



Senior Vice Provost for Research
Northeastern University
Boston, MA

THE SEARCH

Northeastern University—renowned for its innovative and revolutionary model of education and research—welcomes applications and nominations for the position of Senior Vice Provost for Research (SVPR). The new SVPR will join an incredibly ambitious, entrepreneurial, and global university, whose leadership team and culture eschews incremental change and traditional measures of success. Working with a new provost and research leaders across the institution, the SVPR will accelerate Northeastern’s research impact and productivity on a global scale.

Northeastern’s unique value proposition is grounded in several key tenets: a global network of campuses and partners for students and faculty to leverage for research and learning; an experiential education that prepares undergraduate and graduate students to thrive in a technology-driven world; a deep investment in lifelong and experiential learning; a premium placed on pedagogical innovation; and a highly collaborative, partner-fueled research enterprise focused on high-impact solutions and use-inspired initiatives.

Northeastern has experienced unprecedented growth over the last 20 years. Annual external research funding has increased dramatically, fueled by its highly collaborative, interdisciplinary institutes and centers and a 56% increase in faculty hires since 2006. Northeastern’s inimitable experiential model, with its signature co-op program, has expanded to include a vast array of real-world projects and experiences that attract top students and employer partners from around the world.

Over the past decade, Northeastern has also established 12 campuses beyond its founding Boston campus, across North America and in the United Kingdom, that offer diverse opportunities in undergraduate and graduate learning, research, and entrepreneurship. This global network provides faculty and students myriad ways to learn and discover in new contexts, enriching education, leveraging global research opportunities, and maximizing the ability to make an impact. Northeastern is deeply committed to expanding international education, partnerships, and research, enabling learners and faculty to become leaders equipped to navigate and influence an interconnected world.

The Senior Vice Provost for Research will be tasked with advancing Northeastern's leadership in high-impact research globally. The SVPR will oversee the university's nearly \$300 million research enterprise, which has grown fivefold in the past decade. Despite current challenges in the federal research landscape, Northeastern remains on an impressive, upward trajectory, looking to continue its ambitious growth in both scale and impact of research through increased productivity, strategic faculty hiring, mergers and acquisitions, industry partnerships, and diversifying funding sources.

The SVPR will lead this charge and shepherd a strategic plan for research that leverages Northeastern's global network, strengthens its infrastructure for research, and expands collaborations with industry and other external partners. The university has successfully placed strategic bets in key, highly interdisciplinary areas of research through the establishment of empowered research institutes. The SVPR must continue to develop and grow these powerful mechanisms while creating new pathways for advancement in fields such as security, health, and sustainability, among others.

Northeastern has retained Isaacson, Miller, a national executive search firm, to assist in this search. All applications, inquiries, and nominations, which will remain confidential, should be directed to the search firm as indicated at the end of this document.

ABOUT NORTHEASTERN UNIVERSITY

Founded in Boston in 1898, Northeastern is renowned for its experiential learning model, high-impact and use-inspired research, deep industry partnerships, and worldwide reach. Since its establishment, the university has pursued innovative ways of teaching and research that place a premium on experience and engagement with the world. Today, its signature approach spans the globe, empowering not only students, but faculty, alumni, partners, and innovators to explore ideas, solve problems, and scale impact. The university had an endowment of \$2.1 billion as of June 30, 2025, and an FY25 operating budget of \$2.5 billion.

Northeastern's [global university system](#) provides the community as well as academic, government, and industry partners with unique opportunities to think locally and act globally. It includes 13 campuses across the United States, United Kingdom, and Canada, 320,000-plus alumni, and more than 3,800 employer partners worldwide, serving as a platform for innovating and scaling ideas, talent, and solutions. Northeastern's campuses are located in Arlington, Virginia; Boston, Burlington, and Nahant, Massachusetts; Charlotte, North Carolina; London, United Kingdom; Miami, Florida; Oakland and Silicon Valley, California; Portland, Maine; Seattle, Washington; and Toronto and Vancouver, Canada. In 2024, Northeastern announced the addition of a campus in New York City through a merger with Marymount Manhattan College, subject to the state and federal regulatory approvals now underway. And most recently, the university established the Dublin Innovation Institute, extending its longstanding partnership with University College Dublin (UCD) in Ireland, providing access to new research collaborations across Europe and the European Union's Horizon Research program.

The university campuses operate as a distributed global network. For example, new programs may be developed and established at one of the network campuses, enhanced locally, and then offered throughout the broader campus system, consistent with local needs and demand. The successful Align computer science master's program—which accelerates people with no prior computer science education or training into a career in computing—is an example of this approach. It was designed, implemented, and revised in Seattle before being offered in Boston and other campuses. Similarly, the Roux Institute's partnership model leverages this distributed network approach, as demonstrated by the collaboration with Biogen, which brought together Northeastern faculty and researchers from both the Roux Institute on the Portland, Maine, campus and the Boston campus to advance workforce training. The university also encourages and enables students to benefit from pursuing learning and experiential opportunities at more than one campus in the system. Faculty, colleges, and institutes are encouraged to use the campuses to scale their research, and several of the university's research institutes are located across multiple campuses. The Academic Plan envisions that all members of the Northeastern community will have a “passport” to the university's global network to maximize their own opportunities and the impact of their work.

As an R1 Carnegie institution, Northeastern's use-inspired research enterprise spans the globe. Its scholars and students work in teams that cross not just disciplines, but also sectors—aligned around solving today's highly interconnected global challenges and focused on transformative impact for society and the planet. Northeastern's faculty totals nearly 3,500 (more than 2,000 are full-time) and comprises a diverse and talented group of teachers and scholars. The chairs, deans, and provost have built a tenure-stream faculty aligned with Northeastern's strategic themes, supported by large investments in new campuses, facilities, and startup packages. Faculty productivity and distinction are at the heart of the Northeastern mission and of the university's commitment to growing its academic enterprise. Northeastern is the proud home of seven members of the National Academies and six members of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. The non-tenure-track faculty receive progressive titles for promotion, training in the science of teaching and learning, and directly participate in Northeastern's strong shared governance tradition. Faculty cite the broad intellectual ferment of the university, Northeastern's excellence in foundational disciplinary research, and institutional momentum as key reasons for joining the university community.

Northeastern's personalized, experiential undergraduate and graduate programs lead to degrees through the doctorate in 10 colleges and schools across the network. Learning emphasizes the intersection of data, technology, and human literacies, uniquely preparing graduates for agency in an AI-driven world and careers of the future. The university's signature cooperative education program (co-op) and other experiential programs have enabled Northeastern undergraduate and graduate students to have professional, research, and service opportunities in 151 countries, giving students real-world experience that adds enriching new dimensions to their classroom studies.

Northeastern received 105,092 applications for the fall 2025 undergraduate entering class, and the mean composite SAT score was 1480. Applications for all graduate programs exceeded 72,000 as of fall 2025, up more than 208% in the last decade. For the Class of 2024, 96% of Northeastern graduates were employed (full- or part-time) or in graduate school within nine months of graduation, and 93% of

employed graduates were doing work related to their major. Nearly 60% of graduates obtain their first job placement at one of their co-op employers.

RESEARCH AT NORTHEASTERN

The pace of change and progress at the university has accelerated significantly under the leadership of [President Joseph E. Aoun](#). Northeastern's research profile and external funding levels have risen sharply: External research funding was \$267 million in 2025, up 450% since 2006. In 2015, the university moved into the top tier for research activity when it achieved R1 status under the Carnegie Classification system. Currently, the vast majority of research funding comes from government sources (82.5%), 7.7% from foundations, 5.8% from industry, and 1% international sources. The National Academy of Inventors has ranked Northeastern among the Top 100 universities worldwide for granted U.S. utility patents for ten consecutive years.

Driving Northeastern's interdisciplinary research growth and impact are its [institutes and centers](#). These institutes and centers are organized around solving major societal challenges. They operate across colleges, disciplines, and campuses. They have attracted top-tier faculty from around the world, fueling prominence in several domains, with particular strength in:

- *Network Science* – Mapping the unseen systems around us to surface new solutions (disease transmission, Big Data bias, disease patterns, optimized digital platforms, operational efficiency)
- *Network Engineering* – Making wireless communications faster, more efficient, and secure (underwater Internet of Things (IoT), 6G innovation, smart implantable medical devices, blockchain technologies, secure IoT devices)
- *Cognitive and Brain Health* – Human-centered ways to draw upon the mind's complexity and resilience (Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, autism, aging, depression)
- *Experiential AI* – advancing research in human-centric AI and developing responsible solutions that extend human intelligence.
- *Experiential Robotics* – Enriching human experience through adaptive, collaborative robotic systems.

Northeastern also conducts significant classified and controlled unclassified information (CUI) research at the [George J. Kostas Research Institute for Homeland Security \(KRI\)](#) at the Burlington, Massachusetts, campus. A 2023 James S. Cogswell Award recipient, KRI is committed to the rapid development and transition of innovation to overcome the most urgent threats to national and global security. Its five technical thrusts are advanced manufacturing and sustainment, assured communications and electromagnetic dominance, chemical and biological innovation, embedded intelligence through robotics and autonomy, and mission, intelligence, decision analytics, and support.

Northeastern has over 549,000 square feet devoted to research across its global network. The [Interdisciplinary Science and Engineering Complex \(ISEC\)](#) is a hub for collaborative research on the Boston campus. This 234,000-square-foot facility promotes a vibrant research environment that brings disciplines

and partners together with several facilities, gathering spaces, and amenities to foster interdisciplinary collaboration. ISEC is connected by pedestrian bridge to the new 357,000-square-foot, LEED Platinum [EXP](#) building. EXP's flexible architecture is designed to meet the university's evolving needs and puts Northeastern's research and innovation on full display, with views into a 15,000-square-foot makerspace, two-story robotics high bay, and multiple research labs. In 2025, Northeastern acquired a 100,000-square-foot biotech lab-ready building adjacent to the university's Burlington, Massachusetts campus, expanding research capacity and enabling growth in the life sciences and biotechnology sectors.

THE ROLE OF THE SENIOR VICE PROVOST FOR RESEARCH

Reporting directly to the Provost, the Senior Vice Provost for Research leads Northeastern's broad and ambitious research enterprise. As an accomplished scholar, the SVPR will bring a demonstrable understanding of and appreciation for the infrastructure and institutional posture necessary to support cross-pollinating research and translational impact. The SVPR leads a division of 65 people which includes the following critical internal functions: research development for faculty, core shared university research facilities across all campuses, research focused institutes, the Center for Research Innovation, research computing, and collaboration with the Provost, senior leadership, and Deans on research strategy.

As a strategic leader, the SVPR will spend the majority of their time driving forward Northeastern's grand ambitions to continue its impressive trajectory of research growth and societal impact. Building pipelines of research talent and coalescing interdisciplinary teams and clusters in strategic areas is key and requires both forward-looking vision and robust relationships across Northeastern's matrixed network to identify people and opportunities, incentivize collaboration, and position teams for success. At a tactical level, the SVPR will build and develop the infrastructure to ensure effective and efficient internal functioning of Northeastern's growing research and innovation enterprise. A compelling advocate, they will be expected to leverage their professional networks and aggressively position Northeastern with funders in Washington, D.C., and across Northeastern's global university system, with state and local governments and international partners, with industry collaborators, and with philanthropies to diversify funding streams and fundraising possibilities in strong coordination with university government relations.

KEY OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR THE NEXT SVPR

The successful candidate will focus on the following key opportunities and challenges in leading Northeastern's research enterprise:

Shape a strategic vision for research excellence and impact responsive to national and global needs

Northeastern remains uniquely positioned to build on its momentum in conducting impactful interdisciplinary research that addresses society's most pressing and rapidly evolving challenges at the regional and global nexus. The next SVPR will be a forward-looking leader who advances a holistic and ambitious approach to research that leverages Northeastern's interdisciplinary and geographic advantages, empowers and supports faculty excellence, and catalyzes discovery across its units. The SVPR will foster a culture of collaboration that breaks down traditional boundaries, creating coalitions that

translate ideas into action and cement Northeastern as a leader across the full spectrum of discovery and application. They will identify and pursue emerging opportunities that position the university to secure transformative partnerships and funding that extend its reach and influence beyond academic bounds. They will play a defining role in shaping the next chapter of the university's research enterprise amid a rapidly changing landscape by securing the infrastructure and resources necessary to sustain excellence, galvanizing faculty to pursue major funding opportunities, and articulating a compelling vision that inspires research at scale. The SVPR will ensure that Northeastern's continued growth in research strengthens its global distinction and deepens its commitment to creating an ecosystem where innovation, discovery, and real-world impact thrive.

Foster large-scale research collaboration and institutional capacity

The SVPR will accelerate the growth of interdisciplinary and large-scale research at Northeastern, advancing the university's capacity to pursue major center grants and high-impact team science. Working closely with institute and college leadership, the SVPR will align incentives, strengthen coordination, and foster a culture of collaboration that connects research strengths across disciplines and campuses. They will champion innovation and entrepreneurship as integral parts of the research portfolio, supporting the development of incubators and startup programs that translate discovery into application, technology transfer, and commercialization. With Northeastern's presence in key innovation hubs such as Silicon Valley, the DMV (District of Columbia, Maryland, and Virginia), Canada, the United Kingdom, and the European Union, the SVPR will leverage the university's network to expand research opportunities, partnerships, and access to diverse funding sources. Through intentional mentorship, recruitment, and cross-institutional partnerships, the SVPR will help build a strong pipeline of research-active faculty and postdoctoral scholars, enabling Northeastern to strengthen its position as a hub for interdisciplinary collaboration, applied research, and entrepreneurship.

Leverage the global network to advance strategic partnerships to expand and diversify research funding

The next SVPR will strengthen and diversify Northeastern's research funding through strategic engagement with government agencies at home and abroad, industry, and other mission-aligned partners. As the university's chief champion in the research arena, the SVPR will elevate Northeastern's institutional visibility and competitiveness in areas of national and global significance. They will bring the strategic insight, presence, and networks needed to position Northeastern for major opportunities while strengthening systems and relationships that empower faculty to cultivate and secure meaningful research partnerships. Working in collaboration with senior leaders across the university's units, the SVPR will streamline processes that allow faculty to act nimbly, pursue complex multi-partner projects, and deepen funding collaborations across corporate, philanthropic, and governmental sectors. It will be critical for the SVPR to harness and integrate the distinctive capabilities within Northeastern's global network, leveraging the expertise and industry opportunities of each campus to expand the university's reach and influence, and positioning the university to be agile and competitive across a dynamic and interconnected research landscape.

Evolve the university's research structures, systems, and posture to support excellence and integrity

Northeastern's continued success in research, discovery, and innovation is contingent on the strength and functions of its research and operational infrastructure. The SVPR will focus on strengthening these systems by improving processes, streamlining operations, and fostering a culture of operational excellence that creates a more efficient and service-oriented environment for faculty and staff. They will enhance the structures that underpin research activity, including procurement, compliance, pre- and post-award support, and technology transfer and licensing policies, to ensure that the university remains competitive and responsive to major funding opportunities as they emerge. The SVPR will also invest in developing staff expertise and capacity across the network, particularly in areas that enable growth in complex and internationally funded research. Equally important, they will cultivate a culture grounded in creativity, trust, integrity, and compliance, while building a coordinated team to manage policy, structure, and operations that sustain the university's research enterprise.

QUALIFICATIONS AND CHARACTERISTICS

Northeastern has a bold vision and an aggressive plan for the institution's future. The senior officers of the university embody and cultivate an institutional culture of rigorous engagement focused on strategic and operational excellence. Successful leaders at Northeastern demonstrate confidence and flexibility, enjoy creative and collaborative planning and problem-solving, and combine outstanding capability in their own domains with an appetite and enthusiasm for discussing programs, initiatives, and challenges that span the university. Innovation is a cornerstone of Northeastern's culture.

Northeastern seeks a Senior Vice Provost for Research with exemplary credentials and entrepreneurial vision. The successful candidate will bring many of the following personal and professional qualities and characteristics:

- A deep appreciation for Northeastern's mission and vision and a commitment to the bold initiatives in the Academic Plan
- Achievement in driving, enhancing, and sustaining a sophisticated research infrastructure and stewarding its operational capacities
- Track record of interdisciplinary engagement and ability to promote a culture that values and connects across the full breadth of Northeastern's scholarly pursuits
- Demonstrated success securing fundamental and translational research funding, particularly for interdisciplinary projects
- A visionary leader who exercises superb judgment, anticipates emerging areas, and defines adaptive, collaborative strategic priorities
- Deep ties to and fluency in engaging senior leaders across government, business, industry, and philanthropy
- A proven record of leading strategic initiatives and managing complex projects with diplomacy and confidence in decentralized environments, preferably at major research institutions
- A demonstrated ability to execute ambitious, fiscally responsible, entrepreneurial initiatives

- An effective, strategic change agent who translates ideas into action and is comfortable with ambiguity
- Skilled in negotiation and problem-solving within large, complex organizations
- A commitment to global education and to fostering a community of belonging among students, faculty, and staff
- Unimpeachable character and personal integrity
- A record of scholarly achievement that engenders trust and credibility to lead research across the university

TO APPLY

Screening of complete applications will begin immediately and continue on a confidential basis 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/northeastern-university/senior-vice-provost-research>.

Andy Lee, Managing Partner
Vijay Saraswat, Partner
Elizabeth Weithman, Managing Associate
Damla Williams, Senior Associate
Madeline Fitzpatrick, Managing Search Coordinator
Isaacson, Miller

All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability status, protected veteran status, or any other characteristic protected by the law. Northeastern is an E-Verify Employer.

APPENDIX 1: [Academic Plan](#)

In 2021, the Northeastern community adopted a new strategic plan, [Experience Unleashed](#), that builds on previous efforts and sets ambitious goals for Northeastern's coming decade. At the heart of the framework is the central goal of maximizing Northeastern's positive impact in the world. To do this, the university aspires to:

- Recognize the complexity of acute and chronic challenges and work across disciplines to address them.
- Translate excellence in scholarship and learning into measured impact.
- Ensure all students, faculty, and staff have access to the skills and tools they need to take projects from idea to implementation.
- Advance leadership in experiential education by enabling globally mobile, culturally agile lifelong learners.
- Promote an academic community in which all members share a sense of belonging and fully participate.
- Provide an unparalleled experience for those that place their trust in Northeastern—learners, employers, research partners, families—enabled by seamless technology integration.

APPENDIX 2: University Leadership

President Joseph E. Aoun

Joseph E. Aoun, an internationally-known higher education thought leader and renowned scholar in linguistics, is the seventh president of Northeastern University. An internationally respected voice on the value of global and experiential education, President Aoun has led the expansion of experiential learning—centered on Northeastern's signature co-op program—to offer opportunities for work, research, service, and global study in 136 countries.

President Aoun has strategically aligned the university's use-inspired research enterprise with three global imperatives—health, security, and sustainability—a focus supported by eight interdisciplinary research institutes. Northeastern has also established a network of 13 campuses in the U.S., Canada, and the United Kingdom, as part of the president's vision for a global university system that will expand opportunities for lifelong learning and collaborative research. As a result of these and other initiatives created during the president's tenure, Northeastern has attracted record numbers of high-talent students and faculty, while external awards for research have more than tripled.

Among his awards and honors, President Aoun was recently appointed as Chevalier of the Legion of Honor by the President of the French Republic. He is a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, and a past chair of the American Council on Education.

Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs Beth A. Winkelstein

Beth A. Winkelstein is Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs at Northeastern, where she oversees the university's ten schools and colleges and the global university system, expanding the global research enterprise and libraries. In her role, she serves as a driving force for innovation in experiential learning and research across the university network.

Winkelstein joined Northeastern in 2025 from the University of Pennsylvania, where she served as Deputy Provost and the Eduardo D. Glandt President's Distinguished Professor of Bioengineering and Neurosurgery. Over more than 20 years at Penn, she held several senior leadership positions, including Interim Provost, Vice Provost for Education, and Associate Dean of the School of Engineering and Applied Science. At Penn, Winkelstein co-led a \$750 million initiative to recruit faculty in strategic academic fields and led efforts to strengthen teaching and expand faculty diversity.

A world-renowned bioengineer, Winkelstein's research focuses on how injuries cause pain, contributing to advances in medical devices and treatment approaches. She edited *Orthopaedic Biomechanics* and has written more than 175 papers and book chapters. Winkelstein has mentored more than 60 doctoral and postdoctoral researchers and over 70 undergraduates. She is an elected Fellow of the Biomedical Engineering Society, American Institute for Medical and Biological Engineering, and American Society of Mechanical Engineers. Her honors include the Y.C. Fung Young Investigator Award, Van C. Mow Medal, and an Early Career Award from the National Science Foundation. She holds three patents and chairs the American Society of Mechanical Engineers board of editors.

This document has been prepared based on the information provided by Northeastern University. The material presented in this leadership profile should be relied on for informational purposes only. While every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of this information, the original source documents and information provided by Northeastern University would supersede any conflicting information in this document.