



Search for the Executive Director, Laboratory Science
Children's Hospital of Los Angeles
Los Angeles, CA

THE SEARCH

Children's Hospital of Los Angeles ("CHLA"), a highly ranked premier pediatric hospital and research center, invites applications for the position of Executive Director, Laboratory Sciences. Reporting to the Chief Research Operating Officer & Vice President, Research Operations within the Saban Research Institute, the incoming Executive Director will have the opportunity to build upon and grow a highly successful research safety and compliance program in support of CHLA's mission of creating hope and building healthier futures.

The Executive Director will be a strategic leader and vital partner to the highly talented faculty, researchers, and staff within the research enterprise at CHLA. It is expected that the Executive Director will build close working relationships across the unit to establish, implement, and uphold guidelines and procedures designed to assure regulatory compliance. As a key contributor to the overall success of CHLA's research mission, the Executive Director will lead with vision for the future and focus on supporting current programs and endeavors.

Children's Hospital of Los Angeles 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.

ABOUT CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL OF LOS ANGELES

Established in 1901 and located in the heart of metropolitan Los Angeles, [Children's Hospital Los Angeles](https://www.childrenshospital.org/) is one of the nation's largest pediatric hospitals. It is ranked by U.S. News and World Report as among the top 10 pediatric hospitals for clinical excellence in the nation. With an established track record of high-quality, patient-centered research, it is currently eighth in funding by the National Institutes of Health

among children's hospitals. CHLA is also one of America's premier teaching hospitals through its affiliation, since 1932, with [Keck School of Medicine](#) of the University of Southern California (USC). It is also an active partner in USC's Southern California Clinical and Translational Science Institute.

As a private, non-profit hospital, CHLA provides care to a large and highly diverse pediatric population, with more than 17,000 inpatient admissions, over 95,000 Emergency Department visits, and more than 723,800 patient visits every year. Over 15,600 pediatric surgeries are performed annually, including heart and lung transplants, cardiac catheterizations, cancer and neurosurgeries, and orthopedic procedures. The institution is designated as a Level I Pediatric Trauma Center and has a 386-bed capacity, including 132 pediatric critical-care beds—more than any other hospital in the Western United States.

Details about CHLA as a leading academic medical center, including key statistics and leadership profiles, can be [found here](#).

RESEARCH AT CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL OF LOS ANGELES

One of CHLA's overarching aims is to [foster innovative research to improve the health and wellness of children](#), as well as to ensure the delivery of culturally competent care for diverse pediatric populations. This is achieved through a combination of basic, clinical, and translational research studies focused on developing and improving diagnostics and therapeutics—research conducted under the auspices of [The Saban Research Institute](#), one of the largest and most productive pediatric research facilities in the United States. Research funding at CHLA is significant, including \$52.4 million from NIH and \$166.2 million in total for 2023. Additionally, more than 530 clinical trials were conducted during that same year.

The Saban Research Institute is one of the few freestanding research centers in the U.S. where scientific inquiry is combined with clinical care and is devoted exclusively to children. The goal is to improve the health and wellness of children through a combination of basic, clinical, and translational studies. Research is performed at the lab bench, in the clinic, and in the community. The Saban Research Institute maintains strong scientific and strategic affiliations with the University of Southern California (USC) and, in particular, the Keck School of Medicine of USC. Almost all of the Institute's principal investigators (clinical investigators, physician-scientists, and PhD scientists) are USC faculty, and many have collaborative projects with scientists at the Keck School of Medicine and other departments at USC. The Institute's researchers also are involved in collaborative projects with academic institutions throughout the U.S. and abroad.

The [Saban Research Institute facility](#) occupies a total of 198,000 net sq. ft. of research space on the CHLA campus, including the 10-story Smith Research Tower, the 5-story Saban Research Building, an 8,000 sq. ft. Clinical Investigation Center, and a 10,000 sq. ft. Community Health, Outcomes, and Intervention Research Unit. The first floor of The Saban Research Building also provides dedicated space to support on-site behavioral and psychological assessments of subjects and their accompanying families participating in clinical research studies. Additionally, the Saban Research Institute is responsible for providing

administrative support for all research activities at CHLA and is home to a [centralized sponsored projects office](#), which manages proposal and award administration as well as financial management. The Saban Research Institute also supports a series of [core facilities](#) fully equipped with state-of-the-art instrumentation to facilitate research at CHLA and USC.

A central initiative is to understand the childhood and developmental origins of health and disease across the lifespan. The Institute's interdisciplinary research is organized around four major research themes designed to promote collaboration and innovation in addressing pediatric health challenges: [Best Starts to Life](#); [From Discovery to Pediatric Care Innovation](#); [Pediatric Disease Models and Mechanisms](#); and [Personalized Care and Prevention](#). World-class research programs include:

- Children's Health Imaging Research Program
- Community, Health Outcomes and Intervention Research Program
- Developmental Biology and Regenerative Medicine Program
- Developmental Neuroscience and Neurogenetics Program
- Nutrition and Obesity Program
- Best Starts to Life Research Program

Additionally, seven institutes/Centers advance research in key areas using a combination of clinical activities and scientific investigation. These include:

- Cancer and Blood Disease Institute
- Center for Personalized Medicine
- Fetal and Neonatal Institute
- Heart Institute
- Jackie and Gene Autry Orthopedic Center
- Neurological Institute
- Vision Center

Research Enterprise Strategic Plan

The future of research at CHLA is pivotal to the fulfillment of its mission as a pediatric academic medical center of choice. This is an inspiring moment that will bring together world-class clinical care for children with the broad and diverse programs that comprise CHLA's entire research enterprise. The Research Enterprise Strategic Plan, developed with the leadership of CHLA's inaugural Chief Scientific Officer along with representation from across the institution, will guide the institution's commitment to cultivate, enrich, and promote science while integrating the discoveries and educational potential with a large and growing clinical care enterprise.

The strategic plan (2020-2025) identifies five main goals centered around accelerating life-changing discoveries to pioneer healthy futures for all children.

- Grow the basic, translational, and clinical research portfolio to advance CHLA's visionary research themes.
- Create a research-focused culture at CHLA.
- Continue to develop a transformative research infrastructure to facilitate the pursuit of scientific knowledge with creativity and purpose.
- Train and mentor a new generation of child health researchers to become future leaders.
- Speed the translation of research discoveries and innovative technology into clinical practice.

CORE FACILITIES

CHLA supports several shared research facilities, known as cores, on its campus, which house specialized scientific equipment and offer expert services. Scientists are provided with access to advanced technologies, infrastructure, and data science and analyses, and many of the research core facilities have pilot funding programs to provide investigators with necessary preliminary experimental data to demonstrate technical and analytical capabilities. Core facilities include:

Data Analytics Service Hub

- [Biostatistics and Data Management Core](#)
- [Data Science and Biomedical Informatics Team](#)

Cell Biology Services Hub

- [Cellular Imaging Core](#)
- [Extracellular Vesicle Core](#)
- [Flow Cytometry Core](#)
- [Extracellular Vesicle Core](#)
- [Stem Cell Core](#)
- [Spatial Biology and Genomics Core](#)

Systems Analytics Service Hub

- [Neuropsychology Core](#)
- [Human Imaging Core](#)
- [Small Animal Imaging Core](#)
- [Nutrition and Metabolic Core](#)

Division Led Cores

- [Genomics Core](#) - Resides within the Division of Pathology.
- [Good Manufacturing Practice \(GMP\) Core](#) - Resides within the Division of Hematology-Oncology.

ROLE OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, LABORATORY SCIENCES

The new Executive Director will assume leadership of a highly engaged and successful unit that has flourished under the vision and strategic leadership of long-time director Dr. Barbara Driscoll, PhD. Upon her retirement, the new Executive Director will have the exciting opportunity to continue the positive growth and momentum while leading with a vision for the future of the research enterprise at CHLA.

Reporting to the Chief Research Operating Officer and Vice President, Research Operations, the Executive Director, Laboratory Sciences is instrumental in supporting and advancing the research enterprise at CHLA. The specific responsibilities for this role include but are not limited to:

- Establish, evaluate, and oversee the operations, policies, and procedures and supervision of the educational and quality assurance functions of the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC), Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC), and Research Laboratory Safety Office.
- Further a culture of research compliance by training faculty and researchers on relevant rules and providing regulatory guidance and requirements across the enterprise.
- Oversee the TSRI animal care facility (ACF) in accordance with federal, state, and local laws, USDA regulations, PHS policy, and AAALAC accreditation standards.
- Working closely with the IACUC Chair, the IBC Chair, and the Lab Safety Officer, the Executive Director will oversee all staff, veterinarians, and physical plant operations dedicated to maintaining animal welfare and laboratory safety.

KEY OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, LABORATORY SCIENCES

Inspire a culture of excellence, high-quality service and accountability, responsiveness, and cohesion

The Executive Director is responsible for the leadership and professional growth of a high-performing team coming from diverse backgrounds, skill sets, and roles. The Executive Director will empower staff and researchers to be an agile and effective team focused on CHLA's mission of creating hope and building healthier futures for children. The Executive Director will foster an environment of continual learning and professional growth, ensuring the necessary training and development to keep pace with advancements and new information. They will leverage the skills and expertise of their teams, provide opportunities for ongoing professional development, and inspire staff to achieve a top level of excellence in their work. This is an opportunity for someone with a keen interest in mentorship, management, and visionary leadership.

Maximize the potential of current facilities while planning for future infrastructure improvements to ensure CHLA's position as a world-class research institute

The Executive Director will play a significant role in maximizing the impact of existing facilities while harnessing the momentum of recent progress, including the successful completion of the new [Alfred E.](#)

[Mann Family Foundation Zebrafish Laboratory](#). As the CHLA laboratory science enterprise looks toward the future of research innovation, the Executive Director will strategically evaluate the infrastructure support for research and animal care, ensuring that it continues to meet CHLA's current and future needs and will support the standards of research regulatory bodies. They will assess research facilities, equipment, infrastructure, and resources, including capacity, structure, and quality in order to improve maintenance and evaluate future sustainable development of space, core facilities, and equipment.

Assess current processes and procedures in order to identify strategic improvements to increase efficiencies across the organization

The Executive Director will participate in and lead initiatives to evaluate the existing processes and systems and work closely with Principal Investigators, faculty, researchers, lab scientists, animal care staff, and other stakeholders to improve processes to provide maximum benefit. In collaboration with stakeholders across the organization, the Executive Director will help determine what advancements will make the greatest positive impact, carefully considering alignment with current and future needs. The Executive Director will work collaboratively to implement process improvements that will expedite workflow, fill gaps, and provide efficiencies to benefit all stakeholders.

Facilitate existing research initiatives and bolster the advancement of the research enterprise

The Executive Director must understand the value, importance, and challenges of supporting world-class researchers while meeting the regulatory and accreditation requirements of a complex enterprise that includes animal care facilities. This individual will bring research, science, and leadership experience that prepares them to work broadly across and between the IACUC, IBC, the Research Laboratory Safety Office, PI's, and others, ensuring an ecosystem of compliance, safety, and success. Leading with an eye toward the future, the Executive Director will support the future growth of the research enterprise by developing new policies and programs to ensure robust research compliance in a dynamic regulatory environment.

Continue to build a supportive environment for diverse, talented researchers, scientists, and staff

CHLA operates in a spirit of inclusivity both in terms of the individuals who work there and in the patients and families it serves. The new Executive Director will proactively work to recruit, retain, and support talented faculty, staff, and researchers from diverse backgrounds across the enterprise. CHLA's position as a safety net hospital located in a diverse city underscores the importance and value of employing and growing talent from the local community. The Executive Director will serve a key role in championing an ecosystem of mutual respect, equity, and inclusion across the units within the research enterprise.

QUALIFICATIONS AND CHARACTERISTICS

The successful candidate will have a PhD in a biological discipline or DVM and appropriate years of proven experience in a senior management animal research position in a supervisory capacity. Rodent husbandry, handling, and clinical knowledge required. Zebrafish husbandry and clinical knowledge preferred.

Additionally, they will possess many of the qualifications and characteristics below:

- 10+ years animal laboratory experience. Rodent husbandry, handling, and clinical knowledge required. Zebrafish husbandry and clinical knowledge a plus.
- At least five years in a supervisory capacity. Experience in a more senior management capacity preferred.
- Knowledge of current federal and state regulations pertaining to the conduct of research and administration of the IACUC and the IBC.
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills using scientific and clinical laboratory animal health terminology
- Specialized knowledge of laboratory animal species used to support research at CHLA and the ability to train others to properly care for research animals and ethically utilize them in an experimental setting.
- Basic understanding of common animal care facility systems, including ventilated cage racks, automated watering systems, cage wash equipment, environmental controls, anesthesia equipment, and aquatic systems.
- Ability to troubleshoot technical issues with ACF equipment and the physical support environment, including lighting, plumbing, infrastructure, and HVAC systems
- Position requires daily monitoring of the ACF operation, including after business hours and on weekends and holidays

TO APPLY

Children's Hospital of Los Angeles has retained Isaacson, Miller, a national executive search firm, to assist in this search. All inquiries, nominations, and applications should be directed in confidence to:

Rebecca Kennedy, Partner (she/her)
Kristin Benoit, Associate (she/her)
Cortnee Bollard, Senior Search Coordinator (they/them)
Isaacson, Miller

<https://www.imsearch.com/open-searches/childrens-hospital-los-angeles/executive-director-laboratory-science>

At Children's Hospital Los Angeles, our work matters. And so do each and every one of our valued team members. CHLA is an Equal Employment Opportunity employer. We consider qualified applicants for all positions without regard to race, color, religion, creed, national origin, sex, gender identity, age, physical or mental disability, sexual orientation, marital status, veteran or military status, genetic information or any other legally protected basis under federal, state or local laws, regulations or ordinances. We will also consider for employment qualified applicants with criminal history, in a manner consistent with the requirements of state and local laws, including the LA City Fair Chance Ordinance and SF Fair Chance Ordinance.

Qualified Applicants with disabilities are entitled to reasonable accommodation under the California Fair Employment and Housing Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act. Please contact CHLA Human Resources if you need assistance completing the application process.

Diversity inspires innovation. Our experiences, perspectives and backgrounds allow us to better serve our patients and create a strong community at CHLA.