define RIT today.

By 1912, RIT had introduced cooperative education, integrating classroom learning with real-world experience. The institution officially became Rochester Institute of Technology in 1944. It awarded its first bachelor's degrees in 1955 and master's degrees in 1960, marking its evolution into a comprehensive university.

A major milestone came in 1966 when RIT was selected as the home of the National Technical Institute for the Deaf (NTID), which began operations in 1968. NTID now serves over 930 deaf and hard-of-hearing students, fostering a diverse and inclusive campus where students of all abilities learn and collaborate.

RIT launched its first PhD program in 1990 and now offers 13 doctoral degrees. The university is internationally recognized for excellence in fields such as business, computing, engineering, game design, imaging science, sustainability, and the arts. Its reputation continues to grow, with U.S. News & World Report ranking RIT #5 in the nation for co-op and internship programs, #41 among "Most Innovative Schools," and #42 for best value.

RIT faculty are deeply committed to the university's mission, fostering a close educational relationship between faculty and students and recognizing the critical impact mentorship can have on students' future professional and personal lives. The faculty is composed of 1,120 full-time and over 400 part-time members.

Faculty include Pulitzer Prize recipients, leaders of national organizations, and trailblazers in gaming, access technology, sustainability, science and mathematics, engineering, and the humanities.

Essential to all University activities and initiatives are the employees who tirelessly support and advance the student experience at RIT. The University employs more than 2,700 full-time and part-time talented and passionate staff, who form the backbone of RIT's operations and are integral members of the tight-knit RIT community.

Staff support student life, health and wellness, the educational mission, and the critical academic, research, co-curricular, and business operations of the institution. Many are alumni, underscoring RIT's role as a major local employer and the dedication of its staff.

Situated in Henrietta, a suburb just south of Rochester, New York, the expansive 1,300-acre campus blends modern architecture with green spaces, creating a dynamic environment for innovation, learning, and creativity. The campus features cutting-edge facilities, including specialized labs and studios, reflecting RIT's strengths in technology, design, and experiential education.

Just a short drive away, the city of Rochester offers a rich cultural and historical backdrop. Located on the southern shore of Lake Ontario and intersected by the Genesee River, Rochester is known for its legacy of innovation, once home to major companies like Kodak and Xerox. Today, the city of Rochester is a dynamic hub for business and technology and is home to leading companies, high-tech industries, and start-up enterprises in optics, imaging, manufacturing, engineering, software, and health care.

Rochester is also a thriving culinary destination, a playground for music enthusiasts, a nature lovers' paradise, an area known for charming festivals, and an imaginative arts and theater scene. Home to nearly 1.1 million people, Greater Rochester is the third-largest metro area in New York. Rochester is a multifaceted, vibrant city, and one of the best to visit, live in, and enjoy.

## UNIVERSITY LEADERSHIP

### President | Dr. William Sanders

Dr. William "Bill" Sanders became RIT's 11<sup>th</sup> president on Tuesday, July 1, 2025. He came to Rochester from Carnegie Mellon University, where he served as the William D. and Nancy W. Strecker Dean of the College of Engineering since 2020.

Before joining Carnegie Mellon, Dr. William H. Sanders spent 25 years at the University of Illinois, where he held the Herman M. Dieckamp Endowed Chair in Engineering and served in several key leadership roles. He was the founding director of both the Information Trust Institute and the Discovery Partners Institute, the latter of which he led in advancing technology-driven economic development across Illinois and revitalizing Chicago's tech ecosystem through collaborative education, research, and innovation.

At Carnegie Mellon, he has led transformative initiatives, including the launch of pioneering degree programs in AI Engineering and Engineering Design, the expansion of graduate offerings, and the establishment of a landmark partnership with the Mastercard Foundation to significantly grow CMU-Africa. Dr. Sanders began his academic career in 1988 as an assistant professor in the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering at the University of Arizona.

A recognized expert in secure and resilient computing systems, Dr. Sanders has authored more than 300 technical publications and co-founded Network Perception, a cybersecurity startup acquired by Dragos Inc. in 2024. His contributions to the field have earned him election to the National Academy of Engineering in 2023, as well as fellowships in IEEE, ACM, and AAAS.

President Sanders earned his bachelor's degree in computer engineering, master's degree in computer, information, and control engineering, and doctoral degree in computer science and engineering from the University of Michigan.

#### **AVP and Chief Human Resources Officer | Jo Ellen Pinkham**

Jo Ellen Pinkham became the Associate Vice President and Chief Human Resources Officer at RIT in August 2020.

Before joining RIT, Jo Ellen served as the Associate Vice President for Human Resources and the Associate to the President at Nazareth College of Rochester (now Nazareth University). During her time there, she successfully led an organizational restructure, redesigned the employee benefits program, conducted a comprehensive staff benchmarking initiative, coordinated Nazareth's presidential search, COVID-19 response, and fall planning task force; in addition to providing organizational and operational leadership for the human resources function.

Jo Ellen holds an MBA with a concentration in human resource management from the University of Buffalo and a BA, summa cum laude, from Hamilton College.

## **ROLE OF THE DIRECTOR OF COMPENSATION**

The next Director of Compensation will bring visionary, proactive leadership to a function central to RIT's evolving workforce strategy. This individual will have the opportunity to drive meaningful transformation in staff compensation programs, steward the integration of staff architecture, and play a key role in the upcoming Workday implementation and support executive and faculty compensation initiatives. They will lead a high-performing team of three analysts, with a focus on innovation, development, and long-term success.

Collaboration and communication will be essential as the Director partners with HR colleagues and other senior leaders to ensure cohesive, aligned policies and programs. Reporting to the AVP and CHRO and serving on the HR leadership team, the Director will also serve as a trusted advisor and subject-matter

expert and provide strategic insight to shape equitable, future-ready staff compensation solutions that support RIT's institutional goals.

## KEY OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

The Director will bring proactive, forward-thinking leadership to RIT's staff compensation function, with the vision, agility, and strong management expertise to effectively address the following opportunities and challenges:

### **Drive the evolution of staff compensation strategy and technology at RIT**

The Director of Compensation serves as a strategic leader in shaping the long-term direction of RIT's staff compensation philosophy and program execution. This role oversees the development and implementation of comprehensive compensation policies that address complex organizational challenges and evolving workforce needs. In addition to guiding staff compensation strategy, a key priority for the Director will be stewarding the ongoing Staff Career Architecture project, enhancing job classifications, career pathways, and compensation structures to support employee development and retention. While primarily responsible for staff compensation programs, the Director may also serve as a consultative partner on faculty compensation initiatives, offering strategic insights and support to ensure alignment with institutional goals.

The Director will play a pivotal role in the successful implementation of Workday, launching on January 1, 2026, ensuring seamless integration of compensation processes, job data, and structures. They will oversee job evaluation and classification processes, maintain accurate and consistent job profiles, and develop salary structures that uphold internal equity and external competitiveness. In addition, the Director will manage pay programs—including base pay and, where appropriate, incentive plans—while leveraging market data and internal analytics to deliver equitable, forward-thinking compensation solutions that align with RIT's mission and strategic priorities.

### **Lead and manage the compensation team**

The Director will lead a high-impact team of seasoned analysts, setting the tone for a culture of collaboration, innovation, responsiveness, and continuous growth. They will provide strategic direction in hiring, developing, and evaluating staff while offering hands-on mentorship and fostering a high-performance environment. With a focus on results, the Director will establish clear goals and performance metrics that align with RIT's strategic priorities. They will champion succession planning and cross-training to build resilience and expertise across the team, ensuring the department is positioned for sustained success.

### **Serve as a trusted advisor to HR leadership and the broader RIT community**

The Director will work closely with the AVP and CHRO to support the President and the Executive Compensation Committee of the Board of Trustees on matters related to executive compensation. In

collaboration with the CHRO, Director of Benefits and Wellness, and the Controller's Office, they will administer executive compensation and benefits agreements, special pay programs, and related arrangements. Bringing a forward-thinking yet grounded perspective, the Director will navigate RIT's historical context, current compensation landscape, and strong shared governance model to bear on RIT's future compensation direction. As a subject-matter expert, they will partner with HR leadership and key stakeholders to contribute to data analysis, governance, and the development of high-level materials for senior leadership. Through a consultative and relationship-driven approach, the Director will help shape strategic direction while building trust, credibility, and alignment across the compensation team and the broader HR organization.

## QUALIFICATIONS AND CHARACTERISTICS

The successful candidate will bring a demonstrated track record of operational success in leading various HR functions. While no single candidate will have all of the qualifications, the search committee seeks candidates with a well-rounded combination of the following abilities:

### *Minimum Qualifications*

- Bachelor's degree and 7+ years of progressively responsible compensation management experience, with a strong background in project leadership and change management.
- Current knowledge of federal and state labor laws, particularly wage and hour regulations.
- Extensive experience with contemporary compensation and classification strategies and programs.
- Must possess the ability to interpret complex information, distill key insights, and communicate clearly to stakeholders across functions to support sound decision-making.

### *Preferred Qualifications*

- Three or more years of experience in a supervisory or management position.
- Master's degree and/or professional certifications (i.e., CCP) preferred.
- Previous experience in higher education.
- Proficient in ERP systems, preferably Workday, with a deep understanding of compensation modules and data integration.
- Proven experience designing and implementing systems and processes.
- Demonstrated success in developing and executing large-scale HR programs.
- Creative problem-solving and strategic thinking abilities.
- Commitment to shared governance principles.
- Excellent presentation and communication skills, with the ability to resolve complex compensation issues with clarity, integrity, and respect.
- Strong customer service orientation, with excellent organizational and prioritization skills.

## COMPENSATION AND LOCATION

The Director of Compensation is a full-time, permanent position based on-site in Rochester, NY, with the possibility of a hybrid work schedule. The University offers a competitive and comprehensive benefits package. The expected salary range for this role begins at \$150,000. The starting base salary will be commensurate with qualifications, experience, market, and organizational considerations.

## 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. Electronic submission of materials is strongly encouraged.

Rebecca Kennedy, Partner (she/her)

Lehman Robinson, Associate (he/him)

Cortnee Bollard, Senior Search Coordinator (they/them)

<https://www.imsearch.com/open-searches/rochester-institute-technology/director-compensation>

In compliance with NYS's Pay Transparency Act, the anticipated starting salary for this position is listed above. Rochester Institute of Technology considers factors such as (but not limited to) scope and responsibilities of the position, candidate's work experience, education/training, key skills, internal peer equity, as well as, market and organizational considerations when extending an offer. The hiring process for this position may require a criminal background check and/or motor vehicle records check. Any verbal or written offer made is contingent on satisfactory results, as determined by Human Resources.

RIT does not discriminate. RIT provides equal opportunity to all qualified individuals and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, age, marital status, sex, gender, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, national origin, veteran status or disability in its hiring, admissions, educational programs and activities. RIT provides reasonable accommodations to applicants with disabilities under the Rehabilitation Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, the New York Human Rights Law, or similar applicable law.