



An Invitation to Apply  
for the position of

**SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT FOR RESEARCH AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

**The University of Texas at San Antonio**  
San Antonio, Texas

**THE SEARCH**

The University of Texas at San Antonio (UTSA)—a thriving, Hispanic-Serving, Carnegie R1 research university on a rapid upward trajectory towards becoming the next great public research university—invites nominations, expressions of interest, and applications for the position of Senior Vice President for Research and Economic Development (SVPR). This is a rare opportunity for a visionary and ambitious leader to strengthen a burgeoning knowledge enterprise, align research and economic development activities for the benefit of the institution and surrounding region, and develop the institution’s culture as it embodies its newly achieved status as an R1 research university.

UTSA has evolved significantly as a discovery enterprise in recent years, with total research expenditures growing from \$68 million in 2018 to \$140 million in 2022. The university is situated in an extraordinarily collaborative research ecosystem in San Antonio, with public and private strategic partners including [UT Health San Antonio](#), [Texas Biomedical Research Institute \(Texas Biomed\)](#), the [Southwest Research Institute \(SwRI\)](#), [Joint Base San Antonio](#), and [Port San Antonio](#). This ecosystem has enabled the creation of several critical initiatives, including the [San Antonio Partnership for Precision Therapeutics \(SAPPT\)](#), the South Texas Center for Emerging Infectious Diseases, and the [Cybersecurity Manufacturing Innovation Center \(CyManII\)](#), among many others. UTSA has played a leading role both in the region and nationally—particularly on areas related to cybersecurity and biomedical and health sciences—and it is well positioned to further influence regional, national, and global conversations as these areas grow increasingly important on the world stage.

Serving as the chief research officer for this emerging, top-tier research university, the SVPR will lead all aspects of [UTSA Research, Economic Development, and Knowledge Enterprise \(REDKE\)](#), providing vision, strategy, oversight, and management for all aspects of the university’s research operations and

administration, centers and institutes, commercialization initiatives, and economic development efforts. The SVPR will lead the UTSA community in developing an institutional culture befitting an R1 research university, assessing and modernizing the research infrastructure and support systems as needed, and working closely with leaders in faculty development and graduate education to align and strengthen these efforts. Beyond the walls of the institution, the SVPR will represent UTSA regionally, nationally, and globally, deepening existing partnerships and developing new collaborations and sources of support that enable faculty to pursue new areas of inquiry. This person will simultaneously champion UTSA's existing strengths—including those in cybersecurity and the biomedical and health sciences—and strategically pursue new areas where UTSA can be a regional, national, or global leader. The SVPR will be supported in this work by a dedicated and talented [leadership team](#), as well as a division of more than 150 professional staff. To successfully lead UTSA's rapidly-evolving research enterprise, the SVPR will need an entrepreneurial spirit, strong communication skills, a commitment to transparency, a collaborative approach, and a willingness to find creative solutions for short and long-term issues.

UTSA has retained Isaacson, Miller, a national executive search firm, to assist in the recruitment of its next Senior Vice President for Research and Economic Development. Please direct all applications, nominations, and inquiries to Isaacson, Miller, as indicated at the end of this document.

#### **THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT SAN ANTONIO**

Founded in 1969, the [University of Texas at San Antonio \(UTSA\)](#) is a Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI) and Carnegie R1 research university situated in a global city that has been at the crossroads of peoples and cultures for centuries. UTSA is the largest university in the San Antonio metropolitan region and the third largest of the nine academic universities and six health institutions in the [UT System](#). The university was founded to advance the education of Mexican Americans and other underserved communities, and it remains committed to that mission today. Generating more than \$3 billion in economic impact in a region that reflects the demographic future of our nation, UTSA serves as a prosperity engine, a driver of social mobility, and a model for the urban-serving public universities of the future.

The university is home to approximately 1,400 faculty of outstanding talent who deeply engage students in their research and scholarship. Approximately 632 faculty members are either tenured or on the tenure track. The 718 dedicated fixed term faculty are committed to the success of students in the classroom. Since 2015, the university has added 113 tenured and tenure track faculty members to its campus, reflecting its continued growth. The faculty body includes 77 endowed chairs and [several members of the National Academies of Inventors, Engineering, Sciences, and Medicine](#).

In addition to their scholarly pursuits, the faculty are highly focused on meeting the educational and socio-emotional needs of UTSA's 34,000 students, many of whom are first-generation, transfer, Dreamer, Veteran, and international students. More than 60% of UTSA students are from underrepresented groups; nearly half (45%) of UTSA undergraduates are first-generation college students; and approximately 14% of all students are connected to the military. Additionally, UTSA is committed to serving the surrounding region, with 63% of the student community coming from San Antonio and South Texas. UTSA also boasts students from 49 states and around 90 countries.

The university offers 160 degree programs at the bachelor, masters, and doctoral levels across [nine academic Colleges and Schools](#): the Carlos Alvarez College of Business; College of Education and Human Development; Margie and Bill Klesse College of Engineering and Integrated Design; College of Liberal and Fine Arts; College for Health, Community, and Policy; College of Sciences; University College; School of Data Science; and the Honors College. The newest of these divisions are the School of Data Science (SDS) and the College for Health, Community, and Policy (HCAP), which were announced in 2018 and 2019, respectively, and reflect the university's commitment to enabling increasingly innovative academic and scholarly work. SDS is the first school of its kind in the state of Texas and promises to expand on San Antonio's status as an information security hub, making it a go-to city for AI and data science.

The university has many points of pride, including being recognized as the #1 Hispanic-Serving Institution in the nation by Bloomberg Businessweek; a top 25 rising young university by Nature; a top 100 institution for economic mobility by the Washington, D.C. think tank Third Way; and #44 for Social Mobility among all universities by *US News & World Report*. The university achieved the [Seal of Excelencia](#) designation from *Excelencia* in Education, the nation's premier authority on efforts accelerating Latino student success in higher education, and Hispanic Network Magazine includes UTSA amongst its "Best of the Best" rankings of U.S. universities. The cybersecurity program has been nationally recognized as a top program by Hewlett-Packard and is the #1 program in the nation according to a survey by Ponemon Institute. UTSA is also among an elite group of U.S. universities to earn the Carnegie Foundation's Community Engagement Classification.

### ***UTSA, the City of San Antonio, and Bexar County***

San Antonio is the 7<sup>th</sup> largest city in the United States, with a thriving economy based on new energy, bioscience/healthcare, aerospace/aviation, military, financial services, information technology and cybersecurity, and tourism. It is recognized worldwide as the home of The Alamo and the Riverwalk. The city is a place of inclusiveness and *familia* and provides an environment where professional satisfaction and career achievement are paired with optimal quality of life. It celebrates its rich heritage while embracing the future. The city has a business-friendly economy that fosters entrepreneurial growth, co-working spaces, and accelerators and incubators. Residents of San Antonio benefit from access to scenic pathways across the city, a rich history and culture, museums and art galleries, impressive performing arts, theme parks, family fun, dining and nightlife, festivals and events, shopping, sports, and a climate that supports an outdoor lifestyle year-round. San Antonio is the county seat of Bexar County, the fourth most populous county in the state of Texas and the third-largest majority-Hispanic county in the nation. The county is home to Joint Base San Antonio, an amalgamation of the U.S. Army's Fort Sam Houston, Randolph AFB, and Lackland AFB—home to the U.S. Air Force's basic military training program, the 16<sup>th</sup> Air Force (Air Forces Cyber), and the Air Forces Lifecycle Management and Installation Management Commands, among the most sophisticated logistics and acquisitions operations in the world.

## UNIVERSITY LEADERSHIP

### *Taylor Eighmy, President*

Appointed in 2017, [Dr. Taylor Eighmy](#) is the 6<sup>th</sup> president of UTSA. Eighmy is a strong advocate for urban-serving public higher education and is passionate about UTSA's role in developing San Antonio's knowledge economy. He brings a strong track record of advancing top research universities through strategic government collaborations, public-private partnerships, and community engagement. His experiences as an administrative leader, researcher, inventor, and professor have influenced his perspective as a champion of student success, particularly regarding the impact of experiential learning and undergraduate research programs. Eighmy has set a bold, 10-year vision for UTSA as a national model for student success and a great public research university. Prior to joining UTSA, Eighmy served as the chief research officer at three universities: the University of New Hampshire, Texas Tech University, and the University of Tennessee, Knoxville.

### *Kimberly Andrews Espy, Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs*

[Dr. Kimberly Andrews Espy](#) has served as the Provost at UTSA since 2018. Throughout her career as an academic servant-leader, Espy has championed the bold idea that higher education can only achieve its aspirational goal of promoting social, intellectual, and economic opportunity by intentionally enabling access, inclusion, success, and career preparation for all. Under her leadership, UTSA has achieved record enrollment, enhanced its commitment to student success, developed the scholarly excellence and impact of its faculty, and aligned the academic environment with workforce needs. Prior to joining UTSA, Espy served as the chief research officer at the University of Arizona.

## A BOLD NEW KNOWLEDGE ENTERPRISE

Committed to the principle that great universities need great cities and great cities need great universities, UTSA has evolved into a nationally recognized, multicultural, cross-disciplinary engine for economic prosperity and for advancing the frontiers of science. The university's knowledge enterprise has seen tremendous growth in the last five years: research expenditures have grown from \$68 million in 2018 to \$140 million in 2022 and the university community has seen an unprecedented surge in commercialization and entrepreneurship activities. From 2018 to 2022, the total budget for proposals submitted grew from \$368 million to \$679 million, and the total new awards grew from \$54 million to \$168 million. Between 2018 and 2022, the ranks of national academy members grew from 5 to 11, and the total patents issued grew from 7 to 24. The direct economic and community impact of the university's activity now totals \$3 billion. The [REDKE Annual Report](#) sheds further light on recent developments, detailing the largest awards received and breaking down expenditures by institutional division.

Reflecting its growth, UTSA achieved Carnegie R1 status in 2022; the university is now one of only 21 institutions to be designated as both an R1 research university and a Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI). In June 2022, UTSA joined its fellow R1 HSIs to found the [Alliance of Hispanic Serving Research Universities \(HSRU\)](#) with the aim to improve Hispanic representation in the highest levels of research. The Alliance

presents unique opportunities to make rapid progress in advancing Hispanic enrollment in doctoral programs and broadening pathways to the professoriate.

### ***UTSA Research, Economic Development, and Knowledge Enterprise (REDKE)***

As the central university division charged with advancing the university's comprehensive knowledge enterprise, [UTSA Research, Economic Development, and Knowledge Enterprise \(REDKE\)](#) fosters an innovation ecosystem that accelerates transdisciplinary research and economic development through creative discovery by producing responsible and transformative outcomes to benefit the region's diverse communities. In support of this mission, REDKE centralizes all aspects of UTSA's research and economic development efforts, including: [Strategic Research Initiatives](#), [Research Integrity](#), [Sponsored Project Administration](#) (including pre-award support), [Research Finance and Operations](#) (including post-award administration), the [Institute for Economic Development](#), and a suite of [research centers and institutes](#).

### ***Accelerate 2030: The Research Strategic Plan***

In 2014, REDKE published a ten-year strategic plan that was meant to guide the division through 2025. Having reached all of the goals outlined in that plan well ahead of schedule, the division retired it in 2019. This year, with UTSA having achieved Carnegie R1 status, the division engaged the campus community to draft and publish its next ten-year research strategic plan: [Accelerate 2030](#).

Aligned with President Eighmy's bold vision for the institution, the Accelerate 2030 framework focuses on five research pillars: Digital Economy, Fundamental Futures, Human Health, Culture and Inclusion, and Socio-Economic Transformation. To bolster these broad pillars, the framework charts eight key pathways: Human Capital Development, Student and Postdoctoral Research, Outreach and Engagement, Research Infrastructure, Transformative Research Programs, Innovation and Economic Development, Global Visibility, and Scholarly Excellence.

### ***Research Centers, Institutes, and Core Facilities***

Aligning the strengths that exist across the university, UTSA is home to myriad cross-disciplinary research centers and institutes as well as relevant research cores that enable innovative and cutting-edge work. The centers and institutes sponsor research that informs public policy, builds cultural understanding, improves medical care, enhances scientific knowledge, and advances economic development. Of the 32 [research centers and institutes](#) at UTSA, 27 report to college deans and five are situated within REDKE, including the [National Security Collaboration Center \(NSCC\)](#), [Cybersecurity Manufacturing Innovation Center \(CyManII\)](#), [Brain Health Consortium](#), [MATRIX AI Consortium for Human Well-Being](#), and the [Open Cloud Institute](#).

The research core facilities provide access to highly specialized services including instruments, technologies, and scientific consultation, all delivered by experienced staff with expertise in designing, conducting experiments, and analyzing data to meet the needs of UTSA's burgeoning research community. These [university-wide core facilities](#) include the Cell Analysis Core, Kleberg Advanced Microscopy Center, Mass Spectrometry and Proteomics Core, Stem Cell Core, and Genomics Core.

### ***Investments in the Knowledge Enterprise***

Over the last three years, UTSA led a robust slate of strategic initiatives that have fueled the institution's scholarly capacity and national reputation. The university conducted transdisciplinary, cross-institution cluster hires focused in cloud computing, brain health, data analytics/machine learning, artificial intelligence, information science, and human performance. This enabled the launch of UTSA's new School of Data Science (SDS) and the [National Security Collaboration Center \(NSCC\)](#). Building on this momentum, the university launched a series of cross-disciplinary [research interest groups](#) in 2021 to provide a forum for UTSA researchers and community and industry partners to work collaboratively on emerging transdisciplinary fields in academia.

Further propelling the university's momentum in 2021, UTSA was selected by the U.S. Department of Energy to lead the [Cybersecurity Manufacturing Innovation Institute \(CyManII\)](#), a member of the Manufacturing USA national network. This win reflects the university's strength in cybersecurity and positions it as a national leader in cyber-secure manufacturing.

Finally, also in 2021, the University of Texas System Board of Regents approved plans for a new collaboration between UTSA and UT Health San Antonio, enabling them to establish a research-intensive, community-centric school of public health to improve health outcomes and reduce disease complications and mortality in South Texas: the [UT School of Public Health San Antonio](#). In 2022, Bexar County Commissioners Court gave preliminary approval to an award of \$10 million to the UT School of Public Health San Antonio, further affirming the need for such a collaboration to serve the growing needs of South Texas communities. Most recently, Vasam Ramachandran, M.D., a distinguished public health researcher from Boston University, [has been named the dean of the school](#), effective September 1.

### ***Strategic Partnerships with the City of San Antonio***

To further fuel regional strengths identified by the [Greater San Antonio Regional Economic Development plan](#) brought forward by [greater:SATX](#), UTSA continues to drive synergies with other research and innovation partners in the city, including [UT Health San Antonio](#), [Texas Biomedical Research Institute \(Texas Biomed\)](#), [Southwest Research Institute \(SwRI\)](#), [Joint Base San Antonio](#), and [Port San Antonio](#). In close alignment with these organizations, UTSA increases the region's competitiveness for national and global level programming and fosters opportunity for unprecedented research and workforce development. San Antonio is a city marked by a culture of collaboration; rather than compete for limited resources, these institutions align their efforts for greater collective impact.

Recent examples of initiatives engaging these partners are the [San Antonio Partnership for Precision Therapeutics \(SAPPT\)](#) and the South Texas Center for Emerging Infectious Diseases. Both efforts are emblematic of the power and creativity behind these alignments and serve as engines of novel discovery and accelerators of critical, translational breakthroughs to deliver life-saving care. Together, they illustrate the distinctive ecosystem in which UTSA finds itself: the tremendous research and translational capacities of the city's public and private actors combined with a deep civic commitment to supporting this ecosystem allow UTSA to uniquely impact the safety and well-being of San Antonio and beyond.

## THE ROLE OF SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT FOR RESEARCH AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Reporting to the President and serving on the President's Cabinet, the Senior Leadership Team, the Provost's Academic Leadership Council, and the University Leadership Council, the SVPR serves as the Chief Research Officer of the institution. In this role, the SVPR leads [UTSA Research, Economic Development, and Knowledge Enterprise \(REDKE\)](#), providing vision, strategy, oversight, and management of all aspects of the university's research operations and administration, centers and institutes, commercialization initiatives, and economic development efforts, both on campus and in collaboration with external partners, including industry partners as well as local, state, and federal agencies.

As a strategic advisor to the President and Provost, the SVPR sets the vision and strategy for the university's research agenda and makes recommendations regarding research objectives, programs, policies, and practices. The SVPR will lead an organization of more than 150 professional staff to provide the university community with the resources necessary to further develop UTSA's burgeoning knowledge enterprise, build upon areas of existing research excellence, and create a campus environment that enables entrepreneurship, innovation, transdisciplinary collaboration, and scholarly achievement.

Reporting directly to the SVPR are the Senior Associate Vice President for Research, Associate Vice President for Strategic Research Development, Associate Vice President for Research Integrity, Associate Vice President for Innovation and Economic Development, CEO of the Cybersecurity Manufacturing Innovation Institute, and Executive Director of the National Security Collaboration Center.

## OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FACING THE NEXT SVPR

The next SVPR will sustain and accelerate the considerable momentum of UTSA's knowledge enterprise, ensuring faculty have the resources needed to develop their research programs, aligning the university's research and economic development activities, and enabling increasingly cross-disciplinary work that impacts society. Building upon a strong foundation and collaborative ecosystem, the SVPR will address the following challenges and strive to use them as opportunities to propel the university forward:

### ***Set a bold and transformative vision for the university's knowledge enterprise***

As the university's senior-most leader directly responsible for research and economic development activities and research infrastructure, the SVPR will have the opportunity to craft a bold vision for UTSA's knowledge enterprise. The SVPR will identify key areas of focus for the knowledge enterprise that will help catalyze cross-pollinating ideas and initiatives that span divisions and institutions. The SVPR will envision new, robust structures and systems built to encourage collaborative, cross-disciplinary work at scale that incorporates the many regional, national, and global public and private partners that look to UTSA as a new model for research excellence. As UTSA has grown in scale and reputation, the SVPR will have the opportunity to influence regional, national, and global conversations around society's most pressing issues, many of which are of major consequence to San Antonio and Bexar County. In this work, the SVPR will align the knowledge enterprise with the broader university vision of becoming the next great public research university.

***Develop and sustain an institutional culture befitting an R1 research university***

UTSA has evolved significantly as a discovery enterprise in recent years and is poised for further growth and transformation in the near- and long-term. Consequently, the university is cementing its identity as a comprehensive, significant, top-tier research university. The SVPR will help to lead UTSA in this transition, advancing a culture that enables the university-wide community to embody the ethos of an R1 research university, and supporting the faculty, students, and partners to more fully embrace transdisciplinary discovery, team science, and translational research. Integral to this work, the SVPR will partner closely with other senior leaders at the institution to enhance faculty development and graduate and postdoctoral education, which are critical for sustaining and further developing the research enterprise.

***Assess and modernize the institutional structures and resources that support research***

As the institution continues its rapid growth, it is incumbent on the SVPR to ensure the capacities of the research office remain resilient, adaptive, and ever evolving. The SVPR will have the opportunity to assess the systems, policies, practices, and resources that currently exist in REDKE and propose changes to modernize the research operation. Changes might include right-sizing the professional staff across the division, implementing new policies that increase workflow efficiencies, and building more robust support systems including expanded research administration, core facilities, specialized equipment, and research space. The SVPR will place particular emphasis on developing the university's capacity to support post-award management, among other key functions. The more than 150 REDKE staff are deeply committed to the institution and to supporting the work of faculty, and they seek the leadership, guidance, and support needed to scale their stellar work.

***Lead further research and educational collaborations with UT Health San Antonio***

As the two University of Texas System institutions located in San Antonio, UTSA and UT Health San Antonio have a strong history of partnership. Current collaborations include the expansion of joint and articulated academic programs (e.g. PhD programs in [biomedical engineering](#) and [translational sciences](#)); creation of the new collaborative [UT School of Public Health San Antonio](#); incorporation of health informatics in the new School of Data Science; collaboration with other research partners to establish the [San Antonio Partnership for Precision Therapeutics](#); and construction of a new medical office building on UTSA's Park West Campus as a patient engagement effort supporting a new teaching and research hospital for UT Health San Antonio. As the knowledge enterprise at UTSA grows increasingly robust and sophisticated, strategic opportunities to collaborate with UT Health San Antonio on research and educational initiatives will abound. The SVPR will play a lead role in identifying these opportunities and bringing them to fruition, while working hand in hand with the Provost and other academic leaders to advance new educational opportunities.

***Expand UTSA's influence with federal funding agencies, policy makers, industry partners, and regional collaborators***

UTSA has benefited from increased federal support in recent years, and the SVPR will work closely with UTSA's senior leadership team to accelerate this momentum. Actively engaging governmental funding agencies like the NIH and NSF and others, and connecting with policy makers in Washington D.C., the SVPR



will champion the university's research enterprise at the federal level, building and deepening relationships with these partners and advocating for additional resources to broaden the university's funding base and open further avenues for UTSA faculty to develop new areas of inquiry. This individual must be deeply involved with federal partners, advocating on behalf of the university community and promoting UTSA's interests through engagement with the [Association of Public and Land-Grant Universities](#), the [National Academies' Government-University-Industry Research Roundtable](#), and the [U.S. Council on Competitiveness](#), among others.

Furthermore, UTSA's astonishingly supportive regional ecosystem will be front of mind for the SVPR, who will serve as UTSA's champion and "front door" for fostering new and mutually beneficial collaborations. The SVPR will think broadly and boldly, building relationships with industry and other regional collaborators and engaging them in long-term, strategic partnerships that further expand UTSA's scope, funding base, and impact.

***Bolster economic development efforts and align them with the research enterprise***

UTSA has a long history of advancing economic development initiatives in San Antonio and the surrounding region. The university's [economic development programs](#) date back to 1979, and the institution has housed the state-funded [Small Business Development Center](#) since 1987. However, there remain significant opportunities to more intentionally connect these efforts with the university's formal research enterprise. Aligned with President Eighmy's vision to develop a more robust, comprehensive knowledge enterprise at the university, research and economic development efforts were brought together for the first time in 2018. In continuing this effort, the SVPR will partner with other university leaders to expand applied and professionally-oriented masters training and workforce-oriented certificates in connection with regional economic and industry needs and provide leadership for the intersection of industry strategy and graduate education.

**QUALIFICATIONS AND CHARACTERISTICS**

The search committee recognizes that no individual candidate is likely to embody all of the desired qualifications, skills, and experience, but anticipates that the successful candidate will possess many of the following:

- Commitment to the mission, vision, and culture of UTSA; a set of core values that reflects the highest level of personal integrity and a demonstrated commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion.
- A proven track record of providing visionary leadership by exercising superb judgment, evaluating trends, anticipating emerging areas, and creating adaptive strategic plans.
- Demonstrated commitment to research excellence; expertise in the transfer of research to practice, including commercial applications of new technologies.
- Deep ties to senior leadership in business, government, and industry communities; demonstrated experience in securing major research funding from multiple sources.
- Effective management of a complex organization within a large university or comparable public or private sector research organization; demonstrated ability to lead the development of organizational processes, policies, and procedures that support a high-performing research

organization and to nurture a culture that is in service of the research and entrepreneurial efforts of faculty.

- The ability to provide intellectual leadership to UTSA's broad research community; a champion for programs outside of their domain of expertise, who can inspire and galvanize others around large-scale and multidisciplinary efforts.
- Excellent communication skills, including strong listening skills, to represent the University persuasively and compellingly to a broad range of internal and external audiences.
- Knowledge and understanding of the current legislative, regulatory, and public policy environment impacting research.
- An earned doctoral degree, a distinguished record of scholarly excellence, and the ability to hold a security clearance are required.

#### **TO APPLY**

UTSA has retained the national executive search firm Isaacson, Miller to assist in this search. All applications, nominations, and inquiries should be submitted in confidence to:

Vijay Saraswat and David Bellshaw, Partners  
Keith Mason and Liz Braun, Senior Associates

[www.imsearch.com/8688](http://www.imsearch.com/8688)

*UTSA is committed to providing equal employment and educational opportunities for all qualified persons without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, veteran status, disability, or sexual orientation.*