



Associate Vice Chancellor and Chief Facilities Officer
Vanderbilt University
Nashville, Tennessee

THE SEARCH

Vanderbilt University, one of the nation's leading research universities, seeks a strategic, entrepreneurial, and collaborative leader with a strong track record of building relationships and strengthening communication across complex organizations to serve as its next Associate Vice Chancellor and Chief Facilities Officer. This rare opportunity offers the chance to shape one of higher education's most dynamic facilities portfolios and help guide Vanderbilt through a period of significant growth, expansion, and institutional transformation.

Reporting to Carl Rodrigues, Vice Chancellor for Real Estate, Facilities and Development, and serving as a key member of the university's leadership team, the Associate Vice Chancellor and Chief Facilities Officer will oversee three direct reports, an annual operating budget of approximately \$100 million, and a typical annual capital budget of approximately \$500 million. [Vanderbilt University Facilities](#) is home to a skilled, service-oriented team of more than 530 professionals responsible for the university's physical infrastructure, including two combined heat and power plants, extensive underground utility systems, capital project delivery, and environmental health, safety, and sustainability programs.

Vanderbilt Facilities is part of the [Division of Real Estate, Facilities and Development](#) (REF&D), which shapes and sustains Vanderbilt's physical environment in support of institutional priorities. The division integrates real estate strategy, facilities operations, and campus development across Vanderbilt's 340-acre Nashville campus and more than 8 million square feet of building space. REF&D also oversees commercial and multifamily properties, manages major capital projects and renovations, and leads

strategic acquisitions that strengthen the university, enhance the campus experience, and support innovation and community engagement. The next Associate Vice Chancellor and Chief Facilities Officer will play a critical role in advancing the division's priorities through collaborative leadership, operational excellence, and strategic vision.

A defining aspect of this opportunity is Vanderbilt's expansion beyond Nashville through a network of new campuses in [New York City](#), [San Francisco](#), [West Palm Beach](#), and [Chattanooga](#). The Associate Vice Chancellor and Chief Facilities Officer will lead the planning, development, and execution of these high-profile initiatives' design, and construction from concept to execution, working with university leadership, external stakeholders, developers, architects, and community leaders to shape a connected, multi-campus enterprise.

The Associate Vice Chancellor and Chief Facilities Officer will provide strategic and operational leadership across Vanderbilt's expanding campus network, overseeing design and construction, facilities management, utilities and energy systems, and environmental health, safety, and sustainability. They will advance the university's physical and operational strategy by applying leading practices, directing major capital investments, modernizing infrastructure, adopting emerging technologies—including AI-enabled solutions—enhancing customer service, and aligning facilities priorities with Vanderbilt's academic, research, and student-centered mission.

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

VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY

Vanderbilt University is in Nashville, Tennessee, with more than 13,000 students and more than 7,000 faculty and staff. The University offers undergraduate programs in the liberal arts and sciences, engineering, music, education, and human development, as well as a full range of graduate and professional degrees in its 11 schools and colleges. The combination of cutting-edge research, strength in the liberal arts, and internationally recognized schools of education, law, engineering, business, divinity, nursing, and medicine, creates an invigorating atmosphere where students tailor their education to meet their goals, and where researchers collaborate to solve complex problems of importance to health, culture and society.

As a member of the prestigious Association of American Universities since 1950, Vanderbilt University is among the most preeminent universities in the nation; it has achieved external research funding exceeding \$1 billion and enjoys a growing global reputation.

Vanderbilt University spurs—and is optimized for—cross-disciplinary research to foster discoveries that impact society for the better. "[Radical collaboration](#)," in a culture where Vanderbilt community members can simultaneously challenge and support one another, is one of Vanderbilt's closely held values. The *One Vanderbilt* spirit can also be seen in the enthusiastic support from Vanderbilt's global alumni community,

which recently helped the University vastly exceed a \$3.2 billion fundraising goal -- the most ambitious in Vanderbilt's history—20 months ahead of schedule.

From Vanderbilt's beginnings in 1873, the university has believed in the power of bringing together people of differing viewpoints for a common purpose. Free expression is fundamental to Vanderbilt's culture. Vanderbilt's approach to free expression rests on the pillars of open forums, institutional neutrality, and civil discourse. Through Vanderbilt's *Dialogue Vanderbilt* initiative, the university continues to embody its long-held value of free expression and strives to be a model of civil discourse. More about free expression at Vanderbilt may be found on [Vanderbilt's website](#).

Vanderbilt University is proud of what has been achieved in its first 153 years and is continuing to drive forward into bold new areas of growth. The College of Connected Computing, the university's first new college in 40 years, recently became Vanderbilt's eleventh college. Vanderbilt is expanding its business and education programs to West Palm Beach, Florida; is establishing a full-time academic campus in San Francisco focused on innovative education and interdisciplinary collaboration that integrates technology, design, and the arts in a global center for innovation, entrepreneurship, and creativity; and has established a campus in New York City that serves as a hub for immersive learning, academic programming, and engagement with alumni and industry partners. More about these growth initiatives and others may be found on [Vanderbilt's website](#).

Vanderbilt is grounded in its shared values and common purpose, with one overarching, ambitious aim: to make Vanderbilt the great university of the 21st century.

UNIVERSITY LEADERSHIP

Daniel Diermeier has served as Vanderbilt University's ninth chancellor since July 2020. An internationally recognized political scientist, management scholar, and higher education leader, he was appointed in 2019, and, in 2024, the Board of Trust extended his contract through 2035. Diermeier has advanced a vision centered on growth, innovation, collaboration, and institutional excellence and is a national voice on institutional neutrality, civil discourse, and higher education's role in innovation, economic competitiveness, and societal impact.

Under Diermeier's leadership, Vanderbilt has experienced growth in enrollment demand, research funding, philanthropy, and national reputation. The university's endowment has grown from \$6.9 billion to \$11 billion, external research funding has surpassed \$1 billion in partnership with Vanderbilt University Medical Center, and the conclusion of the record breaking [Dare to Grow](#) campaign that raised \$4.5 billion for strategic priorities. Vanderbilt has also launched Discovery Vanderbilt, the College of Connected Computing, and new campuses in key innovation hubs. Diermeier is the author of six books and more than 100 academic articles and is a fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. A first-generation college graduate, he earned a Ph.D. and master's degree in political science from the University of Rochester, a master's degree in political science from the University of Munich, and a master's degree in

philosophy from the University of Southern California. He previously held senior leadership positions at Stanford University, Northwestern University, and the University of Chicago.

ROLE OF THE ASSOCIATE VICE CHANCELLOR AND CHIEF FACILITIES OFFICER

The Associate Vice Chancellor and Chief Facilities Officer serves as Vanderbilt's senior facilities leader and is responsible for the stewardship, operation, maintenance, planning, and development of the university's physical environment. The Chief Facilities Officer has three direct reports and leads approximately 530 full-time employees and contingent staff. As a member of the administrative leadership team, the Chief Facilities Officer will work with academic and administrative colleagues to align facilities strategy, capital planning, and infrastructure investment with institutional priorities and long-term goals.

The Chief Facilities Officer will join Vanderbilt as the university advances more than \$1 billion in capital investments across academic, research, residential, and athletics facilities. The role provides strategic oversight for campus planning, facilities operations, maintenance and renewal, capital project delivery, and vendor and contractor partnerships, and will help guide updates to the campus land use master plan. The leader will also represent Vanderbilt with architects, construction partners, government agencies, community stakeholders, and regulatory officials.

KEY OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

Build an integrated facilities enterprise across a growing campus network.

Vanderbilt is rapidly evolving from a single-campus institution into a multi-campus enterprise with growing operations in Nashville, New York City, San Francisco, West Palm Beach, and Chattanooga. As Vanderbilt's growth has accelerated, the University has been intentionally evolving the systems, structures, and operating approaches required to support an institution functioning at enterprise scale. The Associate Vice Chancellor and Chief Facilities Officer will play a central role in defining how facilities and campus operations support this expansion, creating a cohesive vision that aligns people, processes, resources, and service delivery across a diverse and increasingly complex portfolio. The successful leader will balance enterprise-wide consistency with the unique needs of each location while building and supporting the organizational capacity, talent strategies, and operational frameworks necessary to advance Vanderbilt's long-term ambitions. This opportunity extends beyond traditional facilities management. The Chief Facilities Officer will help articulate a bold vision for the future of facilities at Vanderbilt, foster a culture of accountability and client service, and ensure that the organization is positioned to scale alongside the university's continued growth. They will need to be a collaborative leader who can build trusted relationships across campuses, align stakeholders around shared goals, and translate institutional aspirations into a high-performing facilities enterprise capable of supporting Vanderbilt's next chapter.

Advance long-term planning and strategic capital alignment.

The Chief Facilities Officer will strengthen the connection between institutional priorities and facilities strategy. Working closely with university leadership and the Executive Director of Planning, the next Chief Facilities Officer will advance the integrated campus master plan already underway, align capital investment with evolving academic and research priorities, and develop contemporary best-in-class transparent planning processes that support informed decision-making, strengthening organizational effectiveness, communication, and service excellence. They will balance long-term planning with the needs of a rapidly evolving institution, bringing greater clarity to project prioritization, funding, and long-range infrastructure needs while preserving the flexibility to pursue emerging opportunities. They will drive alignment among institutional vision, available resources, and execution.

Strengthen organizational effectiveness, communication, and service excellence.

The Associate Vice Chancellor and Chief Facilities Officer will introduce leading facilities practices that strengthen communication, transparency, and organizational alignment. Building on recent progress, this leader will foster a culture of radical collaboration, accountability, continuous improvement, and service excellence. Success in this role will depend as much on connecting people, priorities, and processes as on technical facilities expertise. Vanderbilt seeks a highly communicative and relationship-oriented leader who thrives in a collaborative environment, builds partnerships across all levels of the institution, and approaches leadership with agility rather than adherence to traditional higher education hierarchies.

The Chief Facilities Officer will strengthen systems and processes that promote clarity, responsiveness, and coordination across Planning, Design and Construction, Maintenance and Operations, Environmental Health and Safety, Real Estate, academic units, and university leadership. They will leverage contemporary technologies and data-informed decision-making, including AI-enabled tools and solutions where appropriate, to improve operational effectiveness, customer service, and organizational alignment. They will also create an environment in which employees understand expectations, are empowered to contribute, and approach their work through a customer service lens. They will build organizational capacity to support employee engagement, sustainability, and long-term effectiveness, recognizing the demands of Vanderbilt's rapid growth and expanding operational footprint. Facilities projects and operations must deliver a first-class experience for students, faculty, staff, and visitors.

Position facilities as a strategic enabler of Vanderbilt's research and innovation agenda.

Vanderbilt's ambitions in research, innovation, sustainability, engineering, artificial intelligence, quantum computing, and emerging academic initiatives are creating new demands on its physical infrastructure. The Associate Vice Chancellor and Chief Facilities Officer will ensure that facilities planning and investment support these priorities and prepare the university for future growth. They will advance a proactive, data-informed approach to facilities management by strengthening asset management, using technology and analytics, improving preventive maintenance, and increasing visibility into infrastructure needs and

performance. These practices will support current operations and provide a strategic platform for future academic, research, and innovation initiatives.

QUALIFICATIONS AND CHARACTERISTICS

The Associate Vice Chancellor and Chief Facilities Officer must operate effectively at both strategic and operational levels and articulate a compelling vision for facilities at Vanderbilt. The successful candidate will lead a large, complex organization through sustained growth and transformation while serving as a trusted partner to the Vice Chancellor, Chancellor, academic leadership, and broader university community. They must be collaborative, visionary, financially astute, and adaptable, bringing clarity, discipline, and alignment without constraining Vanderbilt's entrepreneurial ambitions.

The search committee welcomes candidates from a range of industries, both within and outside higher education. All candidates must demonstrate a commitment to Vanderbilt's mission and trajectory as a leading global university.

While no candidate will embody every attribute, the successful candidate will bring many of the following:

IDEAL EXPERIENCE

- Minimum of fifteen years of successful, extensive, and increasingly responsible management experience in facilities design and construction, and/or facilities operations and engineering. Experience in leading energy sustainability and environmental programs is a plus.
- Previous experience in higher education, healthcare, city planning or administration, military, corporate, or another complex, user-driven, building-intensive environment. A comprehensive understanding of managing a large organization with a diverse spectrum of employees.
- An appreciation for the mission of Vanderbilt University as a teaching, research, and service institution where excellent facilities planning, and management are designed to facilitate those goals.
- Strong management skills, with a focus on encouraging a culture of enabling, planning and problem solving, and optimizing resources and driving efficiencies.
- A record of commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion at all levels among faculty, students, and staff.
- Demonstrated experience in financial planning and analysis and effective business and organizational planning skills.
- A bachelor's degree is required. An advanced degree in management, engineering, architecture, planning, or business is strongly preferred.

CRITICAL LEADERSHIP CAPABILITIES

Strategic Thinking

- Provides visionary leadership in the areas of facilities maintenance, capital program planning and delivery, energy and sustainability, and physical plant stewardship.

- Translates university-wide strategies into clear, specific objectives and plans for direct and indirect staff; balances multiple conflicting requirements driven by academic priorities, philanthropic priorities, and renewal priorities.
- Communicates with clarity and data to all stakeholders, ensuring that the key milestones and trade-offs are well-understood.

Collaborating and Influencing

- Demonstrates a consultative demeanor to build rapport and establish credibility within the University as well as across the local community.
- Possesses a deftness of style that solicits input, listens well, and incorporates feedback yet can make difficult decisions.
- Demonstrates flexible and diplomatic management style characterized by collaboration that empowers staff, sets high expectations, and holds colleagues accountable.

Operational Leadership

- Provides discipline and focus on creating systems that drive efficiency, effectiveness, transparency, and continuous improvement, always mindful of balancing mission-driven priorities and financial realities.
- Attracts, retains, mentors, and develops high-quality staff and creates an environment that fosters collaboration, partnerships, excellence, and respect.
- Provides oversight for all facilities areas, ensuring compliance with applicable laws and regulations.

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/vanderbilt-university/associate-vice-chancellor-and-chief-facilities-officer>.

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Vanderbilt University is an equal opportunity employer. All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, disability, or status as a protected veteran, or any other characteristic protected by law.

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

APPENDIX

More about Vanderbilt University

A leader in higher education access, Vanderbilt University is one of a small number of schools offering no-loan financial aid. Through the [Opportunity Vanderbilt](#) program, Vanderbilt provides full-tuition scholarships for all households with an income of \$150,000 or less. About 65% of the undergraduate student body receives some form of financial aid. To recruit the highest-potential students wherever they might be, Vanderbilt is a member of the [STARS Network](#), a partnership that ensures that students from rural and small-town America have the information and support they need to enroll and graduate from the college or university of their choice.

Vanderbilt provides a gateway to greatness, drawing the best and brightest students and faculty from across the nation and around the world. Vanderbilt alumni are in Congress, on the judicial bench, among the list of Nobel laureates, heading corporations, conducting innovative medical research, writing for and appearing on the stage and screen, and playing in the NFL and Major League Baseball. The university's stellar faculty are recognized for their teaching and research, and they receive record numbers of awards, grants, and contracts each year.

Vanderbilt University is an independent, privately supported university, and the separate, nonprofit Vanderbilt University Medical Center (VUMC) shares a respected name and enjoys close collaboration through education and research. Together, the organizations employ approximately 50,000 people, significantly exceeding the largest private employer in the Middle Tennessee region. The university has total net assets of \$11.2 billion and an endowment with market value of approximately \$11 billion.

Vanderbilt as a Choice Employer

Vanderbilt is proud to have been named as one of “America’s Best Large Employers” as well as a top employer in Tennessee and the Nashville metropolitan area by *Forbes* for several years running. The University welcomes those who are interested in learning and growing professionally with an employer that strives to create, foster, and sustain opportunities as an employer of choice.

In addition to offering an energetic community that encourages learning and connection, Vanderbilt provides its employees with a benefits package that is comprehensive and flexible. In addition to offering health, vision, dental, and many other benefits, the University offers tuition assistance for employees, their spouses, and eligible dependent children.

The City of Nashville

Nashville, Tennessee has been named one of the nation's hottest cities by *Forbes* and *The New York Times*. Healthcare, technology, entertainment, automotive, sports, and education are only a few of the industries

booming in Nashville. The city is home to more than 400 healthcare businesses, including Vanderbilt University Medical Center, the region's key trauma center.

From serving as home to the nation's largest Kurdish population to being named America's friendliest city for three years in a row, Nashville is a metropolitan place that proudly exudes all the charm and hospitality one expects from a Southern capital.

Known as "Music City," Nashville has a music and entertainment scene like no other, and it is the home of country music. Nashville cultivates a spirit of creativity that is reflected in its well-established music industry, chef-driven restaurants, and up-and-coming fashion. Nashville has several charming neighborhoods that serve as great places to live and explore cultural attractions. Nashville's Metropolitan Statistical Area encompasses eight counties — Cheatham, Davidson, Dickson, Robertson, Rutherford, Sumner, Williamson, and Wilson—and has a population of 2.1 million.