



**WISCONSIN**

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

Search for the Vice Chancellor for Research

University of Wisconsin-Madison

Madison, Wisconsin

## THE SEARCH

The University of Wisconsin-Madison (UW-Madison)—among the nation’s most renowned and expansive public research universities—seeks a visionary and collaborative leader with an entrepreneurial mindset to serve as the next Vice Chancellor for Research (VCR). This position will play a pivotal role in building a future-oriented research infrastructure that leverages a storied history of innovation in service to the “Wisconsin Idea” of influencing the lives of people beyond the boundaries of the institution, to the state, the region, and the world.

UW-Madison is currently ranked 8<sup>th</sup> in the Higher Education Research and Development (HERD) Survey with \$1.52 billion in research expenditures. While few institutions match the incredible depth and quality of research these numbers represent, even fewer boast UW-Madison’s remarkable breadth. The University’s 23 schools, colleges, institutes, and divisions include an academic medical center; a college of engineering; schools of veterinary medicine, pharmacy, and nursing; a school of computer, data and information sciences; a land-grant agricultural research program and extension program; and an excellent array of physical and natural science, social science, humanities, and arts programs. Many UW–Madison programs are ranked in the top 20 in fields as diverse as business, nursing, economics, psychology, education, biological sciences, chemistry, computer science, earth sciences, fine arts, history, pharmacy, political science, social work, sociology, and statistics, among others. With more than 750 PhD degrees awarded annually, UW-Madison is ranked 11<sup>th</sup> in the nation for doctorates granted and is among the top 5 institutions for producing tenure-track faculty appointments in higher education. Faculty and alumni have won 20 Nobel Prizes, along with 78 members of the National Academies, 112 Guggenheim Fellows, 11 National Endowment for the Humanities Fellows, 5 MacArthur Fellows, and 68 members of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, among many other accolades. UW-Madison generates \$15 billion annually in economic impact and seeds numerous startups, spinoffs, clinical trials, and other entrepreneurial endeavors aimed at translating its discoveries to impact.

A key partner for the next VCR will be the Wisconsin Alumni Research Foundation (WARF). Founded in 1925 as the first organization of its kind, WARF is an independent, nonprofit corporation run by alumni trustees that manages the university’s patented technologies and invests the revenue. WARF provides an

annual base grant, which in fiscal year 2024 amounts to \$67.6 million, that is distributed through the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research (OVCR) to support research initiatives and fund strategic priorities of the VCR.

The next VCR will join an innovative new leadership team seeking to drive UW-Madison to even greater heights. Chancellor Jennifer L. Mnookin joined the University in 2022 and Provost Charles Isbell joined in 2023. The next VCR will be a strategic thought partner for the Chancellor and her Executive Committee, helping to achieve ambitious research goals, including advancement to a ranking of 6<sup>th</sup> or higher in the HERD Survey. In keeping with UW-Madison's strong tradition of shared governance, the next VCR will be consultative with the community in setting a strategic vision while leading bold initiatives to stimulate new or nascent fields where UW-Madison can define the cutting edge. As the Chief Research Officer for UW-Madison, the next VCR will establish themselves as a national figure, actively networking with federal agencies, industry partners, and nonprofit funders to establish UW-Madison as a go-to partner and staying abreast of emerging areas of national priorities, ultimately expanding the University's influence. They must bring both a strong record of research excellence in their own field and a deep and active curiosity for the breadth of research and scholarship across all disciplines at UW-Madison.

## THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

The University of Wisconsin–Madison was founded in 1848 as Wisconsin was granted statehood, making it the oldest and largest public university in the state. It became a land-grant university in 1866, was a founding member of the Association of American Universities in 1900, and serves as the flagship for the Universities of Wisconsin (formerly known as the University of Wisconsin System).

Ranked 35<sup>th</sup> overall—and 12<sup>th</sup> among the nation's public institutions—by *U.S. News and World Report*, UW-Madison is one of the nation's preeminent research universities and plays a notable role in serving the residents of the state of Wisconsin. Its identity and mission are informed by the [Wisconsin Idea](#), first formulated in the early twentieth century, which holds that education should influence people's lives beyond the boundaries of the classroom. In keeping with this principle, research conducted at UW-Madison is applied to solve problems and improve health, quality of life, the environment, agriculture, and more for all citizens of the state.

UW-Madison is currently in the third year of its five-year (2020-2025) [strategic framework](#). The strategic framework charts UW-Madison's path forward, building on its record of success and taking bold steps toward its vision of being a model public university in the 21st century. The strategic framework sets forth five priorities: excellence in teaching and educational advancement, excellence in research and scholarship, living the Wisconsin Idea, a vibrant campus community, and a high-performing organization.

For more information about the University of Wisconsin, Madison, please visit: <https://www.wisc.edu/>

## RESEARCH AND INNOVATION AT WISCONSIN

As Wisconsin's flagship research university, UW-Madison is uniquely positioned to marshal expertise across disciplines and develop organizational structures to tackle the most pressing challenges facing the state of Wisconsin, the nation, and the world. This potential builds on a storied legacy, with UW-Madison home to several pioneering "firsts," including: the discovery of vitamins A and B in the early 1900s; the method of photometry that led to the Hubble Space Telescope; the revolutionary anticoagulant treatment Warfarin; the discovery of *Homo naledi*, a species on the human family tree; pathbreaking advances in the study of childhood developmental disabilities and Wisconsin's leadership in the National Children's Study; the Nobel-prize winning discovery of reverse transcriptase; and more recent innovations in the study and deployment of stem cell therapeutics, among many other breakthroughs. The Wisconsin Alumni Research Foundation (WARF)—named after the Warfarin discovery—is the nation's oldest independent research foundation and precipitated the establishment of similar entities across the country.

The Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research at the University of Wisconsin has a considerable footprint and plays the key role in supporting all disciplines and domains at the University through mechanisms such as: the WARF annual grant—known colloquially as the "Margin of Excellence" that allows for major, cross-cutting collaborations at the far horizons of research; the Fall Research Competition, which encourages faculty and permanent principal investigators to submit applications for support to bridge extramural funding and generate stronger proposals; its work directly with Associate Deans for Research (ADRs) across UW-Madison's schools and colleges who are in ever closer constellation with the OVCR and its divisional Associate Vice Chancellors for Research (AVCRs); and through its 17 powerful research centers and institutes, reporting through the VCR, who together generate more than \$160 million in extramural research awards annually (see the appendix for more information on these centers).

The Office is a substantial administrative enterprise, comprising nearly 1,200 FTE staff across its divisions and programs. In addition to its robust role in influencing the research directions of the University, the Office also oversees: Research Policy and Compliance; Research Integrity; Sponsored Programs; and the span of IT support services attendant with such a powerful and expansive research enterprise. The University's federally funded research expenditures derive primarily from Health and Human Services (HHS), the National Science Foundation (NSF), and the Department of Energy (DOE), with significant additional funding from the Departments of Agriculture, Defense, and NASA; in FY2021, federal funding exceeded \$646 million. UW-Madison has also garnered significant funding from the nonprofit sector, including a major award from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation exceeding \$22 million.

For more information on the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research, please visit: <https://research.wisc.edu/>

## THE ROLE OF THE VICE CHANCELLOR FOR RESEARCH

Reporting directly to Chancellor Jennifer Mnookin, the Vice Chancellor for Research is the chief officer of the University responsible for overseeing and coordinating the research enterprise on campus.

As a senior leader, the Vice Chancellor will be expected to demonstrate and advance the highest level of ethical conduct and professionalism in their performance. In this role, the Vice Chancellor serves as the Chancellor's partner in articulating and implementing a vision for how UW–Madison will retain and build upon its long history of excellence in research and innovation. The Vice Chancellor works closely with the provost, other vice chancellors, deans, faculty, staff, and shared governance groups to design and implement the programs, organizational structure, and resource management that contributes to UW–Madison's three-fold mission of excellence in education, research, and outreach, all of which directly support the Wisconsin Idea.

Externally, the VCR will be the primary liaison with the Wisconsin Alumni Research Foundation in targeting and directing major funding initiatives and facilitating intellectual property agreements. They will provide leadership in both established and nascent entrepreneurial efforts as well as public and private University partnerships, working closely with the Office of Business Engagement, [University Research Park \(URP\)](#), [Morgridge Institute for Research](#), and other key constituencies. They will be the external champion of the University's research excellence before august bodies such as the American Association of Universities (AAU), American Council on Education (ACE), Association of Public and Land-Grant Universities (APLU), and the Big 10 Academic Alliance, of which UW-Madison is a part. Critically, the VCR will play a more robust role in Washington, D.C., partnering with and through UW-Madison's Office of Federal Relations to showcase UW-Madison's strengths and to help position its faculty for over-the-horizon research opportunities.

Internally, the VCR's responsibilities are manifest and manifold. As the Chief Research Officer, the Vice Chancellor must ensure that a culture of compliance, security, and ethics pervades every aspect of research conducted at the University regardless of domain or discipline, while at the same time steering policies that enable—rather than stifle—creativity and innovation at the institution. They will lead a broad, diverse, and talented group of associate vice chancellors and directors to ensure efficient and effective administrative and financial management of a top tier research enterprise. In their work with WARF and the Fall Competition, the VCR will serve as a convener and thought leader for the University's broader research strategy. They will be seen and sought-after as a visionary and affirmative champion for the broad-based research excellence of the University of Wisconsin–Madison, ensuring that the liberal arts and humanities, social and behavioral sciences, and fine and performing arts are valued and supported alongside the STEM fields, and will bring exciting new ideas into institutional conversations around team-based-scholarship and cross-disciplinary impact.

## **KEY OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR THE VICE CHANCELLOR FOR RESEARCH**

### **Develop an inclusive vision for research excellence at UW-Madison that will strategically guide the enterprise toward the University's ambitious goals**

Already one of the world's most impressive research institutions, UW-Madison sees additional opportunities for expanding its research footprint and is poised for even more growth. The next VCR will have the opportunity to develop a bold vision for the research enterprise that will advance the University's resources, prestige, and impact across all disciplines. The strength of UW-Madison's research enterprise has been built on the faculty, whose bottom-up and collaborative culture have led to unique innovations and prolific partnerships. The next VCR will build on these strengths, consulting with UW-Madison's expert faculty as well as deans of academic units to influence strategic directions while envisioning and implementing robust structures and systems that support the research infrastructure. WARF is a unique asset that provides resources and seed capital to stimulate research activities, and the VCR will leverage these resources to pursue additional growth. The VCR will catalyze cross-pollinating ideas and initiatives that span divisions and institutions and understand and advance the reputation of Wisconsin researchers across the University.

### **Deepen and strengthen connections with external research partners in government, industry, and nonprofit sectors and advance UW-Madison's influence**

As the chief spokesperson for the research enterprise at UW-Madison, the VCR will be a tireless supporter of and advocate for the impactful scholarship of the University. The University has benefitted from significant federal support from a variety of agencies and the VCR will be proactive to ensure that these relationships are maintained and deepened. Through personal investment of time and relationship development, the next VCR will serve as a bridge to agencies in Washington, D.C., promoting the interests of the University, advocating for its faculty, and learning about opportunities on the horizon that UW-Madison should be poised to pursue. They will continue to increase UW-Madison's representation on federal advisory committees, boards, and panels and advance the University's convening authority. In addition, the VCR will advocate to federal and state policy makers and officials the significance of the University's intellectual advances.

Further, the next VCR will seek and strengthen relationships with industry and nonprofit research partners. Though UW-Madison's research portfolio remains impressive, there are few areas where sustained and mutually beneficial relationships have been built with industry. The next VCR will actively pursue new partners, improve administrative processes to ensure the University can move at the speed of business, and steward UW-Madison's reputation and communicate existing and new areas of excellence. Similarly, the next VCR will develop stronger relationships with nonprofit research partners, especially those that support research and scholarship in the arts, humanities, and social sciences.

**Enhance a culture of collaboration, operational excellence, and high-quality service within the OVCR and advance a flexible and robust research infrastructure in alignment with the research vision**

The next VCR will inherit a dedicated team of faculty and staff with a wide diversity of expertise and various forms of functional support. As the Graduate Education function moves to the Provost's Office, the OVCR will be newly streamlined and focused on scaling support for a growing and more strategic research enterprise. The next VCR must understand the value, importance, and challenges of supporting world class researchers and scholars while meeting the complex regulatory requirements of a research university, particularly one with the incredible breadth of UW-Madison. They will enhance a culture of excellent customer service, collaboration, and careful attention to compliance to ensure that faculty across the University are well-supported in scholarly endeavors at all scales and across all disciplines. In addition, they will leverage this healthy culture to recruit and retain excellent office staff.

Further, as strategic directions are determined and priorities and requirements of major funding partners shift, the VCR must stay a step ahead to create and innovate research processes and infrastructure that can support the continued excellence of UW-Madison's enterprise across all disciplines. They will serve as a chief advocate for infrastructure needs and help to address deferred maintenance challenges in research facilities. In a decentralized university environment, the VCR will ensure that the structures and resources are in place to support all units and empower OVCR staff and leadership to be an agile and effective team.

**Serve as a thought partner at all levels of the University to grow the research enterprise**

UW-Madison has a strong tradition of grassroots scholarly collaborations that serves as the source of its intellectual spark and impressive achievements. The VCR will act as a unifying force, rallying academic units and coalescing energy around large-scale, cross-pollinating ideas that span disciplines, approaches, and methodologies. They will partner closely with academic partners, especially academic deans, associate deans for research, and the university research council, leveraging their knowledge and creativity to understand needs and trends across disciplines and inform the research vision. They will build strong relationships to create champions for the OVCR and the University's research mission.

The VCR will serve on the Chancellor's executive committee and will be a trusted thought partner and advocate for the research enterprise with the Chancellor, the Provost, the Executive Committee, and leadership across the University, including shared governance organizations. The VCR will be an advocate for how university leadership thinks about how incentives, resource prioritization, and strategic initiatives can support the research mission. They will be a bridge-builder who establishes connections across the University and with some of its key partners, especially WARF.

**Celebrate and support scholarly pursuits across all disciplines in service of the Wisconsin Idea**

The Wisconsin Idea is one of the strongest traditions at UW-Madison, holding that the University should impact people beyond the boundaries of the classroom. The next VCR will take this mission as a North

Star, constantly seeking ways to increase the impact of the research enterprise on the people of the state of Wisconsin and the world. While no VCR can be an expert in all fields, they will bring a deep curiosity about and passion for academic disciplines beyond their own. In doing so, the next VCR will champion a broad definition of research and promote a culture that rewards, incentivizes, and invests in all scholarly and creative activities, regardless of discipline. In telling the story of UW-Madison's research excellence to broad audiences, the VCR will be a voice for all disciplines and a driver of innovation and impact in all fields.

## **QUALIFICATIONS AND CHARACTERISTICS OF THE VICE CHANCELLOR FOR RESEARCH**

While no one person will embody each one of these qualities in equal amounts, the University of Wisconsin seeks the following criteria in the next Vice Chancellor for Research:

- Demonstrated senior leadership experience and a strong track record in developing an innovative vision for and leading a large research organization or function;
- Experience with and talent for working collaboratively with faculty, staff, students, and shared governance groups or other similar administrative bodies;
- A proven record of achievement in effectively securing and structuring funding for basic and applied research, and an ability to work with executive leadership and researchers in establishing financially stable and excellent research programs;
- The ability to provide intellectual leadership and to build and execute programs effectively within a complex and decentralized academic environment;
- Knowledge and experience with intellectual property, the transfer of technologies from lab to market, the use of industry partnerships in an academic setting, and an interest in providing creative leadership to such efforts at UW-Madison;
- Interest and demonstrated commitment to fostering entrepreneurial efforts among students, faculty and staff;
- Experience promoting and maintaining inclusion and belonging among faculty, staff and students;
- Experience with research compliance, such as human subjects, non-human animals, select agents, controlled and classified research, and conflict of interest;
- Experience in working with public and private groups who fund research and graduate education, including experience with Federal funding agencies, private foundations, industrial partners, and private donors;
- Experience in effectively managing staff, budgets and resources while setting strategic priorities to obtain additional resources;
- Ability to lead diverse working teams comprised of individuals who directly report and those who do not to achieve institution-wide objectives;
- Experience and prominence in the national conversations about science, innovation, research funding and a willingness to provide leadership and promote the strengths of UW-Madison in these conversations;



- Track record of effective communication, including a demonstrated ability to work with media and public officials to promote research;
- Experience in faculty and staff hiring, retention, and professional development, with a focus on supporting excellence in research.
- It is strongly preferred that candidates are qualified to be appointed tenure at the level of full professor at UW–Madison.

### Applications, Inquiries, and Nominations

Screening of complete applications will begin immediately and continue until the completion of the search process with a priority application date of Tuesday, January 19. Inquiries, nominations, referrals, and CVs with cover letters should be sent via the Isaacson, Miller website for the search: <https://www.imsearch.com/open-searches/university-wisconsin-madison/vice-chancellor-research>. Electronic submission of materials is required.

John Muckle, Vijay Saraswat, Hayden Lizotte, Arianna Williams, and Kira Hamilton  
Isaacson, Miller  
263 Summer Street, 7th Floor  
Boston, MA 02210

**Important information regarding confidentiality:** *Unless confidentiality is requested in writing, UW-Madison is required by Wis. Stat. sec. 19.36(7) to release the names of all applicants to anyone who requests that information. If you would like to request confidentiality, please indicate that in an email to Kira Hamilton ([khamilton@imsearch.com](mailto:khamilton@imsearch.com)) and request acknowledgment to that effect. All candidates who advance to the finalist stage will be announced publicly prior to their campus visits.*

*The University of Wisconsin is an Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action Employer. We promote excellence through diversity and encourage all qualified individuals to apply. Please visit <https://apps.diversity.wisc.edu/questionnaire.aspx> to complete voluntary self-identification information. PVL #280821*

*If you need to request an accommodation because of a disability, you can find information about how to make a request at the following website: <https://employeedisabilities.wisc.edu/disability-accommodation-information-for-applicants/>*

*Employment will require a criminal background check. It will also require you and your references to answer questions regarding sexual violence and sexual harassment.*

*The Annual Security and Fire Safety Report (<https://jobs.wisc.edu/asr>) contains current campus safety and disciplinary policies, crime statistics for the previous 3 calendar years, and on-campus student*



*housing fire safety policies and fire statistics for the previous 3 calendar years. UW–Madison will provide a paper copy upon request; please contact the University of Wisconsin Police Department.*

## APPENDIX

### University of Wisconsin-Madison Centers & Institutes

As part of its impressive research enterprise, UW-Madison is home to over 100 research centers. 17 of these interdisciplinary centers operate across the campus and fall under the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research, with their directors reporting to the VCR. These centers and offices involve faculty, staff, and students from the natural sciences, the social sciences, and the arts and humanities and generate, on an annual basis, more than \$160 million in extramural research awards. These centers include:

- **Data Science Institute Powered by American Family Insurance** – This institute brings faculty together from across campus to collaborate on research, spark new opportunities for students, and be a model for new ways to work with industry partners.
- **Arboretum** – The Arboretum includes the oldest and most varied collection of restored ecological communities in the world.
- **Aquatic Sciences Center (ASC)** – ASC administers two institutes that support multidisciplinary research, education, and outreach for the protection and sustainable use of Wisconsin's water resources.
- **Biotechnology Center** – The center facilitates high quality, comprehensive, multidisciplinary research and supports, coordinates, disseminates, and advances biotechnology.
- **Discovery to Product (D2P)** – D2P is focused on entrepreneurship and collaboration to move UW-Madison technology and innovation to market.
- **Center for Genomic Science Innovation** – The center develops innovative technological and computational genomic approaches to address modern problems in medicine, agriculture, and basic scientific discovery.
- **Institute on Aging** – The institute's goal is to understand the many factors (biological, psychological, social) that promote resilience as people age and to translate this knowledge to innovative educational and community programs.
- **Institute for Molecular Virology (IMV)** – The IMV's mission is to conduct research and training in the area of virology, primarily at the molecular level, and to serve as the coordinating focus on the UW-Madison campus for research and training in virology.
- **Primate Research Center (WNPRC)** – The WNPRC's mission is to increase our understanding of basic primate biology and to improve human health and quality of life through research.
- **Physical Sciences Laboratory (PSL)** – PSL is a research and development laboratory that provides a range of services including consulting, design, fabrication, and calibration services in scientific instrumentation.

- **Center for Quantitative Cell Imaging** – The center fosters excellence in interdisciplinary research which crosses departmental boundaries at one of the largest and most productive biology facilities in the world.
- **Space Science and Engineering Center (SSEC)** – SSEC’s mission is to conduct research and develop technologies to enhance understanding of atmospheric processes through new remote sensing instruments and environmental observations using satellites, aircraft-, and ground-based platforms.
- **Waisman Center** – The Waisman Center is dedicated to advancing knowledge about human development, developmental disabilities, and neurodegenerative diseases through research, training, service, and outreach.
- **Wisconsin Energy Institute (WEI)** – WEI is working on one of the most critical challenges of our time – the transition toward new, clean energy systems and solutions. WEI is committed to crossing traditional research boundaries to make major breakthroughs in the way we source and use energy.
- **Wisconsin Institute for Discovery (WID)** – We are a transdisciplinary research institute at the University of Wisconsin-Madison exploring information across disciplines at the interfaces of research, education, and business.
- **Wisconsin Icecube Particle Astrophysics Center (WIPAC)** – WIPAC is a scientific center with researchers based in the Departments of Physics and Astronomy. Within the field of particle astrophysics, their focus is on neutrino astronomy.
- **Stem Cell & Regenerative Medicine Center (SCRMC)** – The mission of the SCRMC is to advance the science of stem cell biology and foster breakthroughs in regenerative medicine through faculty interactions, research support, and education.

For more information, please visit: <https://research.wisc.edu/centers-cores/>

### UW-Madison Research Cores

UW-Madison cores are shared resources which offer a wide range of services dedicated to the support of research. Cores provide access to instruments, technologies, services, training, and expert consultation. The UW-Madison approach to cores is comprehensive and applies to research services in life sciences, physical sciences, social sciences, and the humanities.

The Office of Campus Research Cores has developed a [Research Cores Directory](#) for shared equipment and services, including data for 120+ core units, 500+ shared instruments and services, and 450+ professional services.

## **UW Health**

UW Health cares for more than 720,000 patients each year with more than 1,750 employed physicians and 22,700 employees at nine hospitals and more than 90 outpatient locations in Wisconsin and Northern Illinois. UW Health has been ranked the #1 hospital in Wisconsin for 11 years, with 5 specialties ranked among the best in the nation. In Wisconsin, UW Health partners with the UW-Madison School of Medicine and Public Health, which receives over \$245 million in funding from the NIH and includes the Carbone Cancer Center, the only NCI-designated facility in Wisconsin.