



Pennsylvania State University President Position Specification

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We Are Penn State

A common refrain and sense of pride

Pennsylvania's sole land-grant institution with a 24-campus network and an innovative, top-ranked online World Campus – all under the One Penn State degree

Significant Scale

- **\$7B** annual operating budget
- **\$4.3B** endowment
- **89k+** students from **130** countries and a top producer of Fulbright scholars
- **7K+** full-time faculty
- **275+** undergraduate majors in **16** academic colleges

Top Research University

- **\$1.01B** annual research expenditures
- **Tied for #1 nationally** with **16 disciplines** ranked in the top ten for research expenditures
- Unique **interdisciplinary** focus

Growing Diverse Community

- 36% students of color
- 30% students are first-generation college students
- 25% Pell-eligible

Engaged Alumni Network

- **Largest network** of living alumni worldwide, **700K+**
- Consecutive successful **\$1B** fundraising campaigns
- Recent **\$3B** capital plan

The Opportunity

- Pennsylvania State University’s Board of Trustees has launched a search for a world-class leader to become Penn State’s 19th President. The President of Penn State serves as its chief executive officer responsible for the development and execution of a broad range of institutional initiatives that deliver research and teaching excellence, support access, and benefit the Penn State community.
- At a pivotal moment in the institution’s history, the next President of Penn State will have the opportunity to set a strategic direction that capitalizes on the university’s extensive breadth of assets, unmatched in higher education. Having emerged from the pandemic in a position of strength, the next decade in Penn State’s history will be one of significant impact on the lives of its stakeholders specifically, and the landscape of higher education more generally.
- Prior to officially launching the search, the Board of Trustees formed the Next Gen Penn State Advisory Group – comprised of a broad and diverse cross-section of students, faculty, staff, administrators, alumni, trustees and other stakeholders from across the university – to initiate a campus and community-wide effort to engage the voices of the university in the presidential search process. As a result of this initiative, the Advisory Group received input from more than 14,000 community members whose collective input and insights around the critical experiences and capabilities required for Penn State’s President are reflected in this position description.

“We are a large and complex university, and it’s important that our selection process is informed by the entirety of our Penn State family. Together, their voices will be a critical part of the overall process.”

Board of Trustees Chair Matt Schuyler



Priorities for Penn State's Next President

- Make Penn State's scale an undeniable institutional strength that can be leveraged to serve its students, faculty, staff, alumni, and communities and bring further distinction to the university.
- Identify strategic priorities that advance the university's academic excellence, capitalizing on its interdisciplinary research strength.
- Champion Penn State's efforts to support equity, racial justice, and diversity, building a productive culture of inclusion.
- Deepen and explore mutually beneficial opportunities for collaboration within clinical and research enterprises by the academic medical center and the larger university network.
- Substantially invest in the systems and structures that demonstrate both commitment to and results in student success, making the university a destination for ambitious students.
- Explore and develop a comprehensive campus network strategy that is efficient, binds and aligns the network, and uses technology to lift and optimize operations.
- Elevate the university's brand to send a message to the educational and employment marketplace that Penn State is a university with high aspirations that will be achieved.
- Make Penn State's relationships with officials productive in ways that result in economic vitality for the commonwealth.

Next Gen Penn State's University Analysis

Opportunities

Capitalize on research strength & elevate funding

Already a significant asset, expand interdisciplinary research to spur economic development and revenue growth.

Evolve land grant mission

Build on the foundation of the land grant mission to address changing student demographics; leverage the network of campuses to advance with and in their communities and drive economic growth.

Advance DE&I efforts

Continue to expand efforts to support equity, racial justice, and diversity to build a culture of inclusion for students, faculty and staff.

Improve affordability and access

Enhance access for citizens of the Commonwealth to attend the university and demonstrate the value and outcomes of a Penn State education for the dollars spent.

Innovate in education & student experience

Foster ways of teaching that enhance the student experience, prepare students for life and work, and enable access to education over their lifetimes.

Differentiate brand

Create competitive advantage by building on Penn State's rich tradition as a proud community committed to excellence while furthering the highest values of integrity and service.

Innovate ways of working

Explore and embrace change in areas such as technology, service orientation, communications and decision-making to increase organizational agility.

Leverage scale for increased impact

Given its scale, diversity of programs, 24-campus structure and geographic reach, Penn State has the platform and opportunity for greater impact on the landscape of higher education and the citizens it serves.

Challenges

Resources and funding

With pressure on all revenue streams, Penn State, like other institutions of higher education will need to identify alternative sources of revenue and manage costs to support its aspirations and infrastructure needs.

Changing demographics

Facing higher competition for shrinking pool of students, faculty and staff.

Diversity, equity & inclusion

Fostering diversity and ensuring a welcoming and supportive environment across the university in all its forms.

Affordability and access

Maintaining a cost structure that enables and encourages students to invest in their education.

Education & student experience

Increasing focus on student needs and the student experience in which creativity is furthered in both on-campus and on-line experiences.

Brand/identity and reputation

Increasing awareness of Penn State's academic strengths, research excellence, and robust community to draw additional attention to the university's distinctiveness and potential.

Internal processes and structure

Accelerating the pace of change and decision-making to increase nimbleness.

Scope and scale of multi-campus structure

Fully appreciating the scope and scale of the university's distinctive multi-campus structure. Each campus expands the university's reach and connections; the individual and collective potential is vast and should be leveraged.

Critical Capabilities of Penn State's Next President

Strategic Acumen.

The ability to navigate within a complex organization in a rapidly shifting landscape. Focuses on long term strategy; conceptualizes, synthesizes, and incorporates complex issues to produce a clear direction that constituents understand and embrace. Lead a data driven and consultative process to set priorities. Communicate extensively and leverage networks and partnerships to the benefit of the institution.

Leading People.

Attracts talent and builds high performing teams, empowering leaders to execute effectively at all levels of the organization. Aligns people around a compelling vision to which they can ascribe. Is visible and engaged throughout the community.

Building Organizational Capacity.

Ensures that the structure of this large, distributed institution aligns with the ambitious mission and values. Build the systems, programs, and services that leverage the institution's strengths and reflect the demands facing excellent higher education today.

With a Broad Range of Ideal Experiences and Attributes

Experiences

- Successful leadership of a complex organization and an extensive set of assets with vision and sense of purpose.
- Experience leading an academic enterprise and/or experience that suggests a deep appreciation for research and scholarship.
- A track record of sound strategic and financial decision-making and judgment that moved an organization forward whether capitalizing on opportunities or overcoming challenges.
- Has built and empowered high-performance leadership teams and an organization that reflects and values equity, diversity, and inclusion at all levels.
- Proven skills to manage, inspire, influence, and collaborate with a diverse set of stakeholders, particularly in a shared governance culture.
- Demonstrated capacity as a transparent and compelling spokesperson that furthers the reputation, stature, and resources of an organization or initiative.
- A body of work, on behalf of an organization, that demonstrates a high capacity for innovation, entrepreneurship, growth, and change management.

Attributes

- A career characterized by personal integrity, authenticity, trust, and empathy.
- Thought leadership and a body of work that has advanced one's field or institution.
- A leadership style that inspires followership; a good collaborator and partner, internally and externally.
- A champion for equity, diversity, and inclusion.
- An innovative and entrepreneurial mindset.
- A results orientation and a bias for thoughtful decision-making.
- Energy, passion, and commitment for the mission of higher education in all areas – scholarship, arts, athletics, community.

About Penn State

We are Penn State—a place of enormous achievement and consistently ranked among the top 1% of the world’s universities. Educators, researchers, staff, and students work seamlessly across a vibrant, complex, and unique campus network of impressive scale—a network that binds and leverages a highly engaged community.

Overview

Founded in 1855, Penn State established its [land-grant mission](#) to include teaching, research, and public service to support the citizens of the Commonwealth. In collaboration with industrial, educational, governmental, and agricultural partners, the university is a leader in research, learning, and engagement that facilitates innovation, embraces inclusion and sustainability, and inspires achievements that will affect the world in positive and enduring ways.

Penn State is a comprehensive, global academic institution with a \$7 billion annual operating budget, a \$4.3 billion endowment, a complex portfolio of 33 million sf of built space in more than 2100 buildings that includes an airport, hotels, housing, food services, police, transportation and utility plants. Operating and functioning as one university geographically distributed, Penn State enrolls approximately 90,000 students across [24 campuses in Pennsylvania](#) and online via its highly ranked [World Campus](#)—one curriculum offered at multiple access points to meet people where they are. True to its land grant mission and its commitment to access and affordability, approximately 30% of undergraduate students are first generation college students and approximately 25% are Pell-eligible. The university has more than 38,000 full-time faculty and staff, and it offers more than 275 baccalaureate majors.

At the University Park campus, Penn State’s largest campus and its administrative hub, degree programs are administered across 12 academic colleges: Agricultural Sciences, Arts and Architecture, Business, Communications, Earth and Mineral Sciences, Education, Engineering, Health and Human Development, Information Sciences and Technology, Liberal Arts, Nursing, and Science. In addition, Penn State is home to the Schreyer Honors College, Graduate School, Penn State Law, and Dickinson Law.

Vibrant and Engaged Student Body

A Penn State education prepares students to be leaders and innovators throughout their careers. According to a 2018 LinkedIn study, Penn State is the #2 school for producing CEOs, between Stanford University and Harvard Business School, respectively. Tied with MIT for 5th place, according to corporate recruiters, Penn State students are highly sought after, indicating that Penn State is one of the top schools in the country at training, educating, and preparing graduates to succeed once hired. Inside and outside of the classroom, Penn State students are driven to make a difference. For example, the Penn State Dance Marathon, known simply as THON™, is the largest student-run philanthropy in the world and has raised \$180 million for pediatric cancer care and research at Penn State Health Children’s Hospital.

Penn State is home to a top [Division I sports program](#) with a breadth of excellence featuring 31 varsity men's and women's sports, 79 national championships, and known for a focus on

the student-athlete, with 742 student-athletes who have 3.0+, and a graduation success rate of 92% four years in a row.

Interdisciplinary Research

With a [research enterprise](#) grounded in an interdisciplinary spirit, Penn State's breadth of expertise allows us to tackle the most pressing challenges facing the Commonwealth and beyond. Penn State researchers believe the best ideas and solutions come from including a multitude of perspectives. Research and development expenditures have increased steadily during the past decade, contributing to the state's economy through innovation and technology transfer. The university's research expenditures reached a record high for the fourth consecutive year in the fiscal year 2019-2020, totaling \$1.01 billion, a \$40 million increase from the previous year. Tied for the #1 ranking nationally, Penn State has 16 research fields ranked in the top 10 in expenditures, and *The Chronicle of Higher Education* ranked Penn State as the [top producer of Fulbright U.S. scholars](#) among research institutions in the nation, with 13 awards for 2019-20.

Penn State is home to more than 200 research centers, laboratories, and institutes, many of which are nationally or globally known, and its [interdisciplinary research institutes](#) are part of the university's unique, collaborative research culture.

Commitment to Equity and Inclusion

Penn State is committed to advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion across its campuses and to fostering and sustaining an environment of respect and inclusion for all faculty, staff, students, and members of the communities we serve. As a fundamental component of our mission to support citizens of the Commonwealth and beyond, we are dedicated to incorporating these values into our research, teaching, learning, outreach, assessment, operations, and decision making at all levels of the university.

Powerful Philanthropy

The [Penn State Alumni Association](#) is the world's largest organization of its kind, with 174,000 dues-paying members and more than 726,000 living alumni worldwide. The strength of the alumni network is highlighted by Penn State being only one of twelve universities worldwide to achieve \$1 billion or more in three successive fundraising campaigns.

The university's current development campaign, [A Greater Penn State for 21st Century Excellence](#), seeks to fulfill the institution's historic mission to serve the public good and create a better future for its students, the Commonwealth, and the world. With an overall goal of \$2.1 billion, the campaign invites Penn State's alumni and friends to become partners in fulfilling the university's three core imperatives: [Open Doors](#), [Create Transformative Experiences](#), and [Impact the World](#).

Economic Impact

Penn State generates more than \$11.6 billion annually in economic impact for the Commonwealth. As part of its [Invent Penn State](#) initiative, the university has funded more than 20 innovation hubs, designed to foster entrepreneurship and economic development

in communities surrounding its campuses across Pennsylvania. In the last five years, these innovation hubs have engaged more than 10,000 students and faculty, assisted more than 3,000 entrepreneurs, and graduated more than 345 start-up teams from accelerator programs, leveraging more than \$13 million in external matching funds.