



Executive Director
Applied Research Laboratory for Intelligence and Security (ARLIS)
University of Maryland
College Park, Maryland

The Search

The [Applied Research Laboratory for Intelligence and Security \(ARLIS\)](#) at the University of Maryland (UMD)—among the nation’s critical national security R&D engines and the only asset of its kind focused on the human domain —seeks a visionary Executive Director to steward and strengthen its enterprise and position the Laboratory for the future. ARLIS is one of only 15 Department of Defense (DoD) University-Affiliated Research Centers (UARC)s in the nation, and the only UARC with a core mission to support national security at the intersection of people, technology, and information. This is a singular opportunity to organize, inspire, and lead some of the nation’s most talented researchers working to develop technological innovations to meet the nation’s security challenges now and in the future, all the while leveraging the resources of a renowned, tier one, flagship research institution in the heart of the National Capital Region (NCR).

ARLIS’s core mission is to enable national security information advantage and decision superiority by developing scientific foundations and engineering sociotechnical capabilities. It strategically supports an ecosystem of inquiry, innovation, and application across three key areas: *Human and Social Systems; Intelligent Human-Machine Systems; and Advanced Computing and Emerging Technologies*. Its more than 100 employees are comprised of world-class experts in these scientific domains who combine their skills with an intimate understanding of the needs of the national security community, and ARLIS is supported by a team of professional staff who are deeply committed to its mission. Its efforts focus on the countering of foreign malign influence, illumination and mitigation of supply chain risks, improved personnel trust, and operationalizing AI.

It is the combination of ARLIS’s domain expertise together with its commitment to intellectual and organizational diversity that forms its significant strength. As the leader of ARLIS and its major conduits for partnership with the top tier scholarly strengths of UMD, the Executive Director will be a strategic partner in advocating for improved collaboration across the intelligence and security enterprise; defining pathways to UMD for team science aimed at over-the-horizon research relevant to the nation; and

building stronger connectivity between ARLIS, UMD, and its strategic sponsor, and with major federal partners within and beyond the Department of Defense. The Executive Director will bring a demonstrated record of multidisciplinary team-building experience and a collaborative and inspirational leadership style. Experience in launching and sustaining multidisciplinary programs or initiatives, building sustainable infrastructure in the research space, exercising sound fiscal management and stewarding growth, and fostering a positive and trusting organizational culture will contribute to the Executive Director's success. The successful candidate will be a convener, motivator, and relationship builder, who will leverage the transformative potential of the University of Maryland's top-ranked research enterprise and other external assets, positioning ARLIS for bold and meaningful impact across its unique domains and as an independent, trusted advisor to its sponsor.

UMD has retained Isaacson, Miller, a national executive search firm, to assist with this important search. Inquiries, nominations, and applications should be directed in confidence to the firm as indicated at the end of this document.

The University of Maryland, College Park

The University of Maryland, College Park, was established in 1856 as the Maryland Agriculture College and became the state's original land-grant university in 1864. It shares the land-grant designation with the University of Maryland, Eastern Shore, the 1890s Land Grant Institution of the state of Maryland. Today, UMD ranks number 19 among public institutions by *U.S. News and World Report* for best colleges nationwide. Through its Extension, it is present in all of the state's 23 counties and the city of Baltimore. As a driver of research and innovation, it is indispensable to the intellectual and economic vitality of the state and maintains a significant presence in the state capital of Annapolis.

UMD's state-of-the-art research capabilities and facilities, coupled with its prime location and status as the largest university in the Washington Metropolitan Area, have facilitated extensive strategic research partnerships with U.S. federal agencies, positioning UMD as the nation's research university. In the immediate neighborhood are numerous government agencies devoted to scientific research, including the Army Research Laboratory, the U.S. Army's primary facility for scientific research; NASA Goddard Space Flight Center; the National Institute of Standards and Technology; the Food and Drug Administration; National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration; and the National Security Agency.

Classified by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching as a "very high research activity" institution, UMD is a scholarly environment in which students work side-by-side with over 4,000 faculty members to advance the arts, humanities, sciences, engineering, agriculture, and more. The University offers over 200 graduate and professional degrees across 13 colleges and schools: [College of Agriculture and Natural Resources](#), [School of Architecture, Planning, and Preservation](#), [College of Arts and Humanities](#), [College of Behavioral and Social Sciences](#), [Robert. H Smith School of Business](#), [College of Computer, Mathematical and Natural Sciences](#), [College of Education](#), [A. James Clark School of](#)

[Engineering](#), [The Graduate School](#), [Philip Merrill College of Journalism](#), [College of Information Studies](#), [School of Public Health](#), and the [School of Public Policy](#).

The University is home to more than 30,000 undergraduate and 10,000 graduate students, 14,000 faculty and staff, and nearly 400,000 alumni. More than fifty percent of all enrolled students identify as ethnic minorities. 49% of undergraduates and 48% of graduate students identify as female.

UMD has a total of [239 centers and institutes](#), many of which are focused on diverse and interdisciplinary subjects. They include the [University of Maryland Institute for Advanced Computer Studies \(UMIACS\)](#), the [Center for Machine Learning](#), the [National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism](#), the [Maryland Cybersecurity Center](#), the [Maryland Technology Enterprise Institute](#), and the [Joint Quantum Institute \(JQI\)](#), among many others.

UMD's dedication to service is fundamental to its relations throughout the state and the nation. The University's mission is to educate future leaders to be engaged and thoughtful citizens in a complex, vibrant, and democratic society. It anticipates and prepares them for opportunities that will enrich their lives and enhance the economic, social, and cultural vitality of the state and the nation. As a public flagship campus, the University is committed to providing the highest quality educational opportunities that are affordable to all students regardless of family income. The University regards the diversity of its faculty, staff, and students as among its greatest strengths and as an essential component of its excellence. Providing equal educational opportunity, hiring and retaining a diverse faculty and staff of exceptional achievement, and recruiting and graduating talented students from traditionally underrepresented groups are institutional priorities.

For more information about the University of Maryland, please see www.umd.edu.

Applied Research Laboratory for Intelligence and Security (ARLIS)

ARLIS was established in 2017 as one of the nation's 15 University Affiliated Research Centers. It is sponsored by the Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence & Security (USD(I&S)) and was originally tasked with a focus on language preparedness. Its mission areas and capabilities have broadened and deepened since then, expanding in scope to include multidisciplinary research at the intersections of social science, computer science, engineering, and operations and policy. As an independent, institution-level research unit of the University of Maryland at College Park, ARLIS is situated within the Office of the Vice President for Research (OVPR) and is one of UMD's primary research centers for topics of national security, conducting classified and unclassified research and serving as an independent, objective, trusted agent. It provides rigorously obtained scientific insights and sociotechnical solutions to hard security and intelligence challenges, helping defense and intelligence mission owners respond to their needs effectively.

ARLIS's unique combination of mission areas and competencies delivers a human-centric perspective with a technical edge. ARLIS is the only DoD UARC with a focus on the human domain—the space where people, technology, and information intersect and adversaries exercise influence for strategic advantage. Some of the toughest security challenges reside in the human domain, and ARLIS' work supports the university's strategic plan to take on those challenges and advance the public good. The ARLIS research team draws from a wide range of expertise and disciplines representing 40 different degrees in the areas of social and behavioral sciences, political and economic sciences, languages and linguistics, systems engineering, and computer science. With more than 100 employees, the ARLIS team continues to grow in the areas of human and social systems; intelligent human-machine systems; data science, advanced computation and emerging technologies; and software and systems engineering.

Situated in UMD's Discovery District—a research park home to 60 private and governmental organizations—ARLIS connects UMD, government agencies, and other higher education institutions to deliver strategic, multidisciplinary applied research. ARLIS's 128,000-square-foot secure workspace supports efforts at high levels of classification and provides its government partners with secure access to core capabilities and breakthrough scientific research. This infrastructure, coupled with its location, provides an invaluable resource for hosting conferences and wargaming exercises year-round. Presently, ARLIS is building a diverse and scalable multi-domain, multi-tenant computational infrastructure to better integrate research projects and capabilities from both academia and government. Existing projects, like the Cognitive Security Proving Ground and the digital twin model for supply chain security, require a robust and secure IT infrastructure and the ability to interface with the systems of the DoD and its intelligence community sponsors. ARLIS's infrastructure serves as a critical enabler for INSURE consortium members and other partners.

For more information about ARLIS, please see <https://www.arlis.umd.edu/>.

The INSURE Academic Consortium

In 2020, ARLIS established the [Intelligence and Security University Research Enterprise \(INSURE\)](#)—a consortium of 15 member institutions working together to coordinate applied and use-inspired research activities for intelligence and security at member institutions, aligning projects with specific DoD and intelligence community program managers and activities. This alliance improves the translation of products into operational use and enhances the pipeline of students and faculty to work directly on technology problems for the national security community.

INSURE is modeled in part on the consortium approach of the [Systems Engineering Research Center UARC at Stevens Institute of Technology](#). In addition to two new international partners in the FIVE EYES Alliance, INSURE members include top tier national research universities alongside Historically Black Colleges and

Universities (HBCUs) and other minority-serving institutions (MSIs) to coalesce valuable perspectives and reach a diverse array of students.

All member institutions bring institutional strengths in ARLIS' priority areas; a track record of conducting applied, quick-turn, mission-relevant research and development; existing relevant security partnerships to integrate into INSURE stakeholder community; and institutional leadership buy-in, to ensure sustained partnership independent of individual researchers or projects. INSURE's top priorities are to: bring the right team to every problem ARLIS supports as a UARC; be the connector and translator for the IC and defense security communities to engage university talent; and combine resources to strengthen the current intelligence and defense security enterprise (DSE) workforce and build a robust and diverse future workforce.

For more information about the INSURE Consortium, please see <https://www.arlis.umd.edu/insure>.

Research for Intelligence & Security Challenges (RISC)

One of the most significant challenges facing the defense and intelligence communities is competition for talent. The demand for employees who hold security clearances continues to outpace the supply of available workers, particularly in STEM fields. In 2020, ARLIS launched the Research for Intelligence & Security Challenges (RISC) initiative to help fill the deficit of government employees needed to address today's intelligence and security challenges, particularly those with training in STEM fields and rigorous research-driven analysis. In 2023, ARLIS received 383 applications from 81 Universities, ultimately selecting 122 students from fields like information and computer sciences, neuroscience, statistics, forensics, environmental affairs, and foreign languages, among many others.

Over a 10-week internship, top undergraduate and graduate students from UMD and other universities work on real-world problems within ARLIS's focus areas as a UARC. In the process, RISCers learn about sponsor missions and career opportunities in the defense and intelligence security enterprise. The interns work under guidance from faculty and government mentors, using realistic data sets to work on real-world problems. ARLIS also helps RISC interns obtain clearances, adding value to the interns' summer efforts and setting students up for national security work in the future. Ultimately, the RISC program aims to attract new talent to the DoD, intelligence community, and larger security and intelligence enterprise by exposing top students to interesting work in support of a compelling mission.

Though still early in its lifecycle, the RISC program has been a clear success: of the 38 interns who participated in the summer 2021 program, 14 were employed by the government, the defense industry, or ARLIS as of October 2022. RISC has grown exponentially since its inception, from 17 students in the first year to 103 in 2022. More than 35 continued working on projects into the fall, and the majority of RISC interns have expressed a desire to pursue careers in intelligence and security. As of November 2022, 91 interns from RISC 2022 had been successfully adjudicated for security clearances.

For more information about the RISC Internship Initiative, please see <https://www.arlis.umd.edu/programs/research-intelligence-and-security-challenges>.

Role of the Executive Director

Reporting to the Vice President for Research of the University of Maryland and under the sponsorship of the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence and Security, the Executive Director will serve as a catalyst for disruptive innovation in national security research at UMD. This individual will be responsible for providing leadership and vision; promoting external visibility of ARLIS and its complementary capabilities; fostering the growing research of ARLIS and its increasing infrastructure needs; cultivating strong partnerships with its government sponsors; and managing ARLIS's significant human and material resources. The next Executive Director will have the opportunity to leverage ARLIS's faculty and staff, as well as its connections to government, to further research excellence and attract and retain top talent.

The Executive Director will oversee a staff of around 100 and a budget of approximately \$100 million. This individual will work closely with project leaders, technical staff, and administrative personnel to maintain a careful accounting of finances while ensuring research projects' budgets are adhered to. In addition to their administrative duties, the Executive Director will be the external face of ARLIS to its government sponsor and the UMD community.

Key Opportunities and Challenges for the Executive Director

The Executive Director will address the following opportunities and challenges:

Create and refine a vision for the next era of ARLIS' growth and significant impact

ARLIS has been a leader on the cutting edge of human domain research and application for the intelligence and security communities since its founding in 2017. The next Executive Director will embrace the elements that have led to success: significant latitude for researchers to pursue innovation in the human domain, and investment in challenging applied research problems with an accountability-driven approach to impact. In addition, the new Executive Director will evolve what makes ARLIS unique in the decades to come. In partnership with university administration, government sponsors, and stakeholders across the organization, the Executive Director will drive a vision for the future of ARLIS that both enhances its scientific excellence and expands its real-world impact. In doing so, the Executive Director must be able to see more than what is coming next, but what is around the corner in national security problems, driving quality research that is relevant to both academic and ARLIS's operational partners. The successful Executive Director will be capable of translating that vision into action, communicating a plan to move ARLIS forward, and inspiring others to make that plan a reality.

Strengthen ARLIS's interface with the University of Maryland's major research thrusts in order to advance national security interests

The Executive Director will work to support and leverage existing programs that maximally complement UMD's existing research and innovation ecosystem to take advantage of new opportunities, fill gaps, and serve as connective tissue across the University, physically and philosophically. Success at ARLIS benefits its government stakeholders as well as the University, the State of Maryland, and the nation through enhanced technical capabilities, a national reputation for excellence, indirect support to economic development, and furthering the University of Maryland's mission as a land-grant institution. With the help of a dedicated team, ARLIS will assume a leadership role in national security innovation, job creation, and technology transition for the State of Maryland and within the College Park Discovery District. The next Executive Director will leverage key university strengths including the School of Medicine, Unmanned Aerial Systems facilities, quantum sciences, and programs such as Computer Science, Electrical and Computer Engineering, Systems Research, and Information Sciences, creating new opportunities for its vital service to the nation, campus, and state.

Recruit, retain, and mentor the most brilliant minds working on intelligence and security research

Research in the human domain is a dynamic, growing, and ever-changing field, and there is significant competition for top talent. A technical workforce with broad and deep skills is vital for multiple aspects of national security. This applies not only to the ARLIS workforce but also to the creation of pipelines of new national security talent to serve its partner agencies. To best meet this need, ARLIS must design and implement innovative methods to identify, recruit, challenge, develop, and retain expert multi-disciplinary technical talent aimed at national security priorities. This will include operationally relevant, practicum-led internship and training programs; co-operative employment opportunities for engaging undergraduates in research and development; and networks of science and technology professionals from across American higher education through our INSURE Consortium.

The next Executive Director will need to be a savvy recruiter, with a keen and finely honed eye for emerging and established talent, and able to leverage unique cultural strengths and a compelling mission to continue to attract top talent to ARLIS. In addition, they will need to be creative with professional development and collaborative opportunities to continue ARLIS' track record of attracting and retaining the best researchers and staff in the field. Further, the next Executive Director will prioritize professional development and career advancement opportunities to grow and retain its excellent staff. With unimpeachable scholarly credentials of their own, the next Executive Director will identify and nurture the most transformative ideas from ARLIS scientists and bring these breakthroughs to fruition.

Steward the considerable human and material resources of ARLIS with administrative and financial acumen, ensuring its capacity for further growth

In an increasingly competitive global landscape posing urgent national security threats, it is crucial that the organizational infrastructure, operating environment, and business practices of ARLIS evolve to meet the moment. With more than 100 employees and growing, the next Executive Director will work closely to build operational efficiency, systematically plan and build information security architecture, security systems, physical space, human resourcing systems, talent management, and financial management and business processes. Behind ARLIS' world-class scholarship lies a deeply committed staff that have enabled and empowered breakthroughs in national security research to support the DoD and intelligence communities, and the next Executive Director will continue to support their efforts tactically, operationally, and strategically.

Provide sound financial management and ensure funding to match ARLIS' most ambitious goals

The next Executive Director will be tasked with ensuring the financial sustainability and accountability of the institute. ARLIS's primary DoD sponsor is the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence and Security (OUSD (I&S)). It aims to gather further funding from the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA), other defense-aligned as well as philanthropic organizations, non-defense agencies, and university collaborations in its sphere. The next Executive Director will have a historic opportunity to diversify funding sources as ARLIS' reputation and credibility build. They will serve both as an external advocate for ARLIS, building partnerships and relationships, and will ensure that researchers and staff have the support they need to be successful in these efforts. These activities will validate existing and new initiatives, ensure its world-class talent has the resources they need to achieve success, and, importantly, continue to raise the profile of ARLIS and its prolific experts.

Key Qualifications and Characteristics

The successful candidate will possess many of the following professional qualifications, experiences, and characteristics:

- A Ph.D. or terminal degree and a record of nationally recognized research and scholarship (optional appointment as a tenured faculty member, though not required);
- A current United States Government Security Clearance at the TS/SCI level is preferred;
- Knowledge and experience commensurate with leading a premier institute, center, or lab that facilitates cutting-edge research, and in particular, funded by the Department of Defense;
- Interest in promoting the expansion of research involving the human domain across academic disciplines;
- A demonstrated network in the human domain space across government, industry, and academia;

- Ability to work across disciplines to develop and lead research partnerships with government sponsors, non-profits, military, and university collaborators;
- A deep understanding of the research enterprise in a government setting;
- A track record of successfully developing and implementing an enterprise-wide business development strategy;
- Administrative experience and business acumen;
- A devotion to the highest ethical standards, with personal and professional integrity above reproach;
- Excellent written and oral communication skills;
- Excellent interpersonal skills across all stakeholder groups; an ability to represent applied research to a variety of government stakeholders;
- Personal and professional integrity in all matters, including commitment to equity, diversity, inclusion, compliance with University and Government Policies, and federal, state, and local guidelines.

Applications, Inquiries, and Nominations

The University of Maryland, College Park has retained Isaacson, Miller, a national executive search firm to assist in this recruitment. Review of candidates will begin immediately and continue until the position is filled. Nominations, inquiries, and applications, including a letter of interest describing the individual's qualifications for the position and curriculum vitae, should be sent electronically in confidence to:

Rebecca Kennedy, Partner (she/her/hers)
Vijay Saraswat, Partner (he/him/his)
Gale Merseth, Partner (he/him/his)
Katie White, Associate (she/her/hers)
Elizabeth Arvanatis, Search Coordinator (she/her/hers)
Isaacson, Miller

To apply, please visit: <https://www.imsearch.com/open-searches/university-maryland-ARLIS/executive-director>

The University of Maryland, College Park, an equal opportunity/affirmative action employer, complies with all applicable federal and state laws and regulations regarding nondiscrimination and affirmative action; all qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment. The University is committed to a policy of equal opportunity for all persons and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, physical or mental disability, protected veteran status, age, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, creed, marital status, political affiliation, personal appearance, or on the basis of rights secured by the First Amendment, in all aspects of employment, educational programs and activities, and admissions.