



General Counsel and Vice President of Legal Affairs

Leadership Profile

April 2024



Executive Summary

One of the nation's leading public polytechnic universities, New Jersey Institute of Technology (NJIT) seeks a visionary, inclusive, and strategic leader as its next General Counsel and Vice President of Legal Affairs (hereafter General Counsel). Reporting directly to President, Teik C. Lim, Ph.D., the General Counsel also serves as Secretary to the Board of Trustees. Applications, inquiries, and nominations are invited.

New Jersey Institute of Technology (NJIT) is the greatest producer of technological talent and knowledge in New Jersey and is a nexus of innovation--a physical and intellectual focal point for innovative ideas, actions, and people. NJIT is the only polytechnic university that is an R1 (most productive) Carnegie Classification research university and is designated both an Asian-American and Hispanic serving institution. *The New York Times* college ranking tool rates NJIT No. 1 nationally among all public universities when you prioritize high alumni earnings, economic mobility, and academic profile, and the *Wall Street Journal* rates NJIT No. 19 overall and No. 2 among public universities in the United States. Additionally, NJIT stands among the top 100 universities in the country for alumni mid-career earnings, according to PayScale.com; is ranked No. 35 nationally by The Princeton Review as a Best Value College and is rated among the top 50 public national universities and top 100 overall by *U.S. News & World Report*.

In addition to serving as the Secretary to the Board of Trustees, the General Counsel oversees and manages the university's legal affairs, providing legal and strategic counsel on a wide range of legal, regulatory, policy, governance and risk management issues that may arise to the President, Provost & Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs, the Trustees, and other senior leadership. The role requires extensive experience in areas such as contracts, labor and employment law, intellectual property, land use, real estate development, research agreements, and risk management.

The General Counsel is expected to continue to develop and lead a high performing legal team, ensuring their accountability while also effectively mentoring this group and supporting a positive, open and responsive team environment. Simultaneously, the General Counsel will serve as a thought leader and advance initiatives in workload distribution, legal processes and case management serving the legal needs of a responsive and agile organization. The General Counsel will be an actively engaged leader with mature interpersonal skills who adds broad legal experience in higher education to the team and remains active in the practice of law. It is important that the General Counsel be a credible and visible university-wide leader who exhibits high integrity and the skills of listening effectively and partnering collaboratively. This is an outstanding opportunity to establish and manage a legal team committed to the success of a robust and diverse learning community at an exceptional institution.

The ideal candidate should possess excellent verbal and written communication and management skills, the fiscal and human resources management skills necessary to lead NJIT's General Counsel's Office, and an established record of advancing equity, diversity, and inclusion. The successful candidate is expected to make themselves familiar with NJIT policies and procedures and demonstrate a commitment to the public mission and core values of the university, with the capability and breadth to contribute beyond the core legal function. Candidates must have a Juris Doctorate from an ABA-accredited law school, membership in the New Jersey State Bar, or eligibility for admission based on reciprocity is required (if reciprocity is not available, out of state candidates will be expected to become full New Jersey State Bar members within one year of employment). They must also have at least ten years of relevant legal experience, knowledge of the state labor laws and regulations, and a focus on higher education. The ideal candidate should also possess a minimum of seven years of supervisory experience leading and directing a legal team.

To submit a nomination or express personal interest in this position, please see [Procedure for Candidacy](#) at the end of this document.

Role of the General Counsel and Vice President of Legal Affairs

Serving as chief legal counsel to the university, the General Counsel is responsible for overseeing and managing the legal affairs of the institution. The General Counsel is responsible for a wide range of legal, regulatory, policy and governance issues that may arise, either by providing advice directly or in consultation with members of the Office of General Counsel, or by engaging the services of outside counsel.

The General Counsel provides counsel on a wide range of legal questions associated with the administration, management and operation of the university, including employment law and labor relations, anti-discrimination laws and regulations, state ethics regulations, transactional matters of all types, academic affiliation agreements, sponsored research, real estate property transactions and development of campus facilities, tort liability and insurance, patents, licenses, copyrights, intellectual property, risk management and insurance, taxes, campus security and safety, affiliated entities, fundraising, contracts and other legal considerations contained within or related to these broad categories.

The General Counsel leads a team of about eight attorneys and legal support staff, and provides legal advice to the university's leadership, faculty, and staff.

The General Counsel aims to collaborate with external legal experts possessing valuable insights. This entails enlisting external counsel to aid in handling intricate legal matters requiring specialized expertise or cases that could overburden the in-house legal team.

Essential Functions

- Develops and executes a leading strategy for providing legal services in support of NJIT's mission; oversees the delivery of legal services and resources to accomplish strategic university goals and priorities.
- Advises the Board of Trustees, President, Provost & Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs, and other senior leaders on a variety of issues to mitigate legal risk while balancing the pursuit of rewarding opportunities.
- Collaborates and supports members of the President's Cabinet and other senior leaders to ensure key mission of the institutional strategic plan can be achieved.
- Maintains awareness and monitors changes in applicable laws and regulations to proactively address potential compliance issues, including but not limited to research, employment, and anti-discrimination.
- Provides counsel on labor relations matters, including collective bargaining, contract negotiations and interpretation, grievances, complaints, and dispute resolution.
- Develops, reviews, and updates university policies to ensure compliance with legal requirements and alignment with higher education best practices.
- Represents NJIT and provides legal oversight in interactions with the New Jersey Innovation Institute (NJII), an NJIT wholly-owned subsidiary corporation with approved bylaws that define the NJIT relationship.
- Represents NJIT in legal proceedings, working with outside and in-house counsel as appropriate.
- Maintains proper interactions with relevant federal, state, and local governmental agencies and, when appropriate, manages or directs legal related interactions outside the USA with foreign governmental agencies and NJIT partnerships.
- Fosters a culture of legal awareness and ethical behavior within the university community in accordance with federal and state laws.

Opportunities and Expectations for Leadership

In no particular order, the next General Counsel will be charged with addressing the following opportunities and challenges:

- **Serve as Secretary to the Board of Trustees**

The next General Counsel will undoubtedly be a crucial figure in establishing and maintaining trust with the President, the Board of Trustees, and other senior-level administrators. The role of Secretary to the Board of Trustees will require the General Counsel to provide expert guidance on the board's legal and fiduciary obligations and responsibilities. The General Counsel will be responsible for interpreting and maintaining board bylaws, drafting board resolutions, and supporting board members in navigating complex and sensitive issues. In addition to these duties, the General Counsel will have the opportunity to help foster a culture of transparency, integrity, and excellence, which will be critical to the organization's success.

- **Provide support and guidance as a reliable collaborator and advisor.**

The General Counsel will be a crucial university leadership team member, acting as a trusted advisor and partner especially in achieving the goals of the institutional strategic plan. The General Counsel will provide expert legal guidance and support to the university's President, administrative leaders, and campus-wide constituents, ultimately helping them make informed decisions that align with the university's goals and values. This includes managing the university's legal affairs, negotiating contracts, and providing legal advice on a wide range of issues. The General Counsel will be dedicated to upholding the university's mission and values, and they will perform their duties with the utmost integrity and objectivity.

- **Lead and further strengthen the Office of the General Counsel**

The new General Counsel will lead the Office of the General Counsel and build upon the office's successes and reputation as a valued business partner. The President and Board stand ready to support a well-planned and reasoned leadership approach so as to best meet the ever-evolving imperatives present at an institution of NJIT's makeup and stature. The new approach will help further streamline processes and foster growth and development of the current legal team. The General Counsel will collaborate closely with various constituents, including faculty, staff, administrative, and external partners, to ensure the General Counsel Office's continued success and positive impact on the university community.

Professional Qualifications and Personal Qualities

NJIT seeks a driven, innovative, collaborative, and skilled General Counsel to serve as a strategic partner committed to the university's success as a nationally recognized public, polytechnic research university committed to educational opportunity, research and community enrichment. Excellent academic credentials, a law degree from an ABA-accredited school of law, membership in the New Jersey State Bar, or eligibility for admission based on reciprocity is required (if reciprocity is not available, out of state candidates will be expected to become full New Jersey Bar members within one year of employment). The ideal candidate should also possess a minimum of seven years of supervisory experience leading and directing a legal team.

In addition, the ideal General Counsel must possess demonstrated skills and experience necessary to provide sophisticated legal advice and counsel reflecting sound judgment and offer substantive in-depth legal knowledge in areas such as contracts of all types, labor and employment law, intellectual property, land use, real estate development, research agreements and risk management. Given the considerable number of significant matters that pertain to the business and administrative aspects of campus operations, extensive experience in these areas is desirable. When in-house expertise is insufficient, has the ability to leverage outside counsel in a timely and effective manner. Must also possess excellent verbal and written communication and management skills; the fiscal and human resources management skills necessary to lead NJIT's General Counsel's Office; and an established record of advancing equity, diversity, and inclusion. The environment of public sector higher education requires flexibility, creativity, judgment, integrity, collaborations, and ability to engage in a broad array of legal and policy matters. The successful candidate should be prepared to learn the extensive NJIT policies and procedures and demonstrate a commitment to the public mission and core values of the university, with the capability and breadth to contribute beyond the core legal function.

Additional desired qualifications include:

- Prior experience providing legal counsel and support to governing boards (e.g. Board of Trustees), preferably in a public higher education environment. This could include providing guidance regarding the board's legal and fiduciary obligations to the State, interpreting and maintaining board bylaws, drafting board resolutions, and assisting board members navigate complex and extremely sensitive issues with discretion, diplomacy, and tact.
- Prior experience working with government agencies at the Federal, State (preferably in the State of New Jersey) and local levels and a keen understanding of how they operate is a plus. A proven track record of building relationships with elected officials and experience advocating for public policy changes, building coalitions with internal and external partners, creating opportunities to serve as a resource and partner to government agencies, and developing and implementing advocacy strategies is preferred.



About New Jersey Institute of Technology

Overview

As New Jersey's public, polytechnic research university, NJIT enrolls approximately 13,000 students across six schools and colleges and has enjoyed a meteoric rise in many key performance indicators in recent years. New and innovative programs, enrollment growth, and major developments in NJIT's physical infrastructure and research productivity have driven an ascension up the rankings and enabled the university to attract a student body of a high caliber and a faculty made up of individuals who are leaders in their fields.

NJIT has accomplished this while staying true to its roots as an institution that changes the lives of its diverse students and provides a vital workforce creation and economic service to the state and the nation, graduating well-prepared students in industry-relevant areas. NJIT is one of the largest producers of engineers and computer scientists in the tri-state area. In recent years, the university has received accolades from national publications for alumni earning potential, education of underrepresented minorities in STEM, education of veterans, and a variety of top-ranked industry-relevant academic programs. With a clear dedication to access, a demonstrated return on investment for students, and a commitment to local and global impact through world-class research and curriculum, NJIT is a shining example of what public higher education can be.

Academics

NJIT is home to six schools and colleges: Newark College of Engineering; Hillier College of Architecture and Design; College of Science and Liberal Arts; Martin Tuchman School of Management; Albert Dorman Honors College; and Ying Wu College of Computing. Each has a distinct identity while contributing to the overall mission of NJIT. Each college is led by a dean who reports to the provost. NJIT is in the process of transitioning from a centralized budget model to a more decentralized, incentive-based, and transparent model.

As the university has grown and evolved, care has been given to ensure that each college augments the others. An interdisciplinary approach to learning allows students to study across the full breadth of NJIT. The university

works actively to constantly develop new educational opportunities designed to meet the changing needs of the marketplace. Learning communities, undergraduate and graduate research, hands-on experiences, internships, and co-op programs complement the classroom and laboratory experience. In this same spirit, NJIT looks to integrate student life with academics and believes that engagement with athletics, student clubs, and other activities is a part of a successful holistic curriculum.

NJIT is committed to the challenge of preparing students to compete and excel in the quickly changing landscape of the high-tech industry. The immersive, multi-dimensional educational experience students receive in preparing them to be well-rounded citizens of their communities is a central component of meeting that challenge.

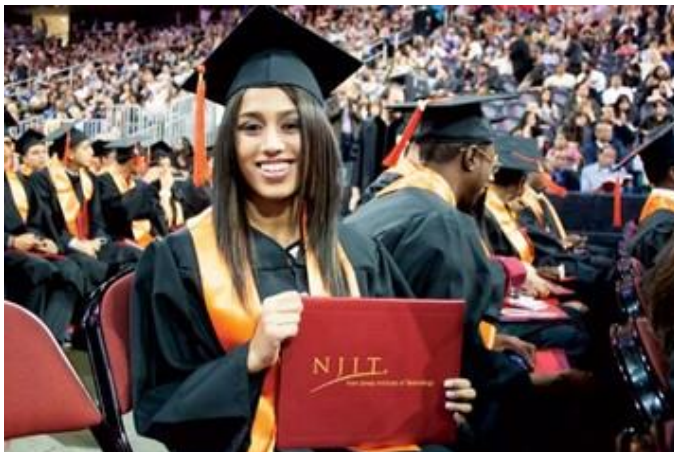
Colleges and Schools

- [Newark College of Engineering](#)
- [Hillier College of Architecture and Design](#)
- [College of Science and Liberal Arts](#)
- [Martin Tuchman School of Management](#)
- [Albert Dorman Honors College](#)
- [Ying Wu College of Computing](#)

Research

Mirroring the growth evolution of the institution itself, NJIT has steadily increased its research output and in 2019 was designated an R1 research university. NJIT comprises 151 research institutes, centers, and laboratories, up from 41 in 2010. NJIT is continuously growing its research enterprise with \$178 million of annual research expenditures in FY2023. The university aims for national and international prominence in research through new discoveries in areas ranging from medical sensors and devices to robotics, nanotechnology, and cybersecurity, to next-generation materials, among other topics of vital importance in basic, applied, and translational research. Five research clusters exist within the research enterprise of NJIT: Bioscience and Bioengineering; Data Science and Management; Environment and Sustainability; Materials Science and Engineering; and Robotics and Machine Learning.

Housed within NJIT is also New Jersey Innovation Institute (NJII), a 501(c)(3) organization. As a unique NJIT corporation, NJII is exceptionally positioned to be agile, entrepreneurial, and opportunistic. NJII is focused on accelerating technology and fostering innovation to have a positive economic impact in New Jersey. To date, NJII has generated over \$330M in revenue during its ten years of operation across its four divisions (Healthcare, Defense, Continued Learning, Entrepreneurship) and today has a team of 126 staff. To learn more visit <https://www.njii.com/about/>.



Students

NJIT embraces and takes seriously its purpose as a public university, and students are at the heart of that mission. More than 44 percent of undergraduate students are the first in their family to attend college and about 40 percent receive Federal Pell Grants. In a typical year, more than 90 percent of undergraduate students have federally demonstrated financial need. Qualifications of incoming students have risen significantly in recent years as first-year applications have more than doubled since 2014. Incoming first-year students have an average SAT score of 1327 and an average

ACT score of 28. Students come to NJIT with an uncommon seriousness of purpose and willingness to work hard. This work ethic and drive manifests itself through successful careers and an inordinate amount of prestigious national honors. In 2019, NJIT had the second-largest number of Goldwater Scholars in the nation.

Some 78 percent of students are from New Jersey, but more than 2,600 international students hail from 87 countries. NJIT has earned a minority-serving institution (MSI) designation from the U.S. Department of Education. Under the umbrella MSI designation, NJIT has qualified as an Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander Serving Institution (AANAPISI) with more than 20% of undergraduate students identifying as Asian American or Pacific Islander (AAPI). Students of color make up 50 percent of the student body, and NJIT has been nationally ranked by *Diverse* among the top 20 universities in the nation for graduating minority engineers. Those graduates are in great demand, with an average of nearly three job offers in hand during their senior year and starting salaries that exceed national averages by nearly 20 percent. Sixty-two percent of all minority engineers in New Jersey are NJIT graduates.

As a polytechnic university with about 90 percent of students studying in a STEM area, NJIT students can find others who share similar passions around science and technology with ease. Many students choose NJIT for the opportunity it provides, and there is a professional focus on campus. Students recognize their time at NJIT as the first step in a greater journey with the power to be transformational for both them and their families. The sense of opportunity is palpable. They are cognizant of student outcomes while on campus, and excited about entering the workforce on the cutting edge.

Students are engaged as leaders on campus and are part of a diverse campus life. More than 50 percent of first-year students and 25 percent of students overall live on campus. Over 150 student clubs exist, and with a robust Student Senate, Graduate Student Association, a network of Greek organizations, and culture of community service, student engagement in campus leadership positions is high. The NJIT Theater Arts Program offers students degree opportunities in the arts and boasts several theater and musical performances each year, while the NJIT E-sports team is nationally ranked.

Athletics

NJIT competes at the Division I level in 19 varsity sports as a member of the America East Conference. Student-athletes are dedicated scholars in their own right, with incoming SAT averages that mirror the class at large, and a current streak of 30 consecutive semesters in which the student-athletes averaged above a 3.0 GPA. This past semester, 68 student-athletes achieved a 4.0 GPA. Additionally, the Joel and Diane Bloom Wellness and Events Center is host to intramural sports, fitness facilities, and significant conference space.

Finances

NJIT has a total budget of \$686.48 million and an endowment currently valued at \$167 million. Moody's gives NJIT an A1 rating with a stable outlook due to favorable student demand, enrollment growth projections, and revenue diversity that includes 48 percent from student tuition and fees and 23 percent from research grants. Tuition and fees total \$35,934 for out-of-state students and \$19,022 for New Jersey residents. In a typical year, about 90 percent of NJIT students receive financial aid.

NJIT receives approximately \$42 million annually in state funding for operations. There are opportunities for additional funding as the state developed a performance-based funding model in 2019, tying a small portion of appropriations to four-year colleges in the state to metrics focused on student success and diversity. Further discussions around the cost of STEM education and additional need-based student financial aid from the state are ongoing.

Tuition, set at the end of the process, has increased marginally year over year, though not in the year coming out of the pandemic. NJIT completed a fundraising campaign in 2018 surpassed \$200 million and is in the planning

stages for its next campaign. Philanthropic giving and alumni engagement are on steady growth trajectories, with ambitious year-over-year increases as the continued goals.

The Foundation at NJIT is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization that raises, manages, stewards, and distributes all philanthropic gifts in support of the university.

Leadership

Teik C. Lim, President, Ph.D.



Dr. Teik C. Lim is the 9th President of New Jersey Institute of Technology and also holds the title of Distinguished Professor of Mechanical Engineering. Prior to joining NJIT on July 1, 2022, Dr. Lim led the University of Texas at Arlington (UTA) as interim president from 2020-2022 and was Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs at UTA from 2017-2020.

Dr. Lim's career has spanned from the private sector to university administration. He worked as an engineer at Structural Dynamics Research Corporation before joining The Ohio State University Center for Automotive Research as a research scientist. He taught at the University of Alabama beginning in 1998, as associate professor, before joining the University of Cincinnati in 2002, where he advanced from associate professor to professor to department head and to associate dean for graduate studies and research before, ultimately, being named Dean of the College of Engineering and Applied Science.

Dr. Lim earned his Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering (ME) from Michigan Technological University, his Master of Science in ME from the University of Missouri-Rolla, and his Ph.D. in ME from The Ohio State University.

Dr. Lim is internationally recognized as a leading scholar in the field of structural vibrations and acoustics as well as modeling and simulation technology. He was named a Fellow of the National Academy of Inventors in 2018. He is Fellow of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers and of the Society of Automotive Engineers, from which he received numerous research and teaching awards such as the Arch T. Colwell Merit Award in 2003 and the Ralph R. Teetor Educational Award in 2002. Dr. Lim also was recognized with the Thomas French Alumni Achievement Award in 2010, the GearLab Distinguished Alumnus Award in 2017, and the Distinguished Alumni Award for Academic Excellence in 2019 from his alma mater, The Ohio State University.



John A. Pelesko, Provost and SVP for Academic Affairs, Ph.D.

Dr. John A. Pelesko serves as Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and also as Professor in the Department of Mathematical Sciences. Prior to joining NJIT on August 1, 2023, Dr. Pelesko served as Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at the University of Delaware from 2018-2023, as Associate Dean for the Natural Sciences in the College of Arts and Sciences at the University of Delaware from 2015-2018, and as Department Chair for the Department of Mathematical Sciences at the University of Delaware from 2011-2015.

Dr. Pelesko is a distinguished scholar and mathematician, whose research centers on the mathematical modeling of physical systems, especially micro and nanoscale engineered systems. He is also dedicated to student success and has conducted extensive research on integrating mathematical modeling, numerical simulation, and experiment into undergraduate and graduate mathematics courses. Pelesko is the author of the highly regarded books *Unlocking the Mystery: Mathematical Modeling in Secondary Classrooms*, published in 2022, *Self Assembly: The Science of Things That Put Themselves Together*, published in 2007, and *Modeling MEMS and NEMS*, published in 2002, as well as several book chapters and numerous research articles.

Prior to joining the University of Delaware faculty in 2002, Pelesko was a member of the faculty at the Georgia Institute of Technology from 1999 to 2002 and held the position of Von Karman Instructor in the Department of Computing and Mathematical Sciences at the California Institute of Technology from 1997 to 1999.

He earned his bachelor's degree cum laude with distinction in pure mathematics at the University of Massachusetts at Boston and his Ph.D. in mathematical sciences at the New Jersey Institute of Technology.

About Newark, New Jersey

Newark is a diverse city and home to a rich culture. It is a city revitalizing with significant corporate investment in the downtown Central Ward and steady progress in the revitalization of residential neighborhoods. With a population of more than 300,000, it is New Jersey's largest city and home to the [New Jersey Performing Arts Center \(NJPAC\)](#), one of the largest performing arts centers in the United States.



Located in the Central Ward, the NJPAC lies in the heart of a cultural district just north of The Prudential Center, home to the NHL's New Jersey Devils. Newark is also the headquarters to several leading companies including Prudential Financial, Panasonic Corporation of North America, Audible.com, and The Public Service Enterprise Group (PSEG).

Newark hosts a wide variety of events designed to encourage deep thinking about current topics. Additionally, it is a center of intellectual discussion, with a wealth of free lectures, panels, and forums available. This is not surprising, given that the city spans 21 square miles and is essentially a hotbed for higher education, home to [New Jersey Institute of Technology](#), [Rutgers University-Newark](#), [Essex County College](#), [Seton Hall University School of Law](#), and other institutions.

Every spring, an enchanting sight awaits outdoor enthusiasts - the largest assemblage of cherry blossoms in the country can be found in Branch Brook Park. With over 4,300 cherry trees in full bloom, the park creates a serene atmosphere with the impressive [Cathedral Basilica of the Sacred Heart](#) as a stunning backdrop.

[Military Park](#) and [Weequahic Park](#) were both designed by the Olmsted Brothers. Weequahic Park features a natural lake and rolling hills that provide a beautiful backdrop for a golf course, athletic fields, miles of trails, and playgrounds. In the late 19th century, Weequahic was the site of both horse and car racing, as well as New Jersey's State Agricultural Fair, and even welcomed President Ulysses S. Grant as a visitor.



Procedure for Candidacy

All applications, nominations and inquiries are invited. Applications should include, as separate documents, a CV or resume and a letter of interest addressing the themes in this profile.

WittKieffer is assisting NJIT in this search. For fullest consideration, candidate materials should be received by **May 13, 2024**.

Application materials should be submitted using WittKieffer's [candidate portal](#).

Nominations and inquiries can be directed to:

Werner Boel, LL.M. or Luis Bertot
NJITGeneralCounsel@wittkieffer.com

As an EEO employer, NJIT is committed to building a diverse and inclusive teaching, research, and working environment and strongly encourages applications from individuals with disabilities, minorities, veterans, and women.

Diversity Statement

As a Minority Serving Institution and Asian-American and Native American Pacific Islander Serving Institution, diversity is a core value of NJIT and we are committed to making diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging, part of everything we do. We celebrate the diversity of our university community and recognize the cultural and personal differences each member of the community brings to NJIT. We strive to cultivate an inclusive campus culture that promotes excellence among our faculty, staff, and students. Building a robust and diverse community is critical to NJIT's continuing status as a premier institution of higher education and a leading polytechnic university.