



RICE

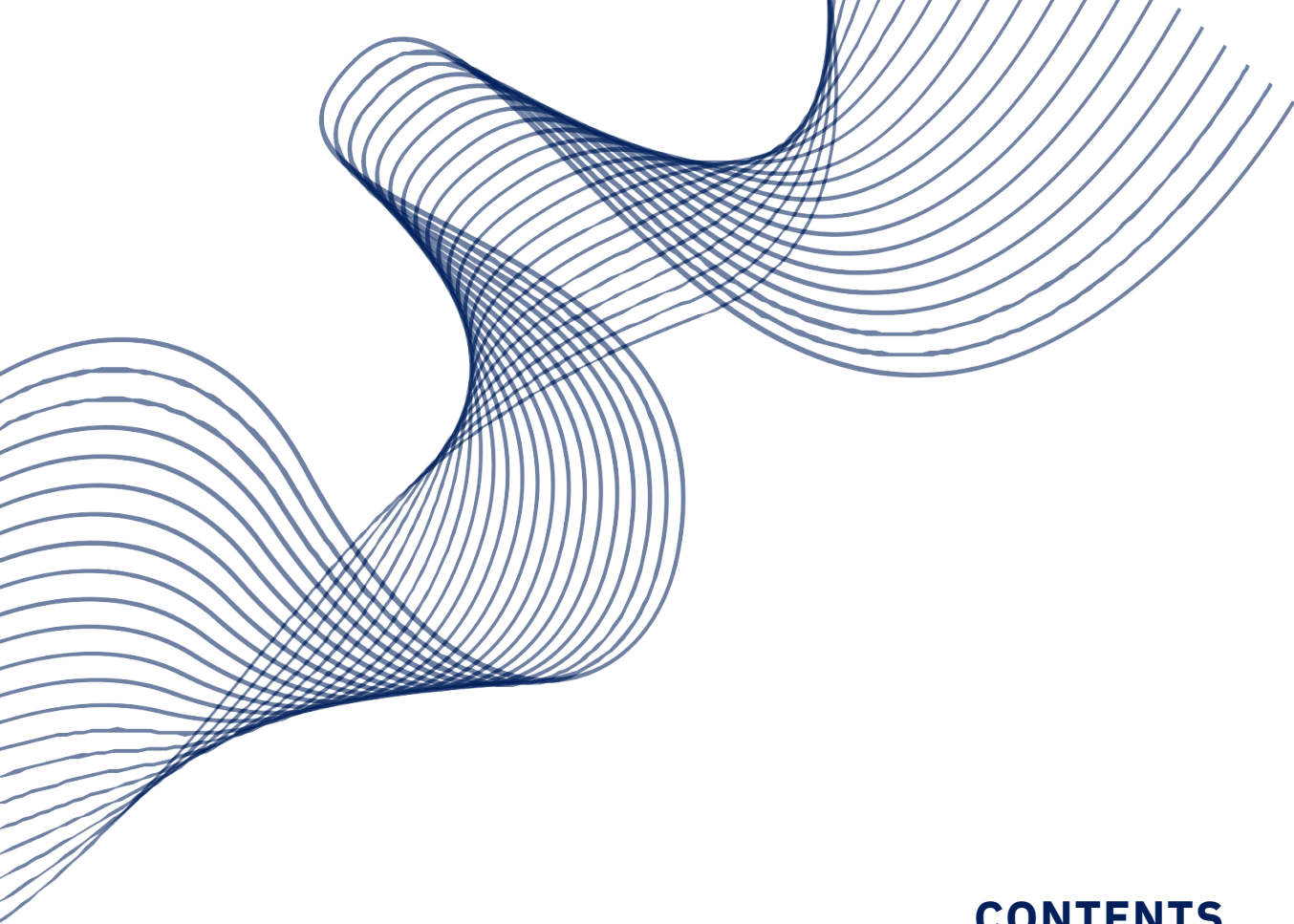
Associate Vice President of Research Computing

LEADERSHIP PROFILE

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WittKieffer



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THE SEARCH

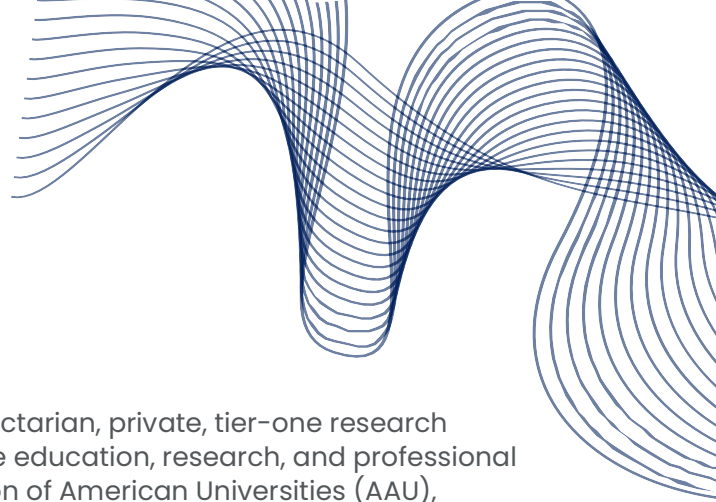
Rice University, one of the nation's elite universities for scholarly research and societal impact, seeks a dynamic leader to serve as the institution's Associate Vice President of Research Computing (AVP). This is an exciting time to join Rice and make a significant impact in supporting a growing research enterprise. The AVP will report to the Vice President & Chief Information Officer and will play an integral role within Technology Solutions & Services (TS&S) at Rice. The AVP partners closely with stakeholders across Rice University to understand the evolving computational needs of the research community and develop sustainable solutions that leverage on-campus infrastructure, cloud technologies, advanced storage, and emerging computing resources. This leader will collaborate across the enterprise to establish investment priorities while strengthening relationships with regional and national supercomputing organizations to expand access to advanced research resources.

In support of the University's research mission, the AVP works across campus to assist in securing internal and external funding opportunities, engage faculty in the effective use of research computing resources, and enhance Rice's ability to recruit and retain research-active scholars. The role also focuses on broadening access to advanced computing capabilities through outreach, reducing barriers, and aligning workforce and user engagement strategies with institutional objectives. Additionally, the AVP helps position Rice at the forefront of emerging technologies by fostering partnerships with industry leaders in areas such as artificial intelligence, machine learning, quantum computing, data storage, and advanced applications.

Operationally, the AVP is responsible for developing effective service models, facilities, and capabilities that support the University's research enterprise. The role provides strategic leadership and oversight for the Center for Research Computing, ensuring efficient operations, effective communication with the Research Computing Committee, and strong alignment with partner organizations across the technology enterprise, including information security functions. Through these efforts, the AVP ensures that research computing services remain responsive, innovative, and aligned with the University's strategic objectives.

The ideal candidate will have deep experience leading research computing, a proven track record of collaboration and faculty partnerships, and the ability to be an effective and persuasive leader. The successful AVP candidate will serve as a strong strategic partner with research faculty and will continue to develop and shape a compelling, integrated service offering for the research community. The AVP will be a visible leader who communicates effectively and can develop, articulate, and execute the future vision for research computing.

Rice has retained the services of WittKieffer, a national executive search firm, to assist the search committee in its identification and review of candidates. Confidential inquiries, nominations, referrals, and a CV or resume and a letter of interest should be directed in confidence, as noted at the end of this document.



RICE UNIVERSITY

Founded in 1912, Rice is an independent, coeducational, nonsectarian, private, tier-one research university dedicated to rigorous undergraduate and graduate education, research, and professional training in selected disciplines. As a member of the Association of American Universities (AAU), Rice University is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC), the recognized regional accrediting body in the 11 U.S. Southern states. Rice offers more than 50 undergraduate majors across seven divisions of study, including architecture, business, engineering, humanities, music, natural sciences, and social sciences, with multiple opportunities for research and collaboration. Currently, over 930 instructional faculty members are devoted to the instruction and training of approximately 4,200 undergraduate students and 3,900 graduate students. The undergraduate student-to-faculty ratio is six-to-one.

Rice is centrally located in Houston, the fourth-largest city in the U.S., and home to more Fortune 500 company headquarters than any city in the nation except New York. Rice is part of the Texas Medical Center (TMC), the world's largest medical complex, which is located across the street from Rice's main campus. Houston is the most diverse city in North America; such diversity not only makes Houston an exciting place to live, but it also represents a notable strength for Rice, as people of different backgrounds and interests work together in virtually all local, political, educational, professional, and social contexts.

The Rice endowment was valued at \$8.5 billion for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2025. Robust institutional resources have permitted Rice to offer an intellectually ambitious yet financially affordable education. The university has been nationally acclaimed by Kiplinger's as the "best value" in private higher education, with an undergraduate tuition price that is consistently lower than that of other leading private institutions. Rice was named the 15th most innovative school in the nation and 17th in national universities in the 2025 U.S. News & World Report rankings.

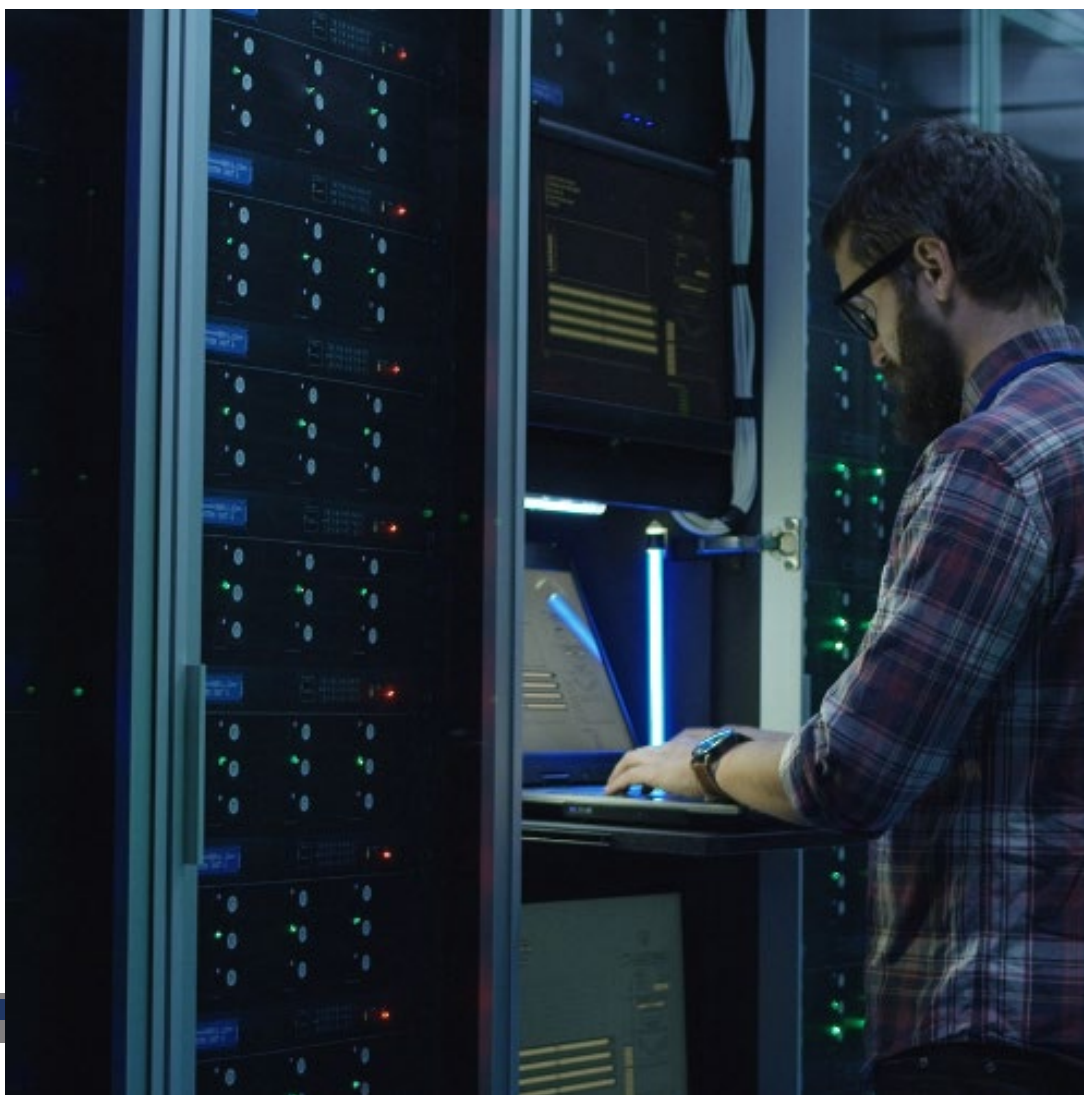
Research Computing at Rice

Rice has a strong foundation in research computing and a significant opportunity to further advance its capabilities. The institution has built a respected research computing environment supported by experienced professionals, established high-performance computing resources, secure computing environments, expanding cloud partnerships, and a proven ability to support complex, computationally intensive research. Over time, Research Computing has earned the trust of the faculty by helping solve challenging research problems and by providing specialized support that extends beyond the scope of traditional enterprise IT services.

At the same time, the demands placed on research computing are evolving rapidly. Advances in artificial intelligence, data-intensive research, regulated and sensitive data environments, specialized software, and increasingly diverse computational requirements are changing what researchers need from the institution. While traditional CPU-based high-performance computing remains an important component of the technology landscape, it now exists alongside GPUs, cloud platforms, secure computing environments, research data services, research software engineering, specialized architectures, and consultative expertise. As a result, Research Computing must support a broader and more complex ecosystem than ever before.

Rice is known for its strength in science and engineering, but its research enterprise spans many disciplines, methods, levels of technical sophistication, and funding models. A computational scientist training a large model, a social scientist working with restricted data, a humanist building a digital archive, and an experimental researcher operating specialized instruments may require very different tools, services, and support. Rice also supports federally sponsored research involving Controlled Unclassified Information (CUI), including certain DARPA, IARPA, and DTRA-sponsored projects. This work requires specialized, secure infrastructure and appropriate training for researchers and support personnel. Consequently, Rice's approach to research computing cannot be centered around a single technology platform, architecture, or user profile. Instead, it must reflect and support the full diversity of the University's research enterprise.

As Rice looks to the future, Research Computing should remain a distinct and strategically important capability within TS&S while operating as an integrated part of the broader Technology@Rice, Rice's university-wide technology ecosystem. The organization should leverage shared institutional capabilities in areas such as cybersecurity, identity and access management, networking, cloud services, enterprise architecture, vendor management, service management, and operational resilience. At the same time, it must maintain strong connections with technology practitioners and subject matter experts embedded across schools, departments, institutes, research groups, and administrative units throughout the University. Where research demands specialized support, Rice must continue to invest in distinct capabilities tailored to the needs of the research community. These include capabilities and disciplines such as research software engineering, scientific facilitation, advanced data services, secure research environments, grant support, and expertise in emerging computational methods. The goal is to combine a strong shared technology foundation with the specialized services and expertise required to enable research success.



The Center for Research Computing (CRC)

The Center for Research Computing (CRC) works to meet Rice community members' research needs with specialized computing resources and services. The CRC maintains shared research computing infrastructure on campus as well as relationships with off-campus organizations and vendors and facilitates the optimal use of these resources through consultation and direct partnership.

Through the CRC, Rice researchers have access to a wide array of scalable computing resources: on- and off-campus cloud computing and storage, traditional supercomputing resources on Rice's cluster and national networks, specialized infrastructure for the fast transfer of large datasets, and secure virtual research environments.

The CRC assists researchers in planning their use of research computing resources and executing on their plans. The CRC consults on grants, supports the use and optimization of specialized software and systems, partners on and incubates projects, and runs public and custom workshops on research computing topics such as parallelization, virtualization, and cloud migration.



RICE LEADERSHIP



Terrence Gee
Vice President of Technology Solutions and Services and Chief Information Officer

Terrence Gee is the Chief Information Officer at Rice University, where he leads Technology Solutions & Services and collaborates with institutional leaders to advance Rice's academic, research, and administrative priorities. A Rice alumnus and former university trustee, Gee brings four decades of executive experience leading technology strategy, enterprise transformation, and organizational change across complex environments.

Prior to joining Rice, Gee served as Chief Information Officer and Senior Vice President of Enterprise Transformation for Coca-Cola Beverages Florida, playing a key role in launching the company and scaling its revenue more than fourfold over a decade. He began his career at Accenture, where he became a partner advising Fortune 500 clients on technology strategy and operational design, and later founded Trilogee Partners to make strategic investments across consulting, education, health care, and banking.

Known for integrating emerging technologies with intention and coherence, Gee focuses on delivering exceptional user experiences and building secure, resilient operations. He has served on advisory boards for Salesforce, UiPath, and Parsable, and was a founding board member of CONA Services, where he chaired its IT Risk Management Committee.



OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

Primary opportunities and challenges for the AVP for Research Computing include the following:

Ensure Continuity and Organizational Readiness

The AVP will focus on creating a comprehensive understanding of the research computing environment by documenting critical services, funding commitments, technical dependencies, key faculty relationships, and areas of specialized expertise. They will establish clear accountability and operational ownership across the organization, ensure appropriate succession and coverage plans are in place, formalize operating procedures, and develop a realistic assessment of both technical and organizational risks to strengthen stability, continuity, and long-term sustainability.

Understand the Research Community

Lead a comprehensive assessment of the University's research computing needs across academic disciplines, schools, institutes, and varying levels of technical sophistication. Through engagement with researchers and stakeholders, they will identify unmet needs, barriers to adoption, duplicated investments, emerging research methodologies, resilience gaps, and existing capabilities already available across Technology@Rice. This work will result in a detailed and segmented understanding of the research community, recognizing the distinct needs of different researcher groups rather than relying on a one-size-fits-all approach.

Develop the Research Computing Strategy

Develop a comprehensive Research Computing strategy that aligns technology investments with Rice University's research ambitions and the broader capabilities of TS&S and Technology@Rice. This strategy will establish a cohesive vision for supporting the research enterprise across areas such as on-premises computing and storage, cloud and commercial AI platforms, GPU and accelerator resources, secure research environments, research data services, software engineering support, instructional computing, external partnerships, and access to regional and national research computing resources. Additionally, the strategy will address workforce requirements, funding and cost-allocation models, modernization and lifecycle planning, and long-term resilience and continuity. A key outcome will be clearly defining which services and capabilities will be owned and operated by TS&S, which will reside elsewhere within Rice, which will be delivered through shared institutional partnerships, and which will be sourced externally, creating a sustainable and well-coordinated ecosystem to support the University's evolving research needs.

Define the Operating Model

Define a clear operating model for Research Computing that establishes how the function integrates with the broader TS&S organization and the Technology@Rice ecosystem. This includes distinguishing between shared enterprise capabilities, research-specific services, and distributed resources located across the University, while identifying areas of joint responsibility and collaboration. The operating model will also establish clear governance structures, decision-making authority, escalation pathways, and consistent standards for architecture, security, service delivery, resilience, and investment planning.

Establish Research Enablement as a Service

Establish a highly visible and accessible research enablement function that serves as the primary entry point for faculty and researchers seeking computational, data, and technology support. Rather than requiring researchers to navigate complex technology environments on their own, this service will provide a consultative approach that helps researchers translate research objectives into technical requirements, evaluate available options, select appropriate tools and environments, and identify the resources needed to advance their work. The function will also support cost and capacity planning, security and compliance considerations, grant proposal development, environment provisioning and optimization, and connections to relevant expertise and capabilities across Rice.

Create a Segmented Service Portfolio

Develop and manage a clearly defined Research Computing service portfolio that establishes the full range of services available to the University community, identifies service owners and delivery partners, outlines eligibility and support levels, and creates a transparent process for evaluating and prioritizing requests. The portfolio will encompass core capabilities, including computing infrastructure, cloud enablement, consulting services, research software engineering, data management and analytics, secure computing environments, user training, grant development support, and access to regional, national, and commercial research resources.

Establish a Sustainable Financial Model

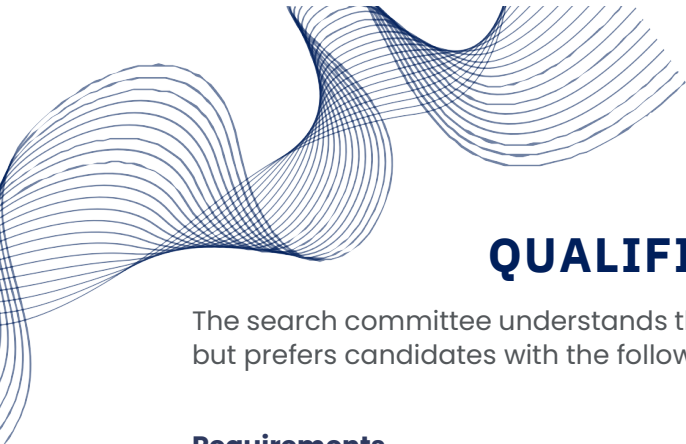
Establish a sustainable and transparent financial model that provides clear visibility into demand, capacity, utilization, costs, and subsidy levels across the Research Computing portfolio. This framework will serve as the foundation for informed decision-making regarding central investments, grant cost recovery, cost allocation methodologies, cloud spending commitments, infrastructure refresh cycles, strategic reserve planning, and equitable access to resources.

Expand AI and Data-Intensive Capabilities

Develop a strategy for supporting the University's rapidly growing demand for artificial intelligence and data-intensive research while recognizing that not every use case requires institutionally owned GPU infrastructure. This approach will balance on-premises resources with cloud-based and partner-provided capabilities, ensuring researchers have access to the most appropriate, cost-effective, and scalable computing environments for their needs. Key priorities will include establishing frameworks for workload segmentation, expanding access to shared accelerator resources, leveraging cloud bursting where appropriate, and strengthening capabilities for data preparation, model development, and advanced analytics.

Build the Team and Required Disciplines

Evaluate whether Research Computing has access to the talent, expertise, and organizational capabilities necessary to support Rice's evolving research mission. This assessment will include infrastructure engineering, cloud computing, research software engineering, data management and analytics, cybersecurity, architecture, research facilitation, and stakeholder relationship management. Working closely with leaders across TS&S and Technology@Rice, the candidate will identify capability gaps, organizational strengths, and opportunities to better align resources with institutional priorities.



QUALIFICATIONS AND CHARACTERISTICS

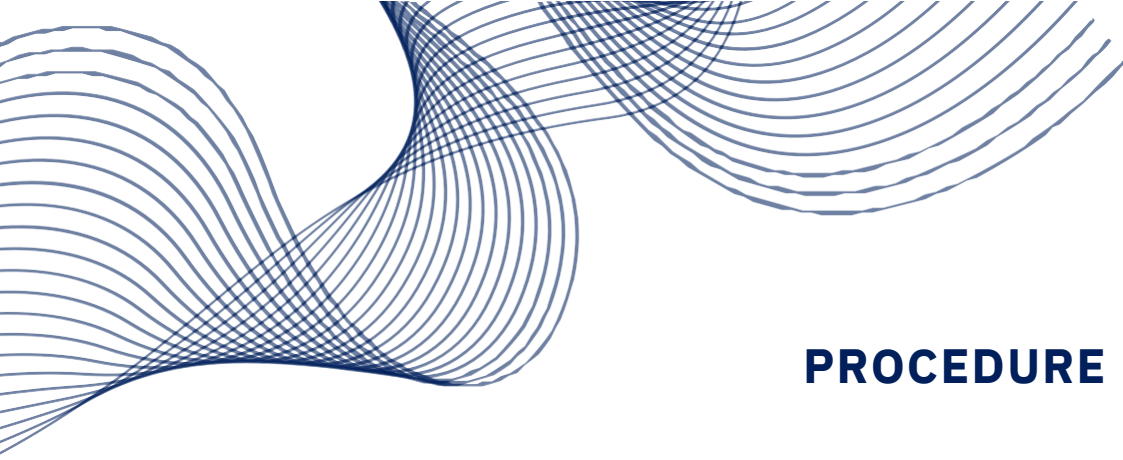
The search committee understands that no single candidate may have all the ideal qualifications, but prefers candidates with the following characteristics and qualifications:

Requirements

- Bachelor's degree and five years of experience in computing and/or information technology services
- Experience managing budgets with multiple funding sources
- Experience leading and supervising personnel
- Demonstrated awareness of broad issues and management trends, with the ability to evaluate the impact of policy and procedure changes and adjust accordingly
- Knowledge of management principles to ensure optimal performance throughout the division
- Willingness to lead by example to create an effective team with a customer service focus
- Excellent collaborative, leadership, and diplomacy skills
- Excellent listening, verbal, visual, and written communication skills, including presentation skills
- Must be able to explain difficult, abstract concepts verbally, in writing, and through presentations
- Knowledge of current information technology trends and issues
- Demonstrated organizational skills in handling and directing multiple and complex assignments and projects

Preferences

- An advanced degree in computer science, engineering, a computational science, or another research-intensive discipline
- Experience managing and protecting restricted data
- Experience working with faculty or clients in a computational domain
- Experience using HPC systems as a researcher
- Experience leveraging emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence
- Experience developing and delivering tutorials, workshops, and lectures on high-performance computing at the institutional, regional, and national levels
- At least eight years of relevant experience in academia or research-intensive institutions, including a demonstrated track record in a leadership role



PROCEDURE FOR CANDIDACY

All applications, nominations, and inquiries are invited. Applications should include, as two separate documents, a CV or resume and a letter of interest addressing the themes in this profile. The search will remain open until an appointment is made.

WittKieffer is assisting Rice University in this search. Please direct all nominations and applications to Suzanne Teer, Nick Giannas, and Scott Dethloff through the WittKieffer Candidate Portal by clicking [here](#) or via email to sdethloff@wittkieffer.com. Candidates can also find this portal via the WittKieffer website at www.wittkieffer.com by selecting the "Become a Candidate" button.

Rice University is an Equal Opportunity Employer with a commitment to diversity at all levels, and considers for employment qualified applicants without regard to race, color, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national or ethnic origin, genetic information, disability or protected veteran status.

Rice University is committed to ensuring Equal Employment Opportunity and the full inclusion of all qualified persons in the workplace. This commitment includes providing reasonable accommodations to persons with disabilities. For applicants with disabilities who require a reasonable accommodation for any part of the application or hiring process, please contact Rice University's Disability Resource Center at 713-348-5841 or adarice@rice.edu for support.

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