



University of Colorado
Boulder

Vice Chancellor for Information Technology

Leadership Profile

May 2026



Executive Summary

The University of Colorado Boulder (CU Boulder) seeks a driven, visionary leader to serve as its next Vice Chancellor for Information Technology (VCIT). This role calls for an executive with a highly sophisticated understanding of the needs of a research-intensive, AAU member institution – one who can deliver inclusive, exceptional, reliable service through robust foundational IT infrastructure while also addressing the specialized, evolving needs of faculty, researchers, students, and staff. CU Boulder is Colorado's flagship public research university, combining world-class scholarship, global impact, and student success, and operates in a highly complex, data-intensive environment with significant regulatory, compliance, and cyber-security demands. The VCIT will play a critical role in enabling the university's mission and advancing its impact across the state and beyond.

The University of Colorado Boulder has been transforming lives since 1876. As one of only 38 U.S. public research institutions in the Association of American Universities (AAU), CU Boulder has proudly served Coloradans since the state's founding. Home to five Nobel Laureates since 1989 and the only university to send space instruments to every planet in the solar system, CU Boulder provides a strong return on investment by aligning efforts to achieve research and creative excellence, global sustainability impact, and the success of all students, faculty, and staff.

In close collaboration with senior leadership, faculty, researchers, staff, students, and partners in the four-campus CU system, the Vice Chancellor for Information Technology will align information technology strategy with the institution's mission, strategic priorities, and goals for academic excellence and research distinction. CU Boulder Institutional priorities can be found [here](#). The VCIT will play a critical role in advancing administrative effectiveness and supporting research competitiveness and an enhanced student experience. Key priorities will include strengthening IT governance to support transparent and effective investment decision-making; modernizing enterprise infrastructure and platforms; working with the CU System Office to help select and implement next-generation administrative systems; advancing a robust and resilient cybersecurity program; enhancing research computing and cyber infrastructure; reinforcing IT's commitments to organizational development and diversity, equity, and inclusion; and supporting innovation and research competitiveness. The successful candidate will be a dynamic, experienced, and mission-driven leader with a demonstrated record of building inclusive, high-performing teams and strengthening IT services within a complex research university environment. The VCIT will be a collaborative and trusted partner who communicates effectively and builds strong relationships across the institution and with external constituents, driving progress through credibility, influence, and consensus. This individual will bring a deep understanding of emerging and established technologies that support teaching, learning, and research, and will serve as a principled, action-oriented leader capable of guiding meaningful change within a leading R1 institution.

To submit a nomination or express personal interest in this position, please refer to the Procedure for Candidacy at the end of this document.

Role of the Vice Chancellor for Information Technology

Position Summary

The Vice Chancellor for Information Technology (VCIT) will provide technology vision and leadership in the development and implementation of the information technology program. They will establish the strategic direction of CU Boulder's information technology (IT) resources; provide support to information users; determine information needs throughout the enterprise; identify changes in computer and systems technology, systems software, and hardware necessary for the successful integration of information systems; and coordinate, facilitate, and consult with various departments on policy, information systems, communications, and other initiatives. The VCIT will also be responsible for establishing group, departmental, and division goals, and determining the resources needed to meet those goals, as well as assessing group, departmental, and division performance feedback (to include, for example, [advancing diversity, equity and inclusion](#) within IT).

Reporting Relationships

The incoming Vice Chancellor for Information Technology will report to the Senior Vice Chancellor of Operations. Direct Reports Include:

- Associate Vice Chancellor for IT
- Assistant Vice Chancellor for Digital Experience and Technology
- Assistant Vice Chancellor for Campus IT Finance, Planning & Asset Management
- Assistant Vice Chancellor for IT Service Delivery & Organizational Strategy
- Assistant Vice Chancellor/Information Security Officer
- Assistant Vice Chancellor for Research Computing

Responsibilities

The successful VCIT will:

- Lead, develop, and execute an institution-wide technology strategy and business plan that supports CU Boulder's academic, research, and administrative mission.
- Develop and sustain strong relationships with faculty, researchers, staff, students, senior leadership, shared governance groups, external service providers, vendors, and industry peers.
- Position information technology as a strategic enabler of teaching, learning, research and creative work, and institutional operations.
- Provide executive leadership and strategic direction for enterprise technology functions, including digital experience and technology, IT finance and planning, enterprise IT operations and service delivery, information security, organizational strategy, and research computing.
- Foster a culture of collaboration, inclusion, innovation, transparency, accountability, and service excellence across the IT organization.
- Integrate effective systems development methodologies and disciplined project leadership practices across IT initiatives.
- Establish a strategic approach to understanding stakeholder objectives and institutional requirements to ensure IT services meet the needs of a global research institution.

- Serve as portfolio manager for university-wide technology initiatives, reviewing and recommending IT proposals from academic, research, and administrative units.
- Ensure effective planning, prioritization and management of multiple information and communications systems and concurrent projects.
- Develop initiatives to improve efficiency and deliver streamlined, high-quality services, while supporting and reinforcing effective change management practices associated with the adoption of innovative business systems and emerging technologies.
- Lead enterprise-wide IT process, business, and technical transformation initiatives, applying strong change management practices to support the adoption of innovative business systems and emerging technologies while improving efficiency and delivering streamlined, high-quality services.
- Advise senior leadership on IT acquisition and management, including the evaluation, selection, implementation, maintenance, and appropriate investment in strategic and operational systems.
- Establish and lead a comprehensive IT service performance framework that monitors service delivery, service levels, quality, effectiveness, and operational performance across IT functions, using institutional metrics to assess and improve the contribution of systems and services to institutional outcomes and business value.
- Ensure organizational business processes, information security practices and technology operations comply with applicable standards, policies, and regulations (including, for example, digital accessibility).
- Develop and manage a comprehensive, university-wide IT budget encompassing capital planning, operating expenditures and technology investments, ensuring responsible stewardship of institutional resources.
- Work in close partnership with the University of Colorado System Office, which manages the ERP ecosystem, to deliver cohesive integration and continuous improvement across systems.
- Communicate information technology strategies, policies, plans, and emerging technology trends across the enterprise.
- Model ethical leadership and responsible stewardship of resources through effective governance, resource allocation and decision-making.

Opportunities and Expectations for Leadership

The following goals and objectives have been identified as priorities for the next Vice Chancellor:

Build Relationships and Foster Collaboration

- Build strong, collaborative, and trust-based relationships with faculty, researchers, staff, students, administrators, shared governance and other advisory bodies, CU system leaders and colleagues and key internal and external constituents, recognizing CU Boulder's emphasis on long-standing relationships and institutional trust.
- Collaborate effectively with academic, administrative, and distributed IT leaders to advance technology initiatives that support education, research and creative work, outreach, and institutional operations in an environment with a multitude of constituents.
- Partner closely with distributed IT organizations to coordinate services, clarify roles and responsibilities, reduce duplication, and improve enterprise efficiency and service delivery and the user experience across schools, colleges, administrative support units, and central IT.
- Partner closely with the University of Colorado System Office to drive modernization of enterprise resource planning (ERP) systems and other strategic initiatives.

Lead IT Organizations and Strengthen Governance

- Engage with an in-progress third party comprehensive assessment of the central information technology organization, including structure, resources, capabilities, and talent. Following completion of the assessment, lead the thoughtful implementation of accepted and agreed-upon recommendations to address identified gaps and strengthen the IT organization. Establish a cohesive, service-oriented organization with clear communication channels and accountability, while respecting CU Boulder's collaborative and relationship-driven culture.
- Assess and strengthen IT governance to ensure transparent, inclusive, and effective prioritization of technology investments, recognizing that governance structures are relatively new and require continued maturation to support consistent decision-making across the institution.
- Drive operational excellence, service consistency, and continuous improvement across IT functions, including clearer prioritization, follow-through, and accountability in a matrixed environment.
- Build institutional capacity for ensuring digital accessibility.
- Advance diversity, equity, and inclusion; foster an engaging environment that supports professional development, career growth, recruitment, and retention.

Set and Execute Enterprise Technology Strategy

- Evaluate the institution's technology enterprise and develop, implement, and steward an IT strategic plan aligned with CU Boulder's mission, academic ambitions, and research priorities.
- Develop and execute a multi-year roadmap to modernize and sustain enterprise technology infrastructure, ensuring reliability, scalability, security, and support for advanced academic and research needs.

- Create and execute a technology strategy that supports institutional growth priorities, including enrollment, online and hybrid learning, enhanced student success, and responsible adoption of artificial intelligence and emerging technologies.
- Provide executive leadership for the selection, implementation, and ongoing optimization of next-generation enterprise administrative systems in a complex, distributed operating model.
- Develop and execute a comprehensive, forward-looking cybersecurity strategy that protects institutional, academic, and research assets—explicitly addressing emerging threats from generative AI, including the scaling and automation of cyberattacks, increasingly adaptive malware, and more sophisticated AI-enabled social engineering tactics.
- In partnership with information security, legal, compliance, and others, establish a resilient security and risk management framework for both enterprise IT and research environments, incorporating proactive threat intelligence, continuous monitoring, user awareness, and governance practices tailored to evolving adversarial capabilities and regulatory expectations.
- Support the transformation of ERP platforms used by the flagship campus while maintained and governed by the System Office.

Advance Research and Security Capabilities

- Advance a comprehensive research computing and cyberinfrastructure strategy that expands access to high-performance computing, data, storage, and advanced tools in support of a growing and increasingly complex research portfolio.
- Lead and support institution-wide efforts to strengthen research security, cybersecurity, privacy, and risk management capabilities, particularly as regulatory, compliance, and research-security expectations continue to evolve.

Professional Qualifications and Personal Qualities

Required Qualifications

- A bachelor's degree in information technology, computer science, information systems or related field; or, equivalent combination of education and experience, required including 10 or more years of progressively responsible experience, including significant management experience, with a proven record of leadership in a complex information technology organization, preferably in a research university; preferably in a public university with a system IT group.
- Comprehensive knowledge of business principles and the techniques of administration, organization, and management.
- Proven ability to translate institutional and business objectives into information technology strategies, initiatives, and measurable outcomes.
- Demonstrated ability to define scope and approach for initiatives and to develop short- and long-term information technology plans and budgets; financially savvy with experience in fiscal planning and resource stewardship.
- Broad understanding of the full spectrum of information technology systems and services, with awareness of emerging technologies shaping education, research, and enterprise operations.
- Experience in inclusive organizational leadership, including people management, organizational development, hiring, coaching, performance management, and fostering a healthy team culture.
- Proven ability to build strong relationships with senior leaders and teams at all levels and to lead effectively through influence in decentralized or distributed environments.
- Track record of advising executive leaders in sensitive, high-visibility situations requiring sound judgment, discretion, and clear communication.
- Exceptional critical thinking, problem-solving, interpersonal, project management, and communication skills, with the ability to engage effectively across diverse constituent groups.
- Demonstrates a strong track record of fostering positive, high-performing IT team cultures while promoting a user-centered, service-oriented environment rooted in collegial support.
- Demonstrated ability to lead the IT organization's commitments to advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion; and applies the content knowledge required to do so.
- Brings strong capabilities in leadership, management, mediation, and negotiation; serves as a skilled coach and mentor, a visible advocate for IT, and a principled servant leader.

Preferred Qualifications

- Experience with research security and federal sponsor expectations, recognizing this is now a core institutional responsibility. Proven track record of working collaboratively with research offices, compliance and legal partners, or research institutes and academic units.
- Exhibits outstanding verbal and written communication skills, strong listening ability, and executive-level presentation acumen; engages effectively and empathetically with faculty, staff, researchers, administrators, students, and other constituents.

Personal Qualities

- Vision-to-execution leader: Articulates a compelling vision and translates complex concepts into clear priorities and decisive action.
- Rigorous critical thinker: Applies sound judgment, analytical rigor, and disciplined problem-solving to navigate complex challenges and deliver practical solutions.
- Emotionally intelligent decision-maker: Exercises strong judgment, balances competing interests, and leads with self-awareness, empathy, courage, and confidence in high-stakes environments; able to engage in difficult conversations.
- Influence-based change leader: Builds consensus through trust and credibility, humility and vulnerability, engaging the right constituents to drive alignment and sustainable change.
- Trusted executive partner: Serves as a collaborative, candid advisor to senior leaders; communicates with clarity, transparency, and purpose.
- Mission-anchored and trustworthy: Leads with integrity and deep commitment to mission, earning confidence through consistency, reliability, and values-driven leadership.

About the University of Colorado Boulder

Overview

The University of Colorado Boulder, founded in 1876, is Colorado's leading public research university and the flagship institution of both the state and the University of Colorado System. Serving more than 38,000 undergraduate and graduate students and supported by over 11,000 faculty and staff, CU Boulder is one of only 38 U.S. public research universities in the Association of American Universities (AAU).

Home to five Nobel Laureates since 1989 and recognized as the only university to send space instruments to every planet in the solar system, CU Boulder delivers a strong return on investment through research and creative excellence, global sustainability impact, and a deep commitment to the belonging, well-being, and success of its students and community. With nine colleges and schools offering more than 120 bachelor's, master's, and doctoral programs and 4,400+ courses, the University's world-class faculty provides high-impact learning opportunities while advancing innovative research and creative work.

Mission

Our mission is to serve as the [state of Colorado's comprehensive graduate research university with selective admission standards](#), offering a comprehensive array of undergraduate, master's and doctoral degree programs.

Vision

Our vision is to be [a leader in identifying and addressing the humanitarian, social, and technological challenges of the 21st century](#).

Strategic Priorities

As one of America's leading public research universities, CU Boulder is focused on creating a student-centered campus culture that enables the belonging and success of everyone in our community. In addition, CU Boulder is pursuing these specific [institutional priorities](#):

- **Fostering the Success of All Students, Faculty and Staff** by positioning CU Boulder as a destination for learners and employees through coordinated academic support, flexible pathways, inclusive community-building, and an enhanced digital experience, while strengthening career readiness, engagement, and overall competitiveness through improved compensation, benefits, and professional growth opportunities.
- **Scaling Research and Creative Work Excellence** by advancing high-impact, innovative scholarship while fostering collaborative and inclusive ecosystems both within the university and with external partners. The university will emphasize interdisciplinary collaboration through targeted internal funding and strengthen the societal impact and public engagement of its research and creative work. Collectively, these efforts aim to elevate visibility, relevance, and real-world outcomes across all areas of inquiry.
- **Achieving Global Leadership in Sustainability Impact** by expanding sustainability-focused academic programs, leveraging research expertise to address environmental challenges at all scales, and embedding sustainable practices across campus operations, including comprehensive carbon reduction efforts. The university will amplify its leadership by increasing visibility and measurable outcomes while actively supporting communities and industries across Colorado to advance statewide sustainability

goals. These efforts will be reinforced through the prioritization and funding of key initiatives from both internal and external sources.

- **Aligning Our Resources and Infrastructure to Our Mission** by fostering operational excellence, equity-centered leadership, and financial sustainability through optimized and well-stewarded resources. The university will strengthen its impact by expanding global engagement, enhancing public safety and resilience, aligning physical and technological assets, coordinating strategic events and outreach efforts to deepen statewide and external partnerships, and advancing Colorado Athletics as a key contributor to institutional success. These efforts will be supported by streamlined compliance and data-informed decision-making that balances risk, innovation, and speed.

Land Acknowledgement

The University of Colorado Boulder, Colorado's flagship university, honors and recognizes the many contributions of Indigenous peoples in our state. CU Boulder acknowledges that it is located on the traditional territories and ancestral homelands of the Cheyenne, Arapaho, Ute and many other Native American nations. Their forced removal from these territories has caused devastating and lasting impacts. While the University of Colorado Boulder can never undo or rectify the devastation wrought on Indigenous peoples, we commit to improving and enhancing engagement with Indigenous peoples and issues locally and globally.

We will do this by:

- Recognizing and amplifying the voices of Indigenous CU Boulder students, staff and faculty, and their work.
- Educating, conducting research, supporting student success and integrating Indigenous knowledge.
- Consulting, engaging, and working collaboratively with tribal nations to enhance our ability to provide access and culturally sensitive support and to recruit, retain and graduate Native American students in a climate that is inclusive and respectful.

Creating Supportive Environments

Creating and supporting campus environments where everyone matters and all can thrive is not the responsibility of a single campus unit, but of the entire campus community. Our collaborative work must form a solid foundation for all we do: teaching, research, development, leadership, mentorship, supervision, innovation and service. Building on shared equity leadership, academic and administrative units are creating action plans to support student, faculty and staff success.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion: The CU Boulder campus community must continue the necessary, hard and ongoing work of ensuring the University is a diverse, inclusive and welcoming place for all who live, work and study here. The University is committed to creating a diverse, equitable, and inclusive campus community through Shared Equity Leadership. CU Boulder understands it has hard work to do to make the progress that must be achieved

Leadership

Justin Schwartz, Chancellor



As the 12th chancellor of the University of Colorado Boulder, Justin Schwartz is committed to transforming lives through the mission of Colorado's public flagship university.

Schwartz joined the campus July 1, 2024, from The Pennsylvania State University, where he most recently served as executive vice president and provost.

He previously served as Harold and Inge Marcus Dean of Penn State's College of Engineering from

2017 to 2022 and has spent his career as a researcher, educator, entrepreneur, and academic leader in large state universities.

Schwartz holds a bachelor's degree in nuclear engineering from the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign and a doctorate in nuclear engineering from Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

He is a fellow of the National Academy of Inventors, the American Association for the Advancement of Science, the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers, and ASM International. Schwartz holds seven patents.

A highly visible, transparent, and engaged leader, Schwartz is focused on advancing campus research and leadership in sustainability, supporting innovation and interdisciplinary education, and ensuring that all students, faculty, staff, and alumni survive and thrive as valued members of an equitable and just CU Boulder community.

Janel L. Forde, Senior Vice Chancellor for Operations



Janel Forde joined CU Boulder in June 2025 as Senior Vice Chancellor for Operations. A dynamic leader whose career spans city and state government, K-12 education, and consulting in the areas of strategy, finance and operations, Forde oversees the units of Human Resources, Public Safety, Information Technology, Health and Wellness Services, and Compliance, Ethics and Policy at CU Boulder.

Forde came to CU Boulder from the City and County of Denver where she served as Chief Operating Officer for Mayor Mike Johnston, overseeing core government operations and all agencies, including public safety. Prior to Denver, she was a partner and associate director with the Boston Consulting Group (BCG) where she was a core member of the Public Sector, State and Local practice area, supporting clients on various topics including core government operations, logistics, and large-scale change. Before returning to BCG, she served as the director of the Illinois Department of Central Management Services (CMS), the operational engine enabling the state's more than 80 agencies, boards and commissions.

Prior to her CMS appointment by Gov. JB Pritzker, Forde served in several leadership roles for the City of Chicago, including as Chief Operating Officer for Mayor Rahm Emanuel. She also held leadership positions supporting education, first as a director in the office of the CEO for Chicago Public Schools and then as Chief Operating Officer for the Illinois State Board of Education. Those roles followed her first stint with BCG as a consultant in the firm's Chicago office.

Forde has a master's degree in business administration (MBA) from Stanford University's Graduate School of Business, where she became a Toigo Fellow, and a bachelor of science in economics with a dual concentration in marketing and management from the Wharton School, the University of Pennsylvania. She is also an alumna and associate board member of the Winsor School in Boston and a board member for the American Red Cross, Greater Chicago Chapter.



Boulder, Colorado

Located in the foothills of the Rocky Mountains, about 25 miles northwest of Denver, Boulder is the 12th-largest city in Colorado, with a population of approximately 105,000. Residents enjoy more than 300 days of sunshine a year and an impressive variety of recreation, shopping, dining, cultural and entertainment choices.

At the foot of the mountains, outdoor activities abound, including hiking in the landmark Flatirons with more than 60 parks and 155 miles of hiking trails open to the public. Boulder is also a biking mecca: there are four bikes for every one person, 300 miles of dedicated bikeways, mountain biking trails, a 29-acre free bike park, cycling clubs and more.

Downtown Boulder offers shops, restaurants and street performers on the Pearl Street Mall, as well as the Boulder County Farmers Market in the warm summer months. A strong arts community, with galleries, museums, musical performances and more, provides entertainment rich in culture.

From the Rocky Mountains to an engaging downtown, Boulder is ranked as the number one college town by Universities.com and offers something for everyone.

For more details about Boulder, visit: www.bouldercoloradousa.com.

Procedure for Candidacy

Applications, nominations, and inquiries are invited.

Applications should include, as two separate documents, a CV or resume and a letter of interest. Please submit applications through the WittKieffer Candidate Portal [here](#). Candidates can also find this portal via the WittKieffer website at www.wittkieffer.com. For full consideration, all materials should be received by July 9, 2026.

Please direct inquiries and nominations to the WittKieffer consultants assisting the University of Colorado Boulder with this recruitment:

Suzanne Teer, Zach Durst, and Ethan Robles

Erobles@wittkieffer.com

CU Boulder will offer an annual salary range of \$360,000 - \$415,000 for this role, plus a recruitment incentive and a moving allowance (if applicable).

Commitment to Job Application Fairness: Applicants are not required to provide age or age-related information and may redact information related to age, date of birth, or dates of attendance at or graduation from an educational institution from any submissions during the initial application process.

CU is an Equal Opportunity Employer and complies with all applicable federal, state, and local laws governing nondiscrimination in employment. We are committed to creating a workplace where all individuals are treated with respect and dignity, and we encourage individuals from all backgrounds to apply, including protected veterans and individuals with disabilities.