



LSST
Discovery Alliance

Search for the Chief Executive Officer
Legacy Survey of Space and Time Discovery Alliance
Tucson, Arizona

THE SEARCH

The LSST Discovery Alliance (LSST-DA) seeks a visionary, collaborative, and entrepreneurial leader to serve as its next Chief Executive Officer (CEO).

As the NSF-DOE Vera C. Rubin Observatory begins its 10-year Legacy Survey of Space and Time (hereafter, Rubin LSST), astronomy enters a transformative new era defined by unprecedented volumes of data and the potential for discoveries that will reshape our understanding of the universe. Positioned at the nexus of this scientific enterprise, LSST-DA plays a distinctive role in ensuring that researchers, institutions, and communities around the world are prepared to harness the full promise of Rubin LSST science. An independent nonprofit, LSST-DA delivers programs and resources to help researchers and larger audiences analyze and leverage the vast stream of data products being generated by the survey.

The next CEO will join LSST-DA at a critical juncture. Having helped prepare the scientific community for the launch of survey operations, the organization is now poised to define its next chapter. Working closely with a distinguished Board of Directors, leading scientists, external partners, member institutions, and the broader research community, the CEO will have the opportunity to shape the future direction of a uniquely mission-driven organization while advancing discovery, expanding participation, and strengthening the ecosystem that enables groundbreaking science. The next leader will also play a central role in securing the resources and partnerships necessary to sustain LSST-DA's long-term success while serving as a compelling advocate for the organization's mission, amplifying the contribution of its programs, and elevating its visibility across scientific, philanthropic, and public audiences. For a leader inspired by the power of scientific collaboration and the opportunity to build something enduring, the role offers a rare chance to influence how one of the most ambitious scientific endeavors achieves its full potential.

LSST-DA has retained the search firm Isaacson, Miller to assist with this recruitment. Instructions for applying, nomination, and inquiring about the position can be found at the end of this document.

ABOUT LSST-DA

The LSST Discovery Alliance (LSST-DA) is an independent 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization headquartered in Tucson, Arizona. Established in 2003 to fund the initial development of what would become the NSF-DOE Vera C. Rubin Observatory, LSST-DA now serves as a catalyst for scientific discovery by advancing the tools, partnerships, programs, and resources that enable researchers to maximize the impact of the Legacy Survey of Space and Time.

As the Rubin LSST begins its 10-year mission, astronomy enters a new era of data-intensive science. The observatory's groundbreaking capabilities will generate enormous volumes of data and create unprecedented opportunities to explore fundamental questions about the universe. Recognizing that transformative facilities alone do not guarantee transformative science, LSST-DA helps ensure that researchers have the computational resources, training, collaborative networks, and funding opportunities needed to turn data into discovery.

LSST-DA occupies a distinctive position within the Rubin ecosystem. While the observatory itself is supported through the National Science Foundation, Department of Energy, AURA, and their operating partners, LSST-DA serves as an independent bridge between this scientific infrastructure and the global research community. Through philanthropic investment, community-building initiatives, software development, workforce programs, and research support, the organization expands participation in Rubin science and accelerates scientific progress across disciplines, institutions, and national borders.

The organization is supported by a broad coalition of member universities, observatories, and research institutions around the world (full list of membership organizations can be found in Appendix A). This international network helps guide LSST-DA's activities while fostering collaboration across the scientific community. Building on a history that includes raising more than \$50 million for critical early development of the observatory and its survey, LSST-DA continues to bring together researchers, institutions, and partners around a shared commitment to advancing discovery and expanding access to scientific opportunity.

Core Operations and Programs

LSST-DA's operational portfolio is designed to bridge the gap between the data products of the Rubin LSST and the scientific community's ability to analyze it. In 2019, the organization established LINCC (the LSST Interdisciplinary Network for Collaboration and Computing) to serve as the primary framework for advancing software development, workforce training, scientific collaboration, and research support.

Catalyst Fellowship Program

Funded initially by the John Templeton Foundation, the Catalyst Fellowship Program supports cohorts of early-career researchers working at the intersection of astronomy, data science, and software development. The program combines scientific training, interdisciplinary collaboration, and community

engagement to prepare the next generation of leaders in Rubin-enabled science. More recently, LSST-DA expanded this effort through the Catalyst Postdoc Alliance, an international network connecting early-career researchers across the Rubin community.

LINCC Frameworks and Project Dovetail

Supported by Schmidt Sciences, LINCC Frameworks brings together astronomers, data scientists, and software engineers to develop open-source tools capable of processing Rubin's unprecedented data streams. Complementing this effort, Project Dovetail provides researchers with short-term access to engineering expertise, helping scientific teams overcome technical barriers and accelerate research progress.

Science Catalyst Grants

Through Science Catalyst Grants and related funding initiatives, LSST-DA supports innovative research, workshops, community-building activities, and early-science projects. These programs provide flexible resources that enable researchers to explore new questions, respond quickly to emerging opportunities, and maximize the scientific value of Rubin data products.

Community Events, Training, and Inclusion

LSST-DA invests heavily in workforce development and community engagement through programs such as the Data Science Fellowship Program, the Summer Student Program, the Rubin Undergraduate Network, and the Expansion Partnership Program. Together, these initiatives cultivate scientific talent, broaden participation in Rubin science, and strengthen pathways into astronomy and data-intensive research. LSST-DA also provides targeted support that helps researchers participate fully in the scientific community, including funding that reduces barriers to conference attendance and professional engagement.

Science Collaborations Support

LSST-DA provides operational, logistical, and financial support for the independent Science Collaborations that bring together much of the global community preparing to conduct Rubin-enabled research. Through coordination support, communications infrastructure, and community-building resources, LSST-DA helps sustain the collaborative networks that underpin scientific discovery across a broad range of astrophysical disciplines. The eight active LSST Science Collaborations include: Active Galactic Nuclei (AGN); Dark Energy Science Collaboration (DESC); Galaxies Science Collaboration; Informatics and Statistics; Solar System Science Collaboration (SSSC); Stars, Milky Way, and Local Volume; Strong Lensing Science Collaboration (SLSC); Transients and Variable Stars (TVS).

Leadership

Outgoing Chief Executive Officer Dr. Beth Willman joined LSST-DA in 2022 and led the organization through a period of significant growth and organizational development. During her tenure, LSST-DA expanded its programmatic portfolio and prepared the Rubin scientific community for the transition to active survey operations.

Following Dr. Willman's departure, the Board appointed Dr. Richard Green as Interim Chief Executive Officer. A respected scientific leader with decades of experience spanning the National Science Foundation, Kitt Peak National Observatory, and the Large Binocular Telescope Observatory, Dr. Green is providing leadership and continuity while LSST-DA conducts a national search for its next CEO.

The CEO is supported by a talented and mission-driven team spanning scientific programs, philanthropy, finance, administration, and community engagement. Key leaders include a Director of Strategic Engagement and Philanthropy, who leads relationships with foundations and institutional partners, and a Director of Finance and Administration, who oversees the organization's finances and operations.

Scientific Leadership

LSST-DA's programs are guided by a distributed network of scientific leaders drawn from leading research institutions across North America and beyond. This model allows the organization to leverage expertise from across the Rubin community while maintaining close connections to the scientific collaborations, research priorities, and emerging opportunities shaping the future of Rubin-enabled science. Scientific leadership includes Dr. Jennifer (Jeno) Sokoloski, Chief Scientist; Dr. Tesla Jeltema, Science Collaborations Coordinator; and Dr. Federica Bianco, Senior Science Advisor to the CEO.

Board of Directors

LSST-DA is governed by a Board of Directors composed primarily of representatives from member institutions across the Rubin community. The Board provides strategic, financial, and fiduciary oversight while helping ensure that the organization's activities remain responsive to the needs of researchers, institutions, and scientific collaborations. Through its broad network of domestic and international partners, the Board reflects the collaborative and community-driven nature of LSST-DA's mission. As LSST-DA enters its next phase of growth, the Board is actively exploring opportunities to broaden its expertise, networks, and perspectives in support of the organization's future ambitions.

ROLE OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) serves as the senior executive leader of LSST-DA and is responsible for advancing the organization's mission, strategy, operations, and financial sustainability. Reporting to and working closely with the Board of Directors, the CEO provides leadership for a nonprofit organization

dedicated to expanding the scientific impact of the Legacy Survey of Space and Time through community-building, philanthropy, scientific programs, and collaborative partnerships across the Rubin ecosystem.

As the organization's principal ambassador and spokesperson, the CEO cultivates relationships with member institutions, foundations, federal agencies, industry partners, and the broader research community. The CEO leads a talented team of scientific, programmatic, and administrative professionals while working closely with the Board to guide LSST-DA's continued growth and advance the organization's role as a catalyst for discovery in the Rubin era.

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

The success of the next CEO will be determined by how well they meet the following opportunities and challenges:

Shape the future direction of LSST-DA

LSST-DA has entered a pivotal moment in its evolution. For more than two decades, the organization played a critical role in supporting the development of the Rubin Observatory and preparing the scientific community for the immense opportunities presented by the Legacy Survey of Space and Time. Today, with survey operations underway and data products flowing at an unprecedented scale, the organization must define its role for a new era. The next CEO will have the opportunity to work with the Board, member institutions, and other stakeholders to articulate a compelling vision for LSST-DA's future and guide the organization's transition from an era of preparation to one of active scientific discovery. Building on a strong foundation of successful programs and community trust, the CEO will position LSST-DA to remain an indispensable partner in enabling discovery, fostering innovation, and strengthening the global scientific ecosystem surrounding Rubin.

Strengthen LSST-DA's long-term sustainability and impact

LSST-DA has established a strong foundation of programs, partnerships, and community engagement that are helping researchers maximize the scientific opportunities created by the Rubin Observatory. As the organization enters a new phase of maturity, the next CEO will play a critical role in ensuring that its ambitions are matched by a sustainable and diversified resource base. Working closely with the Board, member institutions, foundations, individual philanthropists, and other partners, the CEO will expand support for LSST-DA's mission while identifying new opportunities for investment and collaboration. Success will require the ability to articulate a compelling case for why scientific community-building, open access to discovery, and workforce development remain essential components of the Rubin ecosystem. The next leader will help position LSST-DA for long-term success by securing the resources, partnerships, and financial resilience necessary to sustain and expand its influence.

Advance discovery through community-building, accessibility, and scientific engagement

One of LSST-DA's distinguishing strengths is its ability to bring researchers together around shared scientific opportunity. Through fellowships, training programs, grants, computational resources, and collaborative networks, the organization has helped create pathways for a broad and diverse community of scientists to engage with Rubin LSST. As survey operations progress, the next CEO will have the opportunity to build upon this foundation while ensuring that researchers at institutions of varying size, resources, and geographic location are positioned to contribute to and benefit from Rubin-enabled science. The CEO will champion initiatives that foster collaboration, lower barriers to participation, and strengthen connections across disciplines, institutions, and career stages. By expanding access to the tools, expertise, and relationships that enable discovery, the next leader will maximize the organization's scientific reach.

Cultivate strategic partnerships across a complex scientific ecosystem

LSST-DA operates within a highly interconnected network of stakeholders that includes the Rubin Observatory, federal agencies, member institutions, foundations, industry partners, and the broader research community. The next CEO will foster strong and productive relationships across this landscape while ensuring that LSST-DA remains a trusted and valued partner. Navigating this environment will require diplomacy, sound judgment, and the ability to bring together constituencies with diverse perspectives around shared goals and opportunities. The CEO will also serve as a visible ambassador for the organization, elevating awareness of LSST-DA's contributions and communicating the tangible contribution of its programs, partnerships, and investments to a variety of audiences. By strengthening existing relationships, cultivating new partnerships, and effectively telling the organization's story, the next leader will increase LSST-DA's influence while reinforcing its complementary role within the broader Rubin ecosystem.

Partner with the Board to strengthen organizational capacity and governance

LSST-DA is entering a period of organizational growth and evolution that will require continued investment in its leadership, governance, and long-term capacity. Working in close partnership with the Board of Directors, the next CEO will guide the organization's continued maturation while supporting efforts to strengthen and diversify the Board's expertise, networks, and sources of support. This work comes at an important moment as LSST-DA seeks to expand its visibility and deepen philanthropic engagement. The CEO will foster a collaborative and strategic relationship with the Board, providing thoughtful counsel while helping align governance structures, organizational priorities, and resource development efforts. Together, the Board and CEO will have a unique opportunity to shape an organization that is equipped to meet the evolving needs of the community and sustain its influence for years to come.

QUALIFICATIONS AND CHARACTERISTICS

The ideal candidate will have most, if not all, of the following qualifications and experiences:

- Demonstrated success in executive leadership roles within scientific, research, academic, nonprofit, philanthropic, technology, or similarly mission-driven organizations.
- A record of developing and executing organizational strategy during periods of growth, change, or evolution.
- Experience building sustainable revenue streams through philanthropy, foundation partnerships, institutional relationships, corporate engagement, or other external funding sources.
- Exceptional relationship-building skills and a demonstrated ability to cultivate trust among diverse stakeholders with varying priorities and perspectives.
- Experience working within complex, multi-stakeholder environments that may include research institutions, member organizations, government agencies, foundations, boards, and collaborative networks.
- An appreciation for the role of scientific research and discovery in addressing society's most significant challenges and opportunities, ideally with a demonstrated interest in astronomy and/or astrophysics.
- The ability to serve as a compelling ambassador, communicator, and advocate for an organization's mission across scientific, philanthropic, institutional, and public audiences.
- Experience working with and supporting governing boards, including helping boards navigate organizational growth, strategic planning, and evolving governance needs.
- Demonstrated success leading, developing, and inspiring mission-driven teams.
- Strong financial, operational, and organizational management skills appropriate for the leadership of a growing nonprofit organization.
- Sound judgment, political acumen, and the ability to navigate ambiguity, competing priorities, and organizational complexity.
- A collaborative leadership style characterized by transparency, listening, humility, and a commitment to partnership.
- The ability to balance strategic thinking with practical execution and organizational stewardship.

APPLICATIONS, INQUIRIES, AND NOMINATIONS

All interested candidates should submit an updated CV/resume and statement of interest via the website:
<https://www.imsearch.com/open-searches/lsst-discovery-alliance/chief-executive-officer>

All nominations and inquiries regarding the position should be submitted via the same site. The position will remain open until it is successfully filled. All correspondences can be addressed to the Isaacson, Miller representatives noted below.

Andrew Lee, Managing Partner
Courtney Cabansag, Associate
Madeline Fitzpatrick, Managing Search Coordinator
Isaacson, Miller

All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, disability, age, or protected veteran status.

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

APPENDIX A: LSST-DA COALITION PARTICIPATING INSTITUTIONS

Adam Mickiewicz University, Astronomical Observatory Institute	Poland
Adler Planetarium	Illinois, USA
Astronomy Australia Limited (AAL)	Australia
Astrophysics Institute of the Canary Islands (IAC)	Spain
Astronomisches Rechen-Institut (ARI), Heidelberg University	Germany
Carnegie Mellon University	Pennsylvania, USA
California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo	California, USA
Chicago Area Partners (IIT/CCCs)	Illinois, USA
City University of New York (CUNY)	New York, USA
Columbia University	New York, USA
Hobart and William Smith Colleges (HWS)	New York, USA
Istituto Nazionale di AstroFisica (INAF)	Italy
Johns Hopkins University	Maryland, USA
Kavli Institute for Particle Astrophysics & Cosmology (Stanford)	California, USA
Laboratorio Interinstitucional de e-Astronomia (LIneA)	Brazil
Las Cumbres Observatory Global Telescope Network	California, USA
Max Planck Institute for Astronomy (MPIA)	Germany
Northwestern University	Illinois, USA
AURA/NSF's NOIRLab	Arizona, USA
Pennsylvania State University	Pennsylvania, USA
Princeton University	New Jersey, USA
Purdue University	Indiana, USA

Universidad Católica de la Santísima Concepción	Chile
Rutgers University	New Jersey, USA
San Diego State University	California, USA
Texas A&M University	Texas, USA
The Institute of Physics of the Academy of the Czech Republic	Czech Republic
University of Arizona	Arizona, USA
University of California-San Diego	California, USA
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign	Illinois, USA
University of Oxford	United Kingdom
University of Pittsburgh	Pennsylvania, USA
University of Texas, Rio Grande Valley	Texas, USA
University of Toronto	Canada
University of Virginia	Virginia, USA
University of Washington	Washington, USA
Villanova University	Pennsylvania, USA
Yale University	Connecticut, USA