Vice Dean for Innovation

Background

In 2016, Princeton adopted a strategic framework that "identifies key goals and major priorities for the University and that will serve as a guide for allocating University resources and prioritizing new initiatives." The framework states that "Princeton needs to find ways to cultivate interaction between its faculty members, researchers, and students and their counterparts in the non-profit, corporate, and government sectors" and envisions the growth of networks and infrastructure that allow Princeton to connect with non-academic partners who can help it carry out its teaching and research mission and enhance its impact on the world.

Princeton has made considerable progress in this direction since adopting the strategic framework. Under the leadership of Inaugural Vice Dean for Innovation Rodney Priestley, transformative initiatives have been implemented, reflecting the University's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion, and to a robust engagement with the broader innovation ecosystem. These include the Princeton Alliance for Collaboration, Research and Innovation (PACRI) and the START Entrepreneurs program. Following the appointment of Rodney Priestley as Dean of the Graduate School, Princeton seeks a visionary leader to serve as the next Vice Dean for Innovation. Building upon the momentum created by Rodney Priestley, the new Vice Dean for Innovation will provide academic leadership for innovation and entrepreneurship activities across campus and serve the faculty and other members of Princeton's research community by becoming the natural point of entry for innovation and entrepreneurship activities across campus.

Position Description

Reporting to the Dean for Research, the Vice Dean for Innovation (VDI) is responsible for creating and implementing campus-wide programs and initiatives to advance Princeton's ambitious goals in the area of knowledge and technology transfer, with emphasis on innovation, entrepreneurship, commercialization, and partnerships with industry. In particular:

- The VDI provides academic leadership in innovation and entrepreneurship across the entire campus in developing new initiatives and programs, serves as an advocate for innovation and entrepreneurship within the University community, and represents Princeton to the broader innovation ecosystem.

- The VDI chairs the Faculty Advisory Committee on Innovation, which provides advice and insights on matters related to expanding innovation/entrepreneurship across campus.

- The VDI chairs the Innovation Partners group, consisting of campus administrators engaged in innovation and entrepreneurship, seeking to coordinate and foster cross-campus collaborations in developing and supporting innovation/entrepreneurship initiatives.

- Together with the Assistant Director of Innovation and the Executive Director of the Entrepreneurship Council, the VDI oversees the Dean for Research External Advisory Council on Innovation and Entrepreneurship.

- The VDI supervises two senior staff members and manages a staff of 9 within the Princeton Entrepreneurship Council and Princeton Innovation, working closely in areas of entrepreneurship, e.g., START Fellowship, and innovation.
• Working closely with the Office of Technology Licensing (OTL), the VDI enables faculty and other researchers to translate their work into commercial or non-profit endeavors by connecting them with resources and opportunities.

• Working closely with Corporate Engagement and Foundation Relations (CEFR), Technology Licensing, and Advancement, the VDI seeks to expand ties with industry, external entrepreneurs, venture capitalists, alumni, and other potential partners.

• The VDI fosters a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship among Princeton's faculty, students, and other researchers through a robust set of workshops, training, networking opportunities, and access to legal and business expertise.

• Working with campus partners, the VDI seeks to create approaches that promote and support an inclusive campus innovation ecosystem.

• The VDI engages with regional partners, including academic institutions, industry partners, non-profit and trade organizations, foundations, and regional government as well as funding agencies, to grow the regional innovation ecosystem.

• The VDI works with the DFR communications team to ensure the promotion of Princeton Innovation, highlighting activities of faculty and student innovators, programs and initiatives, and innovation-related alumni news.

The VDI is a 50% time position.

Qualifications

• Appointment as a Professor at Princeton University.
• Proven track record of involvement with innovation and entrepreneurship activities.
• Strong track record of scholarship and research that will elicit support and respect from the faculty.
• Ability to communicate clearly and persuasively, orally and in writing, to faculty, entrepreneurs, investors, and alumni.
• Strong management and leadership skills.
• Demonstrated commitment to diversity and inclusion.
• Ability to work with a broad range of constituencies (faculty, students, alumni, VCs) and academic or administrative units.