

Assistant Vice President of Research Administration

Leadership Profile

Spring 2026



Executive Summary

Florida State University (FSU) seeks a strategic and experienced leader to serve as the next Assistant/Associate Vice President (AVP) for Research Administration.

FSU is a premier public research institution (R1) located in Tallahassee, the heart of Florida's capital. Florida State University is a top 25 public university (2025 US News and World Report) and is ranked the number 1 public university for student experience (2025 Princeton Review). FSU enrolls over **45,000 students** and is strategically focused on growing its graduate and professional student population. FSU continues to expand its research footprint across disciplines and reported **over \$460 million in research expenditures** in fiscal year 2024. With strategic hires of preeminent faculty and continual investments from the institution, FSU is on track to grow over 5% for FY2025.

- Guided by [ASPIRE](#) (A Strategic Plan Inspiring Research Excellence), FSU is making strong investments that build on its strong foundation and is focused on growing excellence in research, scholarship, and creative endeavors.
- FSU is home to **one-of-a-kind research centers** and a robust sponsored research portfolio.
- The university supports **thousands of active research projects**, including clinical trials, federally funded initiatives, and interdisciplinary collaborations.
- FSU's commitment to modernization is reflected in its **Research Administration Management Portal (RAMP/Huron Research Suite)**, which streamlines compliance and support for IRB, ACUC, grants, agreements, and export control.

As a member of the executive leadership team within the Division of Research, the AVP for Research Administration provides strategic leadership and operational oversight for all sponsored research activities at FSU. Reporting directly to the **Vice President for Research**, this role is pivotal in shaping the university's research infrastructure and ensuring compliance, efficiency, and excellence in research administration.

The AVP for Research Administration oversees research activities for the University, including application submissions, contracting, post-award activities, research accounting, and contract compliance activities. In addition, the position liaises with governmental entities and is responsible for cost reporting, uniform guidance reporting, audit support, recharge centers, sub-recipient monitoring, space monitoring, and effort reporting.

The AVP for Research Administration presents an exceptional opportunity for an experienced and visionary leader to join a dynamic team and elevate the University's research administration infrastructure. The AVP will focus on fostering operational excellence through process innovation and systems development, while collaborating across the University to collectively achieve our goals.

Qualifications: Proven leadership in sponsored research administration, strategic planning, and electronic research administration systems. Extensive knowledge of Research Administration functions, including financial management, grants management, and grant submission processes and procedures, is required. Certified Research Administrator (CRA), experience serving as Key Personnel on a federally funded sponsored award and/or clinical trial management is preferred.

A master's degree and six years' experience or bachelor's degree and eight years of experience is required. Four years' experience at the director level or above is required. Additional education may be substituted for experience.

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 Assistant Vice President of Research Administration

Reporting to the Vice President for Research, the Assistant/Associate Vice President for Research Administration is responsible for providing strategic leadership and operational oversight for all sponsored research activities, playing a critical part in shaping the university's research infrastructure. The AVP oversees key functions including proposal submissions, contract negotiation, post-award administration, research accounting, and compliance. Additionally, the position manages regulatory and financial responsibilities such as cost reporting, Uniform Guidance compliance, audit support, recharge centers, sub-recipient monitoring, space utilization, and effort reporting. The AVP also acts as a liaison with governmental entities to ensure alignment with external regulations and institutional goals.

Key Responsibilities

Strategic Planning & Policy Development: Provide expert advice to the Vice President for Research and help develop comprehensive goals, policies, and procedures for the Division of Research, with a particular focus on enhancing the administration of sponsored research. Ensure that all initiatives align with the strategic objectives of the organization and foster a culture of continuous improvement.

Sponsored Research Oversight: Lead the Sponsored Research Administration (SRA) team, which oversees pre- and post-award activities, ensuring strict compliance with regulatory requirements and providing robust support to faculty research. Implement initiatives to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of sponsored project administration, while maintaining a high level of customer service to meet the needs of researchers.

System Leadership: Oversee the Research Administration Management Portal (RAMP) modules, ensuring that business practices are aligned with regulatory standards and best practices. Provide leadership in the continuous improvement of systems and processes to support research administration.

Training & Development: Oversees a comprehensive campus-wide educational program, including the development and implementation of training initiatives to enhance the capabilities of research administration staff. Ensure that training programs are customer-focused and designed to meet the evolving needs of the research community.

Clinical Trials Management: Assist in the development and management of legal, financial, and billing operations for clinical trials. Ensure that all processes are customer-centric and designed to support the successful execution of clinical trials.

Executive Representation: Act on behalf of the Vice President for Research and serve as a point of contact for affiliated research centers. Represent the organization in a professional manner, ensuring that all interactions with internal and external stakeholders are conducted with the highest level of professionalism.

Opportunities and Expectations for Leadership

The AVP will be asked to support the following initiatives, in no particular order:

- **Help advance FSU's strategic plan and ASPIRE through expanding research**
The next AVP will play a pivotal role in advancing the ASPIRE strategic plan, which aims to elevate FSU's research enterprise through five key strategies. A key component of this role will be overseeing the Office of Sponsored Research, ensuring it provides efficient, responsive, and forward-thinking support to faculty pursuing external funding. By enhancing infrastructure and reducing barriers to investigator-initiated and team-based research, the AVP will help unlock the full potential of faculty and staff. They will also be instrumental in aligning operational efforts with ASPIRE's impact areas—Healthy Florida, Advancing Materials, and A Resilient Future—and crosscutting themes like The Future of Intelligence and The Human Experience. Ultimately, the AVP will serve as a catalyst for translating FSU's bold research vision into measurable outcomes that benefit both the university and society.
- **Strategically communicate to help guide the community through change with confidence and connection.**
The next AVP must be a gifted communicator, capable of fostering trust, clarity, and collaboration across a broad and dynamic research community. As the university continues to evolve and pursue its ambitious goals, the AVP will need to navigate periods of rapid change with transparency and empathy. This includes clearly articulating shifts in policy, funding landscapes, and operational procedures, while actively listening to the concerns and needs of faculty, staff, and external partners. Their ability to translate complex regulatory and administrative requirements into accessible guidance will be essential in maintaining momentum and morale.
- **Leverage strong financial management expertise to maximize FSU's research resources.**
The next AVP will need to bring a strong background in sponsored research financial management, including the F&A rate agreement and fringe benefit pools, to effectively manage the complex fiscal landscape of a major research university. Their financial acumen will be essential in overseeing the Office of Sponsored Research, ensuring compliance with federal, state and sponsor regulations while advocating. The AVP's ability to lead with fiscal integrity and strategic foresight will be critical to advancing FSU's research mission.
- **Empower a team through leadership and service.**
Strong leadership begins with the ability to build and support a cohesive, motivated team. In overseeing the Office of Sponsored Research, the AVP of Research Administration will be expected to foster a workplace culture rooted in collaboration, accountability, and service excellence. This includes investing in professional development, promoting open communication, and ensuring staff are equipped to deliver high-quality support to faculty and partners. A strong customer service mindset will be essential, as the office serves as a central resource for navigating complex research processes and funding requirements. By modeling approachability and responsiveness, the AVP will help strengthen relationships across the university and ensure the research enterprise is supported with both operational rigor and care. Their leadership will be key to sustaining a high-performing team that advances FSU's strategic research goals.

Professional Qualifications and Personal Qualities

The ideal candidate for the Assistant/Associate Vice President for Research Administration at Florida State University will be a strategic and collaborative leader with extensive experience in sponsored research administration at a major research institution. They should possess deep knowledge of federal regulations, compliance standards, and financial management related to research, including Uniform Guidance, cost reporting, and audit processes. Strong analytical and organizational skills, along with a proven ability to lead complex operations and drive process innovation, are essential. The successful candidate will demonstrate excellent communication and interpersonal abilities, a commitment to integrity and transparency, and the capacity to build effective partnerships across academic, administrative, and governmental entities.

Qualifications

- **Experience:** Proven leadership in sponsored research administration and clinical trial management, strategic planning, and electronic research administration systems. Extensive knowledge of Research Administration functions, including financial management, grants management, and grant submission processes and procedures, is required. Four years' experience at the director level or above is required. Certified Research Administrator (CRA) and/or experience serving as Key Personnel on a federally funded sponsored award preferred.

Education: A master's degree and six years' experience or bachelor's degree and eight years of experience is required. Four years' experience at the director level or above is required. Additional education may be substituted for experience.

Competencies

- **Strategic Planning and University Representation:** Ability to anticipate changes in the research environment and align the research office's strategies accordingly. Ability to represent the Office of Research at the university level.
- **Collaboration and Communication:** Excellent communication skills for engaging with a wide range of stakeholders and fostering relationships across campus.
- **Compliance and Integrity:** Deep knowledge of federal, state, and university policies and regulations. Demonstrates a high professional integrity to ensure ethical research practices.
- **Team Management and Leadership:** Ability to lead and mentor a team and delegate authority and responsibility appropriately.

About Florida State University



Overview

Florida State University is a premier public research institution recognized for its academic excellence, vibrant campus life, and commitment to student success. Located in Tallahassee, FSU offers a dynamic and inclusive environment where innovation, creativity, and collaboration thrive. With top-ranked programs across disciplines, a strong focus on interdisciplinary research, and a dedication to community engagement, FSU empowers students, faculty, and staff to make a meaningful impact locally and globally. The university's rich traditions, diverse community, and beautiful campus make it an inspiring place to work, learn, and grow.

Ranked among the top 25 public universities by U.S. News & World Report and recognized as the number one public university for student experience by The Princeton Review, FSU is home to more than 45,000 students.

Mission

Florida State University preserves, expands, and disseminates knowledge in the sciences, technology, arts, humanities, and professions, while embracing a philosophy of learning strongly rooted in the traditions of the liberal arts. The university is dedicated to excellence in teaching, research, creative endeavors, and service. The university strives to instill the strength, skill, and character essential for lifelong learning, personal responsibility, and sustained achievement within a community that fosters free inquiry and diverse viewpoints.

Vision

Florida State University will be among the nation's most entrepreneurial and innovative universities, transforming the lives of our students and shaping the future of our state and society through exceptional teaching, research, creative activity, and service. We will amplify these efforts through our distinctive climate—one that places a premium on interdisciplinary inquiry and draws from the rich intellectual and personal experiences of our students, faculty, staff, and alumni. These three forces—entrepreneurship, interdisciplinarity, and experiential breadth—deepen FSU's impact and result in a powerful return to our students and the people of Florida for their continued support and trust.

Core Values

Transformative Daring

We support thoughtful risk-taking that leads to successes that improve our world dramatically. And when we face challenges, we confront them with resilience, curiosity, and renewed desire to overcome hurdles to our goals.

Inspired Excellence

We achieve the highest levels of success by drawing strength and understanding from the talents of those around us and from our interactions with them.

Dynamic Environment

We believe the benefits of a richly varied community arise not only from the plurality it includes, but more importantly from intentional efforts to create a strong sense of belonging that encourages deep and high-quality connections.

Responsible Stewardship

We transform the resources we are given and the public's trust in us into a powerful impact that better the lives of those around us, near and far.

Engaged Community

We uphold the traditions and history that create a small-college culture within a large university. This makes FSU a welcoming place where people discover others like themselves—while also connecting to and learning from classmates and colleagues of vastly different backgrounds and experiences.



About the Office of Research

Florida State University is a nationally recognized leader in research, fostering a culture of innovation, collaboration, and discovery across disciplines. With a strong commitment to advancing knowledge and addressing global challenges, FSU supports a diverse portfolio of research activities, from cutting-edge scientific inquiry to creative endeavors in the arts and humanities. The university is home to world-class research facilities, including the [National High Magnetic Field Laboratory](#), and maintains robust partnerships with government agencies, industry leaders, and academic institutions.

FSU's [Office of Research](#) plays a central role in supporting faculty and student researchers, offering comprehensive resources for securing funding, managing projects, and translating discoveries into real-world impact. The university encourages interdisciplinary collaboration and entrepreneurship, helping researchers turn ideas into innovations that benefit society.

Florida State University continues to strengthen its research enterprise across a wide range of disciplines, reporting over \$460 million in research expenditures for fiscal year 2024. Through strategic recruitment of distinguished faculty and sustained institutional investment, FSU is projected to achieve more than 5% growth in research activity in FY2025.

With a focus on integrity, excellence, and public service, Florida State University provides an inspiring environment for scholars to pursue meaningful research that contributes to the advancement of knowledge and the betterment of communities both locally and globally.

A Strategic Plan to Inspire Research Excellence (ASPIRE)

FSU's Strategic Plan to Inspire Research Excellence (ASPIRE) [Report](#) outlines the university's strategic commitment to fostering a campus culture rooted in respect, responsibility, and integrity. Through the Aspire initiative, Florida State University promotes personal and community accountability, emphasizing values such as civility, ethical leadership, and engaged citizenship. The report highlights programs, partnerships, and outcomes that support student development, inclusive excellence, and a safe, supportive learning environment. It reflects FSU's dedication to creating a campus where every individual feels valued and empowered to contribute meaningfully.

FSU Research Centers and Institutes

Florida State University is home to over 60 [research centers, institutes, and facilities](#) that support cutting-edge scholarship across a wide range of disciplines. These entities foster interdisciplinary collaboration, innovation, and real-world impact in areas such as science and engineering, health and medicine, social sciences, arts, and humanities. By connecting faculty, students, and external partners, FSU's research infrastructure plays a vital role in advancing knowledge, solving complex problems, and contributing to economic and societal progress at the local, national, and global levels.

Research Administration Management Portal (RAMP)

The [Research Administration and Management Portal \(RAMP\)](#) is Florida State University's centralized platform for managing research activities. It streamlines processes related to proposal development, award management, human subjects research, conflict of interest disclosures, and research compliance. RAMP supports faculty, staff, and administrators by providing efficient tools and resources to facilitate high-quality, compliant research across the university.

Florida State's National Research and Development Partnerships

Florida State University (FSU) fosters impactful research partnerships through collaborations with [national laboratories and consortia](#) such as Oak Ridge National Laboratory, Oak Ridge Associated Universities, Southeastern Universities Research Association, University Corporation for Atmospheric Research, and Universities Research Association, advancing fields like energy, materials science, and atmospheric research.

Leadership

Stacey Patterson, Vice President for Research



Dr. Stacey Patterson serves as the Vice President for Research at Florida State University (FSU), where she oversees a dynamic research enterprise with more than \$460 million in annual expenditures and over 50 prominent research centers and institutes. Appointed to the role in July 2022, Patterson leads a team of 125+ staff members and manages key units including Sponsored Research Administration, Commercialization, and the Council of Research and Creativity. She also has direct oversight of five major research centers, including the National High Magnetic Field Laboratory, a globally renowned facility headquartered at FSU. www.research.fsu.edu

Before joining FSU, Patterson spent 16 years in the University of Tennessee (UT) system, where she held a range of roles from research scientist and licensing associate to becoming the first woman appointed Vice President for Research, Outreach, and Economic Development in UT's history in 2017. Her leadership at UT included strategic partnerships with Oak Ridge National Laboratory, where she served as the primary liaison to Battelle Memorial Institute, and spearheaded major initiatives such as a \$62.5 million solar research project and the \$259 million Composites Institute, a multi-state public-private partnership. www.research.fsu.edu

Patterson is a first-generation college graduate with a bachelor's degree in biological sciences and a Ph.D. in microbiology from the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, as well as a master's in environmental health science from East Tennessee State University. She completed a postdoctoral fellowship at the University of South Florida, and has secured funding from agencies including NOAA, the U.S. Army, NSF, DOE, NIH, and private sector partners. Her research contributions include U.S. patents in sensor development and cancer imaging, and she is a co-founder of 490 BioTech, a Knoxville-based biotech startup.



Tallahassee, Florida

Tallahassee, Florida's vibrant capital city, offers a unique blend of Southern charm, natural beauty, and intellectual energy. Tallahassee is a dynamic college town with a rich cultural scene, varied dining options, and abundant outdoor recreation. Nestled among rolling hills and canopy roads, the city boasts over 700 miles of trails, numerous parks, and easy access to nearby beaches and state forests.

As the seat of state government, Tallahassee also provides opportunities for civic engagement and professional growth, with a thriving public sector and a growing private economy. Whether you're drawn to its academic atmosphere, natural surroundings, or cultural offerings, Tallahassee is a place where you can thrive both personally and professionally.



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 Florida State University in this search. Applications will be received until the position is filled; however, we strongly encourage candidates submit their materials as soon as possible for full consideration.

Nominations and inquiries can be directed to:

Jessica Herrington and Cathryn Davis

FSUAVPResearch@wittkieffer.com

This position requires successful completion of a [criminal history background check](#).

This position requires annual Financial Disclosure based on Florida Statutes 112.3144 and 112.3145.

Equal Employment Opportunity

FSU is an Equal Employment Opportunity Employer.