



Director of Financial Systems
Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Cambridge, Massachusetts

THE SEARCH

The Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) seeks a strategic, collaborative, and forward-thinking leader to serve as its next Director of Financial Systems. Reporting directly to the Vice President for Finance (VPF), this role offers a rare opportunity to shape and modernize the financial systems that support MIT's world-class education, research, and innovation enterprise and make a lasting impression on the Institute.

As MIT enters a significant period of strategic investment in systems modernization, the Director of Financial Systems will play a critical role serving as the Finance Workstream Lead for the Oracle Cloud ERP implementation. The Director of Financial Systems will advance the Institute's long-term financial infrastructure, ensuring that financial systems are resilient, scalable, and aligned with the evolving needs of a complex, global institution.

The successful candidate will be an adept change manager who can navigate a highly complex and decentralized environment, generate buy-in across diverse units, and clearly communicate the vision and goals of system transformation. The Director of Financial Systems will need to leverage strategic thinking and vision to guide the project through to a successful completion and craft a new support model for Oracle ERP's maintenance into the future. Strong team management will be essential to ensure staffing and support structures sustain ongoing operational responsibilities with added commitments associated with the Oracle ERP project. Additionally, the Director of Financial Systems oversees desktop support, project managers, analysts, and business intelligence and must ensure that these functions are providing the highest levels of service across VPF and the wider Institute.

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

ROLE OF THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCIAL SYSTEMS

Reporting directly to the Vice President for Finance (VPF), the Director of Financial Systems will lead a team of business systems analysts and project managers responsible for VPF's management of financial systems that enable a range of financial activity at MIT, including but not limited to paying faculty and staff, purchasing goods and services, and accounting for revenues, expenditures and other dynamics depicted on the Institute's financial statements. The director will be responsible for the maintenance of these systems in conjunction with MIT Information Systems and Technology (IS&T), assisting other VPF units in responding to questions from the MIT community about such systems, and providing strategic direction for the continuous improvement of these systems. The director is also responsible for leading professionals who provide desktop support for VPF and Human Resources and providing leadership for VPF reporting and analytic resources.

In addition to these core duties, the Director of Financial Systems will also play a critical role as the Finance Workstream Lead for the implementation of Oracle ERP targeted for July 2028. In collaboration with IS&T, Business and Digital Transformation Office (BDTO), VPF functional leads for financial operations and accounting, and MIT's implementation partner, the individual in this role will lead the VPF business process redesign, Oracle ERP configuration, testing, and support for the duration of the project. Responsibilities will also include collaborating to propose a support model for the care and maintenance of Oracle ERP after go-live and stabilization.

MIT's financial systems play a critical role in enabling the financial activity that underpins its world-class research, education, and innovation initiatives. VPF seeks a dynamic leader with proven accomplishments to drive a complex organization toward best practices and modernization. Candidates for this position will have demonstrated experience providing and maintaining agile, flexible, and user-friendly financial systems capable of enabling diverse and complex financial activity. Experience with an ERP implementation would be a strong asset.

Principal Duties and Responsibilities

- Leads maintenance and enhancement of central financial systems serving MIT.
- Is responsible for developing complex business cases to aid in decision-making for proposed system changes and improvements, and for changes to related business processes.
- Builds and supervises a team of business systems analysts responsible for systems maintenance and analysis, project management, testing, process mapping, and training, that embraces positive relationships with a variety of constituents.
- Coordinates work with IS&T, BDTO, and across MIT's departments, labs, centers, and institutes (DLCIs) to develop system roadmaps and portfolio management reporting capabilities.

- Collaborates with key business process owners and members of the MIT community, including administrative, research, and academic units, to assess limitations of currently implemented enterprise applications, identify service delivery improvement opportunities, and design systems and process solutions.
- Leads multiple, complex, and highly visible innovation projects that span organizational units within VPF and across MIT.
- Creates new tools and services designed to streamline processes for members of the MIT community involved in financial management.
- Provides leadership in directing requirements design, development, deployment, and support of VPF systems enhancements and projects.
- Creates metric definitions and measurements and develops subsequent management briefings and progress status reporting.
- Works with VPF leadership team to define the scope, budget, deliverables, and timelines for all VPF systems initiatives and prioritizes projects and IS&T resources across VPF.
- Maintains expertise on best practices and new developments in the field of enterprise-wide financial systems—and serves as a resource to inform new systems strategies for MIT, including emerging fields of machine learning, analytics, and artificial intelligence.
- Actively explores opportunities to incorporate analytics into the fabric of VPF systems to inform sound business decisions, compliance, and auditing initiatives.
- Performs other duties as assigned.

KEY OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

The successful Director of Financial Systems will address the following opportunities and challenges:

- **Serve as the Finance Workstream Lead for Oracle ERP implementation:**
 - Drive VPF’s business process redesign including Oracle ERP implementation and configuration, testing, and support through the duration of the project
 - Serve as the nexus between project partners in IS&T, BDTO, functional leads within VPF, and Huron, MIT’s implementation partner, maintain open lines of communication and proactive collaboration.
 - Ensure strong project management to ensure the implementation stays within the compressed three-year timeline.
- **Support change management and build trust-based relationships across a complex and highly decentralized institute:**
 - Serve as a key VPF liaison to academic deans, senior leadership, research units, and departments, labs, centers, and institutions (DLCIs), ensuring alignment and generating buy-in across groups with differing priorities.
 - Clearly articulate project goals and shape a clear vision of project success, helping the wider community understand and embrace the need for standardized processes.

- Communicate complex, technical information in an easily digestible way, adapt communication style to different audiences, and translate between technical, financial, and academic stakeholders.
- Strengthen and reimagine relationships with IS&T, BDTO, and others as roles shift and responsibilities are redistributed in the post-Oracle ERP environment.
- **Strengthen team capacity and ensure proper staffing levels in a lean environment:**
 - Address challenges that come with staff balancing full-time operational roles with ERP project commitments. Advocate for backfilled roles as appropriate. Communicate to business owners that ad hoc requests will likely take more time while the Oracle ERP project takes precedence.
 - Establish clarity around expectations, deadlines, and prioritization
- **Build a new support model for Oracle ERP's ongoing care and maintenance:**
 - Articulate and redefine the future division of responsibilities between VPF and IS&T for system configurations, integrations, security, and first-line support.
 - Advocate for sufficient staffing levels within the Financial Systems team to adequately handle increased system support responsibilities that historically resided with IS&T.
 - Develop a communication plan that clarifies system support roles and responsibilities to the broader MIT community.
- **Elevate financial systems strategy, data quality, and reporting capabilities:**
 - Set priorities and lead innovative projects that improve data quality, analytical capacity, support sophisticated financial decision-making, and streamline administrative work across MIT.
 - Modernize legacy systems and support system integration to create better consistency and cohesion across MIT's 40+ distributed units.
 - In collaboration with IS&T, BDTO, and MIT's DCLIs to strengthen and streamline reporting capabilities

QUALIFICATIONS AND CHARACTERISTICS

The successful candidate will be an experienced leader with a strong record of overseeing and improving complex financial systems in a large, dynamic organization. While no single candidate will meet every qualification, the search committee seeks individuals who bring a balanced combination of leadership, financial systems expertise, and experience supporting enterprise-wide modernization initiatives.

Required

- Bachelor's degree in a related field
- Ten years of professional financial systems experience in a highly complex organization
- Proven ability to lead and manage a team
- Ability to exhibit poise, composure, and confidence in stressful or high-pressure situations
- Highly organized and demonstrated expert knowledge in project management

- Proven ability to identify and design systems solutions for complex enterprises, encompassing a range of financial and transactional activities
- Expertise in business systems and process analysis, and project and change management to drive high-value process improvement projects
- Ability to lead projects that will provide significant impact in areas that are not necessarily owned by one department, but require cooperative, cohesive efforts for successful project outcomes
- Excellent written and oral communication skills; ability to keep colleagues and clients informed about project requirements and deadlines
- Effective interpersonal skills and the ability to develop and maintain excellent working relationships with internal colleagues and stakeholders across the Institute
- Strong teamwork orientation, including a willingness to cooperate in fulfilling joint objectives
- Experience working with an enterprise resource planning (ERP) suite of software supporting a complex organization, preferably SAP, and best-in-class applications that interact with an underlying ERP or data warehouse architecture to enable key business functions, such as Concur, Coupa, Cognos, Tableau, and Salesforce
- Experience with data architecture and data governance constructs, and issues

Preferred

- Advanced degree in a related field
- Previous Finance/Payroll Systems experience
- Experience as part of an ERP implementation
- Experience in a complex not-for-profit setting
- Experience with Oracle Cloud ERP

COMPENSATION AND LOCATION

The salary range for this role is \$208,115 - \$283,000. The position is based on MIT's campus in Cambridge, MA. The Director of Financial Systems is required to be on site two days a week.

ABOUT MASSACHUSETTS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

MIT's first students enrolled in 1865, marking the culmination of an extended effort to establish a new kind of educational institution relevant to an increasingly industrialized nation. The MIT motto, "Mens et Manus," Latin for "Mind and Hand," expresses the Institute's ideal of a productive continuum between rigorous thought and action. In the land-grant tradition, MIT promoted teaching coupled with research, focusing attention on real-world problems, and forging the notion of the teaching laboratory.

MIT is independent and co-educational, with a private endowment of over \$24 billion, a total annual operating budget of approximately \$5.10 billion, and a workforce of approximately 17,000 on campus and at the Lincoln Laboratory. MIT focuses on scientific and technological research and is divided into five schools – comprising more than 30 academic departments as well as interdepartmental programs, laboratories, and centers – and one college. The schools include Architecture and Planning; Engineering; Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences; Science; and the MIT Sloan School of Management. Fall of 2019 marked the opening of the MIT Steven A. Schwarzman College of Computing. Schwarzman College is a bold initiative to accelerate pioneering research and innovation in computing, build a profound awareness of the ethical implications and societal impact of computing, and, above all, educate leaders for the algorithmic future.

Current and former MIT faculty are distinguished for their groundbreaking research and have received some of the highest honors bestowed upon individuals for contributions to science, engineering, the humanities, and social sciences, including: the National Medal of Science, National Medal of Technology and Innovation, John Bates Clark Medal, Pulitzer Prize, A.M. Turing Award, Millennium Technology Prize, Guggenheim Fellowship, Fulbright Scholarship, and MacArthur Fellowship. Most notably, 40 present and former members of the MIT faculty have received the Nobel Prize, including 12 current faculty members (recognized individually or as part of a team). Over 300 current MIT faculty hold membership in some of the most distinguished scientific and academic associations, including the National Academy of Sciences, the National Academy of Engineering, and the National Academy of Medicine.

MIT is located on the north shore of the Charles River Basin in Cambridge, Massachusetts, on 168 acres that extend more than a mile along the Charles River. The central group of interconnecting buildings, dedicated in 1916, was designed by architect W. Welles Bosworth (Class of 1889) to permit easy communication among schools and departments.

ABOUT THE OFFICE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT FOR FINANCE

The Office of the Vice President for Finance (VPF) supports the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's mission by providing stewardship and strategic management of the Institute's financial resources. The office plays a central role in ensuring that MIT's academic, research, and operational priorities are supported through sound financial planning, compliance, and decision-making.

VPF partners closely with faculty, administrators, and staff across the Institute to deliver reliable financial services, strengthen governance and controls, and enhance the quality, transparency, and accessibility of financial information. Forward-looking and service-oriented, the office is committed to continuous improvement and to creating administrative processes that are efficient, clear, and responsive to the evolving needs of a complex and global research university.

Through collaboration, integrity, and a shared commitment to excellence, VPF helps enable MIT's long-term financial sustainability and institutional impact.

You can learn more about the [MIT VPF Office here](#).

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 for the search. Electronic submission of materials is strongly encouraged. <https://www.imsearch.com/open-searches/massachusetts-institute-technology/director-financial-systems>

Dan Rodas, Partner,
Amble Ryan, Managing Associate
Kristin Benoit, Associate
Seema Khan, Senior Search Coordinator

MIT is an equal employment opportunity employer. All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment and will not be discriminated against on the basis of race, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, disability, age, genetic information, veteran status, ancestry, or national or ethnic origin.

This document has been prepared based on the information provided by MIT. 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 MIT would supersede any conflicting information in this document.