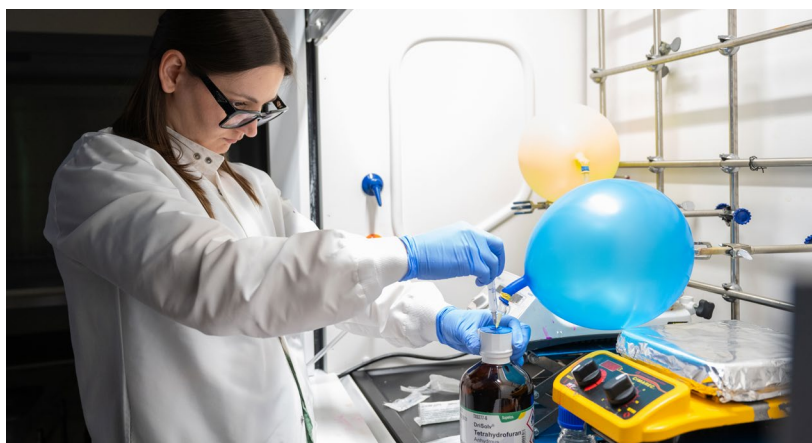
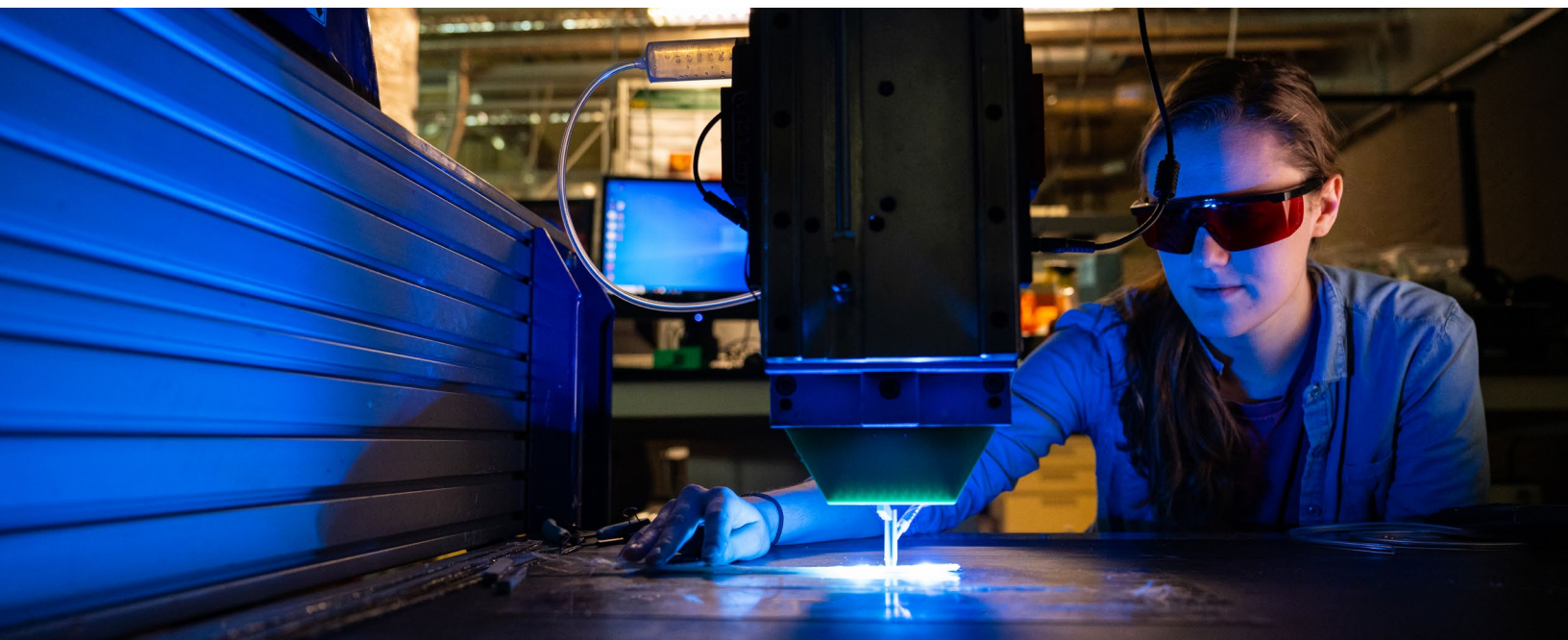


SEARCH PROFILE:

VICE PRESIDENT FOR RESEARCH
AND CREATIVE ACTIVITY



NDSU NORTH DAKOTA
STATE UNIVERSITY

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THE OPPORTUNITY

North Dakota State University (NDSU), a student-focused, land-grant research university founded in 1890, invites nominations and applications for its next Vice President for Research and Creative Activity (VPRCA). The Vice President serves as NDSU's chief research officer, reporting directly to President Marshall Stewart and holding a seat on the President's Cabinet.

NDSU is one of 187 institutions nationally to hold the Carnegie R1 designation for very high research activity, and its research expenditures have set a new institutional record for seven consecutive years, reaching \$215.5 million in fiscal year 2025. The next

Vice President will join the University at a pivotal moment, as new institutional leadership, a growing regional economy, and an evolving federal research funding environment together shape the path ahead for NDSU's research and creative enterprise.

This is an opportunity to lead a research portfolio with strong institutional support and real momentum, in a state that prizes innovation and a metropolitan region built for entrepreneurship and technology. Further details about North Dakota State University, the position, the leadership agenda for the next Vice President, and the application process are provided in this profile.



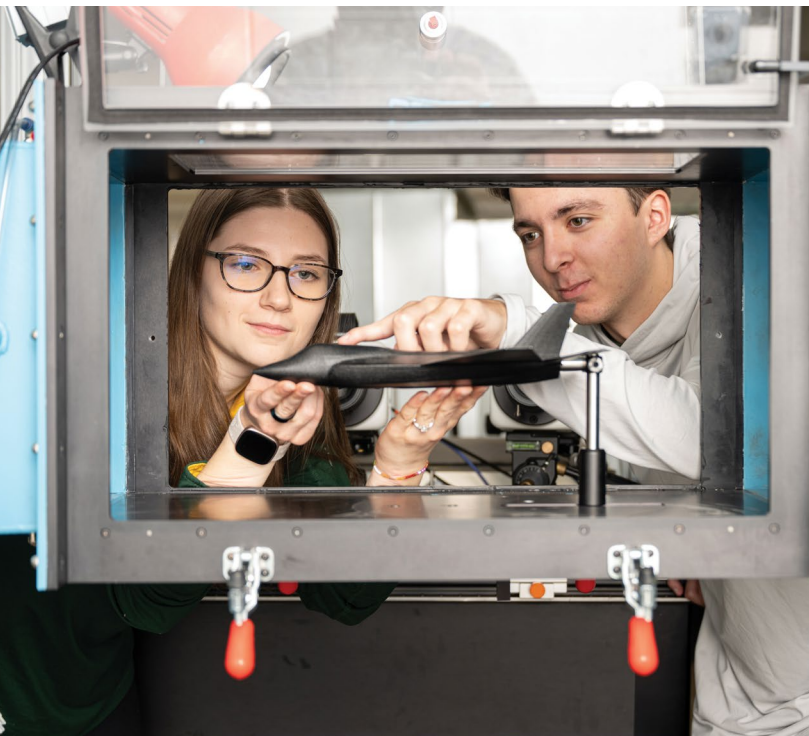
NORTH DAKOTA STATE UNIVERSITY

NDSU traces its roots to 1890, when it was founded as North Dakota Agricultural College, the state's land-grant institution. The University enrolls nearly 12,000 students across more than 90 undergraduate majors and over 200 undergraduate, graduate, professional, and certificate programs, offered through five academic colleges and the Graduate School: Agriculture, Food Systems, and Natural Resources; Arts and Sciences; Business; Engineering; and Health and Human Sciences.

NDSU's research enterprise has grown for seven consecutive years, reaching \$215.5 million in expenditures in FY2025 and more than \$2.459 billion since FY2009 per NSF Higher Education Research and Development (HERD) survey data. That places NDSU 98th among 422 public research institutions nationally (FY2024), and its research strength

across agriculture, materials science and engineering, pharmaceutical sciences, cybersecurity and computer science, and food, energy, and water security supports its standing as one of the nation's Carnegie R1 institutions.

As North Dakota's land-grant university, NDSU maintains a presence in all 53 counties through NDSU Extension and its network of research extension centers, connecting the University's research and educational mission to communities across the state. NDSU is a member of the North Dakota University System and partners closely with neighboring institutions across the Red River, including Minnesota State University Moorhead, Minnesota State Community and Technical College, and Concordia College.



NDSU POINTS OF PRIDE

- NDSU ranks among the nation's top 100 public research universities, according to the National Science Foundation's HERD survey (FY2024).
- NDSU serves as the lead institution for several major translational efforts, including a National Science Foundation (NSF) Industry–University Cooperative Research Center (IUCRC), the Center for Bioplastics and Biocomposites (CB2); an NSF I-Corps Hub, the Great Plains I-Corps Hub; and an NSF Regional Innovation Engine, the NSF AgTech Engine in North Dakota. These initiatives are supported by cooperative partnerships with government agencies, industry, and other universities, positioning NDSU within a robust regional innovation ecosystem.
- NDSU is home to the largest academic supercomputing facility in the state of North Dakota, the Center for Computationally Assisted Science and Technology (CCAST), that provides advanced cyberinfrastructure for research and education at the institution and more broadly to the North Dakota university system.
- NDSU has an active technology transfer ecosystem with the Research Foundation managing 331 active technologies and generating over \$1 million in licensing revenue annually.
- Since 2022, NDSU has made substantial investments in new and modernized research and education infrastructure, with the largest concentration in agriculture, engineering, chemistry, coatings and materials, and the performing arts. These investments have expanded research and technology capacity, increased opportunities for hands-on student experiences, and have connected research infrastructure to North Dakota's economic sectors.
- NDeavor is NDSU's Research and Technology Park, a 55-acre site that houses advanced research facilities supporting university materials research, cleanroom environments, high-performance computing infrastructure, a business incubator, and startup companies. Its proximity with main campus provides a strategic advantage for collaboration and the advancement of translational research and development activities.
- NDSU Bison proudly compete on 16 NCAA Division I varsity teams and have earned more than 96 conference championships.
- The NDSU Foundation's endowment has grown to more than \$550 million, supporting scholarships, faculty research, and campus initiatives.

NDSU FAST FACTS

Total enrollment:

11,609 students
(fall 2026)
including
approximately 9,467
undergraduate and
1,927 graduate
students

**Number of
undergraduate
majors:** more than 90

**Number of academic
programs:** more than
200, offered through
five colleges and the
Graduate School

**Student-faculty
ratio:** 17 to 1

**Number of
faculty:** 749

**Number of
staff:** 1,868

Research expenditures:

\$215.5 million in
fiscal year 2025, a
seventh consecutive
institutional record

**Carnegie
Classification:**
Research 1, Very High
Research Spending
and Doctorate
Production (2025
classification)

Number of alumni:
Approximately 104,000

Nickname: Bison

Colors: Yellow
and Green



THE GREATER FARGO-MOORHEAD REGION

NDSU's main campus sits in Fargo, North Dakota's largest city, part of the Fargo-Moorhead-West Fargo metropolitan region that spans the Red River into Moorhead, Minnesota. With a metropolitan population of more than 260,000, Fargo-Moorhead is one of the largest metro areas between Minneapolis and Seattle, and it combines small-town friendliness with the amenities of a larger city.

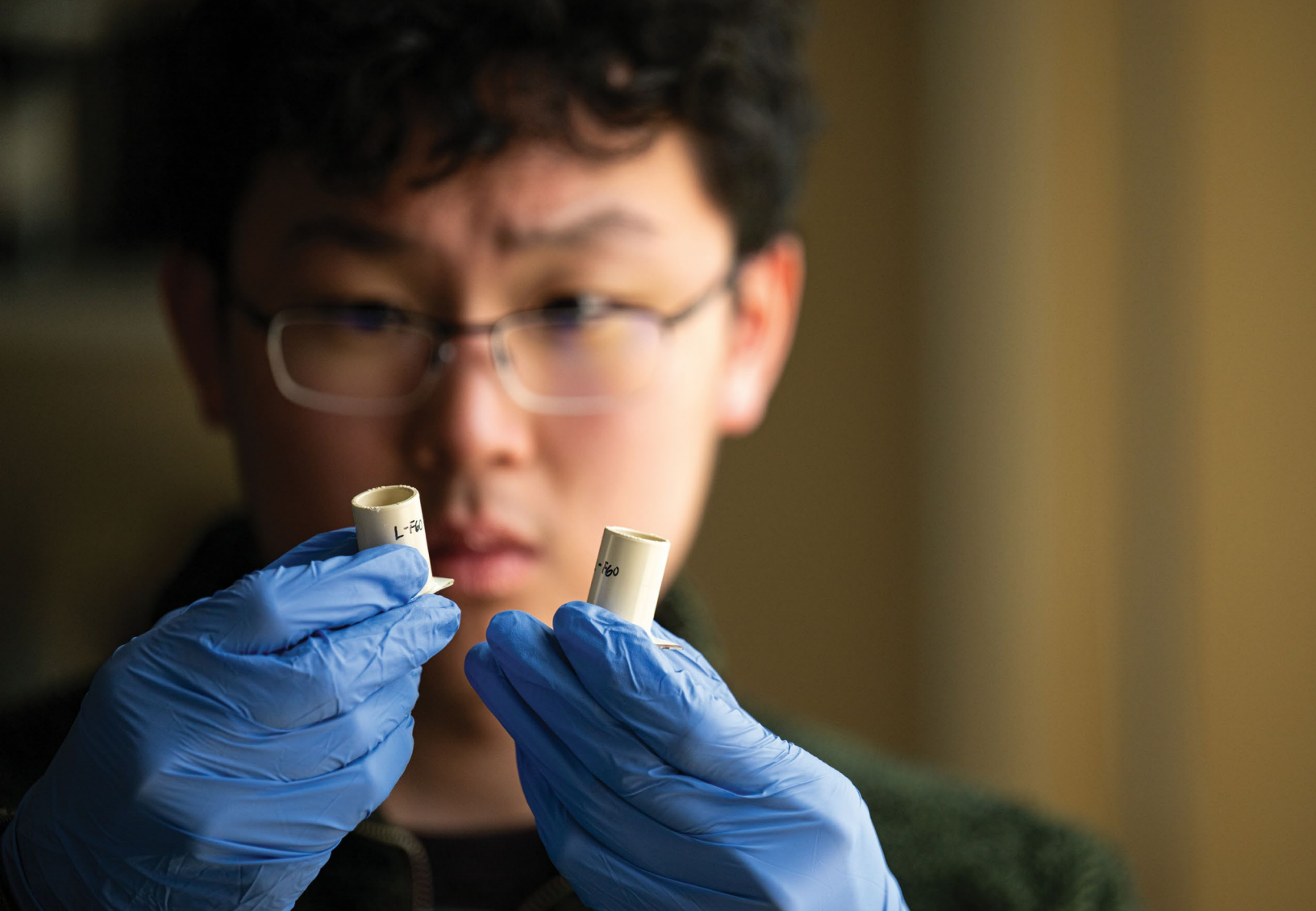
Agriculture remains central to the regional economy, and extends far beyond with strengths in technology, healthcare, finance, education, manufacturing, and government. Industry and community leaders such as Aldevron, American Crystal Sugar Company, Bell Bank, Border States, Doosan Bobcat, Emerging Prairie, Folkways, Gate City Bank, Grand Farm, John Deere, Marvin, Microsoft, Mortenson, Sanford Health, the Fargo Moorhead West Fargo Chamber and Greater Fargo Moorhead Economic Development Corporation drive a dynamic regional economy. Fargo has earned recognition as an emerging technology hub, and one of the nation's most promising destinations for entrepreneurs, with a cost of living 8.1% below the national average and a favorable tax structure.

Residents enjoy an active arts and culture scene, including a symphony, civic opera company, museums, and a growing craft brewery and dining scene, along with abundant opportunities for outdoor recreation along the Red River Valley.

NORTH DAKOTA: A STATE BUILT FOR POSSIBILITY

North Dakota offers a rare blend of natural beauty, economic strength, and community spirit. From the prairies and badlands to the growing metro of Fargo-Moorhead, the state pairs wide-open landscapes with culture defined by connection, resilience, and grit.

North Dakota's economy is strong and forward-moving. Agriculture remains the foundation, and the state's position as a major energy producer is supported by its abundant natural resources and ongoing innovation in the Bakken formation and beyond. Growing sectors in technology, health, manufacturing, and ag-tech create a dynamic environment where businesses invest and talent thrives.



RESEARCH AND CREATIVE ACTIVITY AT NDSU

The Vice President for Research and Creative Activity provides administrative leadership and advocacy for NDSU's research and creative enterprise, working in close partnership with the Provost, deans, faculty, and staff to advance the University's basic and applied research, scholarship, and creative activity. The Vice President reports directly to the President.

The Vice President holds budgetary, personnel, and operational oversight for the Research and Creative Activity division, which encompasses the following units:

- Sponsored Programs Administration, including pre-award budgeting and the negotiation of grants and contracts;
- Research and Faculty Development;
- RCA Core Research Facilities;
- Research Integrity, Security, and Compliance;
- Innovation and Economic Development.

STRATEGIC RESEARCH INITIATIVES

The VPRCA is a member of the NDSU Research Foundation and the Steering Committee for the ND Established Program to Stimulate Competitive Research (ND EPSCoR). The North Dakota Water Resources Research Institute and the NSF AgTech Engine in North Dakota also report to the Vice President.

The Vice President collaborates closely with NDeavor, NDSU's Research and Technology Park, led by its own chief executive officer, to advance technology commercialization and entrepreneurship. The Vice President serves as NDSU's Institutional Official for research compliance committees and as the empowered official for export controls.



LEADERSHIP AGENDA FOR THE NEXT VICE PRESIDENT

The next Vice President joins NDSU at a moment of real momentum for the research enterprise, following seven consecutive years of record research expenditures and the University's continued Carnegie R1 standing. Working with President Stewart, Provost Veil, the deans, and faculty leaders, the Vice President will help shape the next phase of NDSU's research strategy. Priorities for the Vice President include:

- Sustaining NDSU's Carnegie R1 designation and continuing the University's record of research expenditure growth;
- Expanding interdisciplinary and large-scale research initiatives that draw on strengths across NDSU's five colleges;
- Strengthening industry partnerships and technology transfer in support of North Dakota's economy;
- Helping faculty and the institution navigate an evolving federal research funding and research security environment;
- Supporting faculty development and competitiveness for federal and foundation awards;
- Advancing NDSU's land-grant mission through applied, community-facing research and continued engagement with NDSU Extension; and
- Partnering with the President, Provost, and Cabinet colleagues to align the research enterprise with NDSU's broader strategic priorities.

QUALITIES EXPECTED IN THE NEXT VICE PRESIDENT

Based on conversations with NDSU faculty, staff, and campus leaders, the following qualities are expected of the next Vice President for Research and Creative Activity:

- Understanding of the historic role of land-grant universities in advancing research with public and economic impact;
- Ability to communicate the value and outcomes of NDSU's research and creative enterprise to faculty, policymakers, industry partners, and the public;
- Demonstrated ability to build trust across a decentralized research enterprise spanning multiple colleges and administrative units;
- Skill in listening to a range of perspectives and communicating clearly about decisions;
- Curiosity about emerging opportunities at the intersection of research, technology, and workforce needs, including artificial intelligence;
- Willingness to take measured, well-reasoned risks in advancing NDSU's research standing;
- Strategic judgment in balancing institutional priorities with the needs of individual researchers and disciplines;
- Skill in negotiating and building consensus among faculty, administrators, and external partners;
- Exemplary oral and written communication skills, and a personable, collegial leadership style;
- Engaged and strategic leader who identifies emerging opportunities, secures strategic investments, and builds partnerships that advance national competitiveness, economic development, and societal impact; and
- Visionary institutional leader who can position NDSU for sustained growth and greater national prominence as a leading land-grant R1 research university.



REQUIRED AND PREFERRED QUALIFICATIONS

REQUIRED QUALIFICATIONS

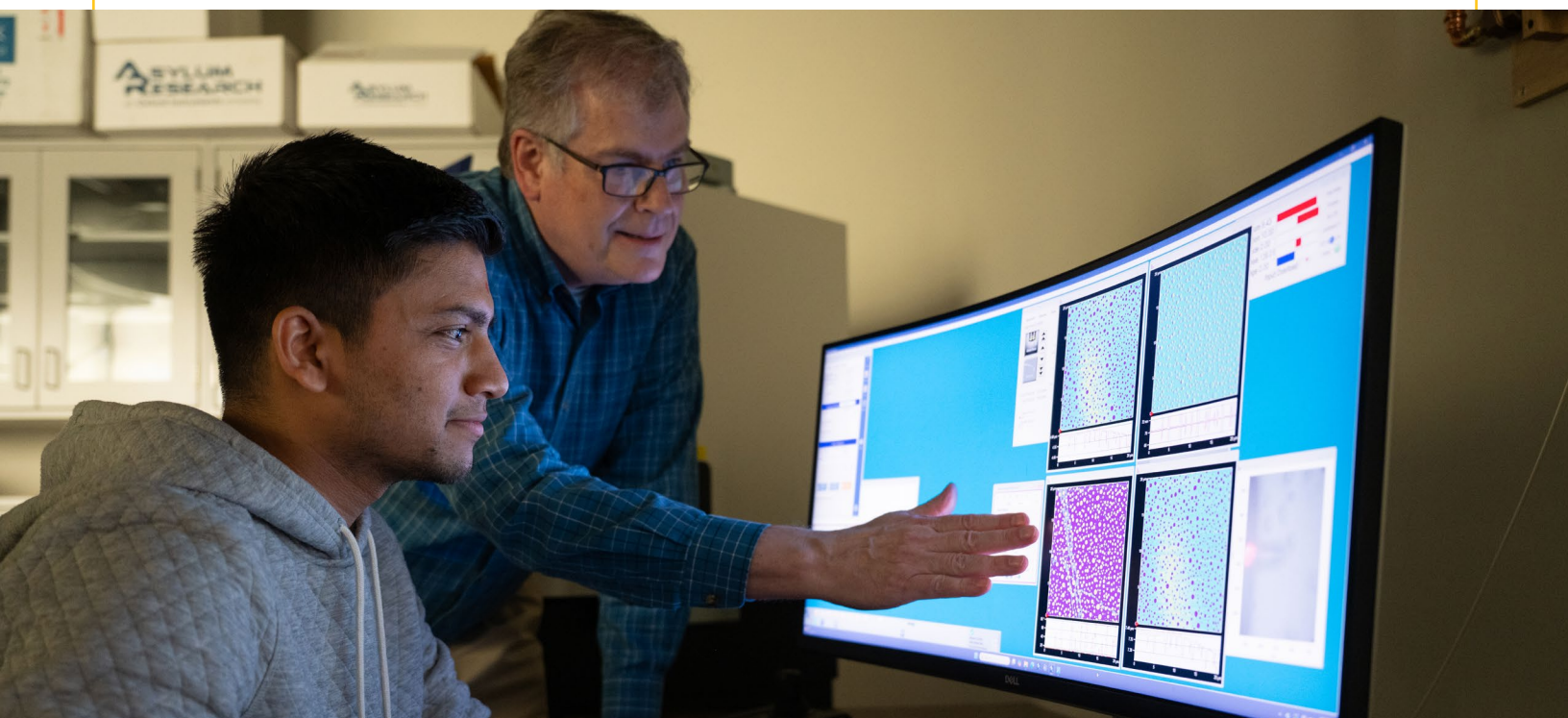
The successful candidate will demonstrate *all* the following:

- A distinguished record of scholarly or creative achievement consistent with appointment as a full professor at NDSU;
- Extensive senior leadership experience in research or creative activity administration, gained in higher education, government, industry, or private research settings;
- A demonstrated record of securing external funding in support of interdisciplinary research or creative activity; and
- A demonstrated commitment to supporting a welcoming environment for faculty, staff, and students engaged in research, creative activity, and research administration.

PREFERRED QUALIFICATIONS

The successful candidate may also demonstrate some of the following:

- Experience advancing technology transfer and commercialization and industry partnerships;
- Understanding of and support for the mission of a contemporary land-grant university across a broad range of disciplines;
- Working knowledge of the federal regulatory environment governing research compliance, security, and export controls;
- Exceptional understanding of the federal funding environment and agency funding portfolios;
- Experience positioning organizations for large funding initiatives;
- Demonstrated ability to increase research competitiveness and external funding;
- Understanding of the economics and infrastructure needed to sustain an R1 enterprise;
- Excellent oral and written communication skills, including the ability to convey the value of research and creative activity to a range of audiences;
- Strong organizational skills and the ability to manage competing priorities across a broad research portfolio; and
- Excellent interpersonal skills and a demonstrated ability to build effective relationships internally and with external partners





NOMINATIONS, APPLICATIONS, AND TIMELINE

Academic Search is assisting North Dakota State University in this search. All inquiries, nominations, and applications will be held in strict confidence outside of the finalists named at the end of the process. To learn more about this opportunity and discuss your qualifications and interest, potential applicants are welcome to email Dr. Maria Thompson, the Senior Consultant leading the search, at NDSU-VPResearch@academicsearch.org.

APPLICATIONS

Applicants should submit the following materials as separate PDFs using the online application link below:

- A cover letter addressed to the search committee, describing interest in the position and how the candidate's experience meets the qualifications outlined in this profile;
- A current curriculum vitae, including relevant responsibilities and accomplishments; and
- A list of five professional references, including names, titles, organizations, phone numbers, and email addresses, with a note on the perspective each reference could provide.

References will not be contacted until later in the search process, and only with the candidate's permission. A satisfactory background check, including verification of identity, degrees, and employment history, must be completed before an offer can be extended.

Apply online at: www.academicsearch.org/NDSU-VPResearchApply

NOMINATIONS

Although a nomination is not required for consideration, colleagues who know of outstanding candidates are welcome to submit a confidential nomination to NDSU-VPResearch@academicsearch.org, including the nominee's full name and contact information. Academic Search will notify nominees, share details about the position, and encourage them to apply.

SEARCH TIMELINE

The position will remain open until filled. The deadline for full consideration is November 5, 2026, and the expected start date for the new Vice President is January/February 2027.

NDSU Land Acknowledgement: We collectively acknowledge that NDSU, a land-grant institution, sits on the traditional lands of the Oceti Sakowin (Dakota, Lakota, Nakota) and Anishinaabe Peoples in addition to many diverse Indigenous Peoples still connected to these lands. We honor with gratitude Mother Earth and the Indigenous Peoples who have walked with her throughout generations. We will continue to learn how to live in unity with Mother Earth and build strong, mutually beneficial, trusting relationships with Indigenous Peoples of our region.

NDSU Non-Discrimination Statement: NDSU does not discriminate in its programs and activities on the basis of age, color, gender expression/identity, genetic information, marital status, national origin, participation in lawful off-campus activity, physical or mental disability, pregnancy, public assistance status, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, spousal relationship to current employee, or veteran status, as applicable. Direct inquiries to the Vice Provost, Title IX/ADA Coordinator, Old Main 100, 701-231-7708, ndsuoaa@ndsuo.edu.

ABOUT ACADEMIC SEARCH

Academic Search is assisting North Dakota State University in this work. For 50 years Academic Search has offered executive search services to higher education institutions, associations, and related organizations. Academic Search was founded by higher education leaders on the principle that we provide the most value to partner institutions by combining best practices with our deep knowledge and experience. Our mission today is to enhance institutional capacity by providing outstanding executive recruitment services, executive coaching, and transition support, in partnership with our parent organization, the American Academic Leadership Institute.

