



# Candidate Brief

## Vice-President, Research and Innovation, and Strategic Initiatives (VPRISI)

### University of Toronto

October 2021



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Canada



# Division of the VPRISI

*We wish to acknowledge this land on which the University of Toronto operates. For thousands of years it has been the traditional land of the Huron-Wendat, the Seneca, and the Mississaugas of the Credit. Today, this meeting place is still the home to many Indigenous people from across Turtle Island and we are grateful to have the opportunity to work on this land.*

As Canada's leading university and a global Top 20 institution, the University of Toronto (U of T) is uniquely positioned to lead life-changing research and innovation that addresses the most pressing global challenges of our time. U of T's exceptional complement of faculty, graduate and undergraduate students, and postdoctoral fellows partner with leading researchers and institutions worldwide. Together, with their hospital partners, they annually attract \$1.4 billion in research funding from a rich array of national and international sources, including federal and provincial governments, the not-for-profit sector and private-sector partnerships. The University annually receives \$64 million in Funding from the Canada Foundation for Innovation's John R. Evans Leaders Fund, and secures 16.3% of the country's Tri-Agency funding. U of T is home to 330 Canada Research Chairs - more than any other Canadian university - and ranks in the top 50 globally for 43 subjects.

The \$135 million Connaught Fund provides almost \$5 million per year to support cutting edge research in the public interest by U of T faculty and students.

The deep expertise of U of T's faculty members is reflected in the frequency with which they are appointed to national advisory bodies for scholarly and scientific matters in Canada and internationally, and nominated for Nobels and visible international awards. In 2020, the U of T community received 130 international and major national awards and honours, and in the last decade, faculty have consecutively led in new elections to the Fellowship of the Royal Society of Canada (FRSC).

## Research Partnerships and Collaborations

This past year, in response to operational and research challenges posed by the pandemic, the Division of the VPRISI launched the Toronto Covid-19 Action Initiative to expedite the investment of \$10.465 million into 40 COVID-

19-related research projects across U of T's campuses, partner hospitals and disciplines, to support research that renders near-term results with strong potential to positively impact individuals, communities, and public health systems. This year - 2021 - marks the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the discovery of insulin, highlighting the collaborative efforts U of T and its partner hospitals and industry partners took to develop, advance, and distribute this life-saving treatment to millions worldwide. Among the hundreds of research partnerships developed, the new [Indigenous Stream of the Connaught Community Partnership Research Program](#) awarded \$450,000 to support research initiatives identified by Indigenous communities to be undertaken in partnership with U of T faculty members. In the past decade, U of T has advanced relationships with over 600 different industry partners, engaged with communities to address significant societal issues, and fostered key international partnerships aimed at accelerating discovery, fostering learning, and leveraging complementary research strengths.

The Division of the VPRISI supports research and innovation partnerships between U of T and external organizations from diverse sectors, and advocates on behalf of U of T's researchers. The Division ensures that U of T fulfills its ethical, legal, and financial reporting obligations associated with research, manages research risks, and promotes a safe research environment.

Further information on research partnerships can be found here: [www.research.utoronto.ca/partnerships/partnerships](http://www.research.utoronto.ca/partnerships/partnerships)

## Institutional Strategic Initiatives

Solving society's most pressing issues, from climate change, to inequity, to infectious diseases demands creative and innovative answers, and a cross-disciplinary approach to translate cutting-edge discovery into societal solutions. The



Institutional Strategic Initiatives (ISI) portfolio enhances partnerships with external industry, community, and philanthropic partners to increase U of T's capacity to support large-scale, high-impact interdisciplinary research.

One of the most exciting and timely of these is the [Student and Youth Mental Health Research Initiative](#), a unique partnership between U of T and the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH) that enables collaboration with students to co-create research-informed, evidence-based solutions that support mental health and wellness of the campus community. The Black Research Network (BRN) - a cross-divisional, interdisciplinary network of Black-identified faculty, staff, and students - work to promote Black excellence at U of T and enhance the research capacity and visibility of Black scholars' research accomplishments. Another profound development is [The Schwartz Reisman Institute for Technology and Society](#) that leverages Artificial Intelligence and powerful data-driven technologies to explore and address the ethical and societal implications of technology. In 2020, ISI launched the [Acceleration Consortium](#), a coalition of researchers, tech companies and entrepreneurs from across the University and around the world, who use AI-guided self-driving laboratories to reduce the time and cost of bringing advanced materials to market.

A key strategic objective for the Division of the VPRISI is to transform several ISI's into major institutes by 2024, by securing new investment from government, industry, and philanthropy. For more information about U of T's ISI's, visit: [www.isi.utoronto.ca](http://www.isi.utoronto.ca)



University of Toronto Entrepreneurship (UTE)

U of T is Canada's leader for research-based startups and a global leader in transforming ideas into impactful products and services. UTE accelerates ideas, people, social impact, and technologies, in addition to providing mentorship and expertise for all stages of the innovation pipeline to provide the skills and resources required to effectively start, build, and scale businesses. It is a central voice for entrepreneurship across U of T's three campuses, representing a powerful network of 11 accelerators. U of T's community of diverse and talented innovators and entrepreneurs are responsible for creating over 500 startups that have provided 5000 jobs and secured over \$1.5 billion in investment in the past decade. Looking forward to the next two years, the continued maturation of U of T's entrepreneurship ecosystem will be critical to ensuring that startups created by the U of T community double their average external investment. For more information about UTE, visit:

[www.entrepreneurs.utoronto.ca](http://www.entrepreneurs.utoronto.ca)

### Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Accessibility in Research and Innovation

An equitable, diverse, and inclusive environment enables all scholars to reach their full potential, and strengthens the quality and impact of research across U of T. The Canada Research Chairs (CRC) Program aims to increase the participation of under-represented groups by mandating participating institutions to meet equity targets for the representation of the four designated groups – women, Indigenous peoples, members of visible minorities, and persons with disabilities – and U of T has exceeded these equity targets. The role of the VPRISI in continuing to build on the CRC Equity and Inclusion Action Plan is three-fold:

- Provide guidance on EDI initiatives related to research and innovation;
- Support the implementation of EDI best practices in research and innovation;
- Support compliance with EDI requirements for federally sponsored research programs.

For more information about Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion in Research and Innovation, visit: [ediri.utoronto.ca](http://ediri.utoronto.ca)



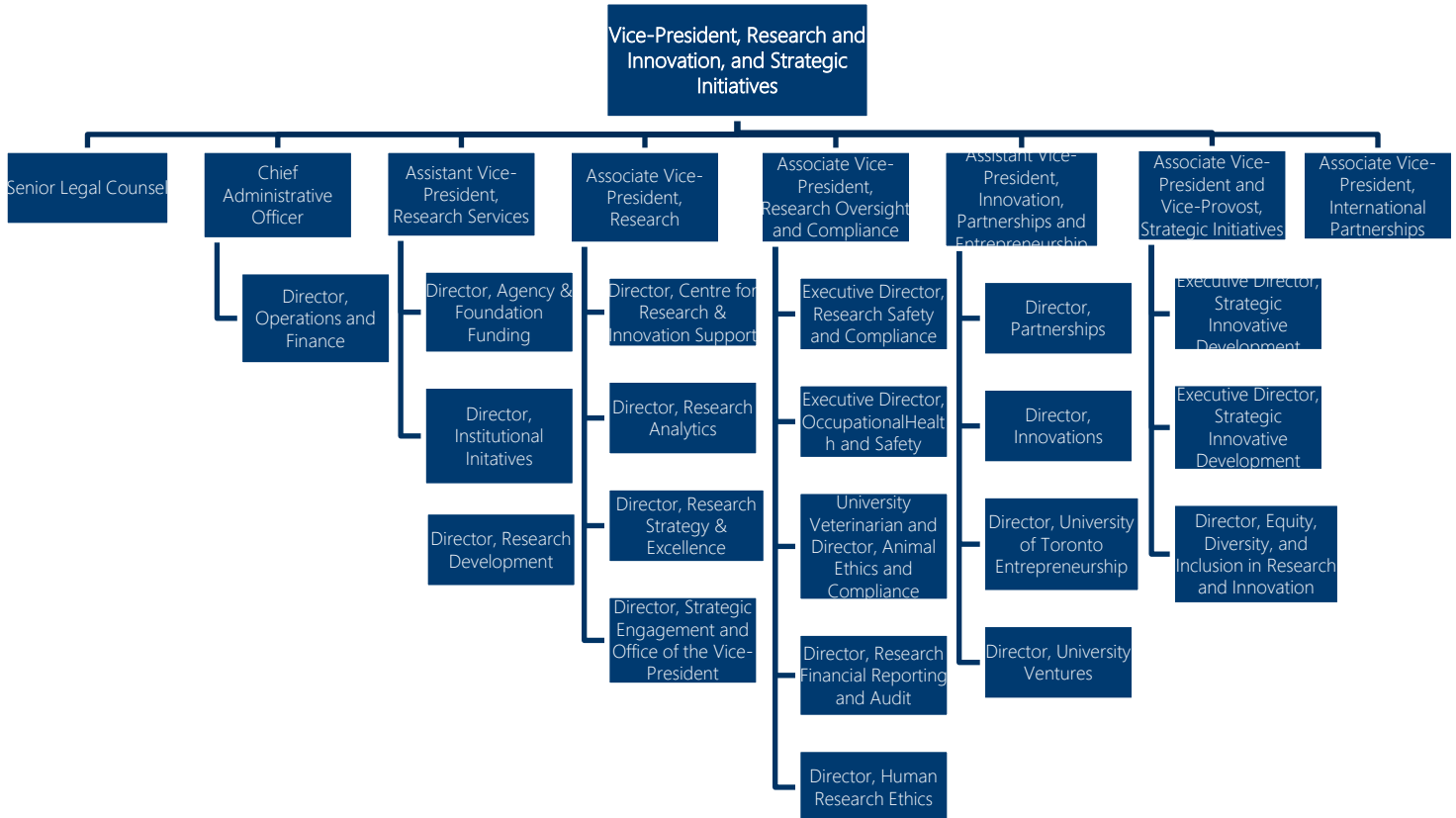
Further information about the Division of the VPRISI and U of T's Institutional Strategic Research Plan is available here:

- [VPRISI Annual Report 2020](#)
- [University of Toronto Strategic Research Plan 2018-23](#)

- [Division of the VPRISI](#)

## Organizational Structure

The Division of the Vice-President Research and Innovation, and Strategic Initiatives is organized into the following units which provide a range of services to U of T's research community:



# A Snapshot of the Opportunity

The University of Toronto (U of T) seeks an inspiring, transformative, and entrepreneurial leader for the position of Vice-President, Research and Innovation, and Strategic Initiatives (VPRISI).

Reporting directly to the President of the University of Toronto and working closely with key members of the Vice-Presidential team, the VPRISI will play a critical role in realizing U of T's aspirations to progress through the global rankings within the top 15, alongside North America's top public institutions. They will lead the University's strategic research mission, including demonstrating U of T's national and global leadership in research and innovation; fostering collaborations, partnerships and engagement; advancing equity, diversity, inclusion and accessibility across research and innovation; supporting the integration of research and innovation in student curricular and co-curricular experience; and, strengthening institutional supports at the undergraduate, graduate and faculty level that foster research and innovation excellence.

The VPRISI will need to devote time and attention to the following:

- Lead the strategic direction of U of T's research enterprise, working to empower U of T researchers to participate and succeed in external funding opportunities. Strategic planning, consultation, advocacy and membership on numerous internal and external committees and boards will be critical. In addition, the VPRISI will effectively communicate the significance of U of T's world-class scholarship to national and international audiences.
- Working collaboratively with the Vice-Presidential team and other senior academic and administrative leadership at U of T is essential to the success of the University's research enterprise. The VPRISI must develop excellent and productive relationships across U of T's campuses and Faculties, and with the Toronto Academic Health Sciences Network, and have the vision, creativity, and team-building skills to ensure that synergies and opportunities are identified and capitalized on, and that key strategic research initiatives of local, national, and global importance can be successfully developed and advanced.
- Breaking down barriers and encouraging a culture of collaboration across the University will be imperative to the success of U of T's strategic research objectives. The VPRISI must be a proponent of interdisciplinary collaboration and play an active role in developing synergies among the various academic divisions and disciplines at U of T. They will encourage faculty members and students to pursue emerging research ideas and new areas of scholarship, and support and promote inter-institutional collaboration. Key to success in this area will be the new VPRISI's relationships and communications with Deans, Vice-Deans/Principals Research, and Chairs.
- With UTE providing a coordinated and cohesive approach to innovation and entrepreneurship, the VPRISI will champion an entrepreneurial ecosystem across U of T, foster engagement with external partners, and solicit capital from the private sector with the goal of doubling external investment by 2024. Enhancing commercialization activity and social entrepreneurship is key to ensuring that the research undertaken at U of T has broad societal impact.
- The new VPRISI will lead the development of a 10-year major research infrastructure plan for U of T.
- As governments across the country adjust their approaches to funding universities, the VPRISI must be nimble and entrepreneurial, with an ambitious vision to devise strategies intended to increase tri-council research partnership funding. They will recognize the growing importance of government in advancing the scholarly aspirations of research-intensive universities and will play a critical advocacy role for university-based research at both the federal and provincial government levels.
- The VPRISI will cultivate partnerships with the private sector, potential donors, and other partners to attract alternative and innovative sources of research funding, to



potentially double industry-sponsored research income from \$24m and 600 industry partners today to \$48m by 2024. The VPRISI will also facilitate international research partnerships and leverage international research funding opportunities.

- A strong advocate for inclusive excellence, the VPRISI will work collaboratively with colleagues to develop and strengthen institutional infrastructure and capacity to integrate accessibility, equity, diversity, and inclusion principles and practices across research activities and communities. This includes celebrating, empowering, and providing resources to each U of T faculty researcher and student to enable their success as leading researchers in their field globally.
- U of T has a critical role to play in responding to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC). There is opportunity and imperative for the new VPRISI to work across faculties to increase capacity for Indigenous

scholarship, to ensure that Indigenous scholars are well-supported, and to authentically partner with Indigenous communities.

- The Fall of 2021 saw the signing of the Scarborough Charter on Anti-Black Racism and Black Inclusion in Canadian Higher Education: Principles, Actions, and Accountabilities. The Charter was a collaborative, national effort, through which institutional partners committed to develop concrete actions for change in higher education and in communities. U of T has formed the Anti-Black Racism Task Force to address anti-Black racism and to promote Black inclusion and excellence with U of T's tri-campus community. Moving towards a more inclusive University community that recognizes inclusive excellence is vital to best advancing the research, educational and civic impact of the University of Toronto both nationally and globally.



# Candidate Qualifications

The University of Toronto is one of the top universities in the world and aspires to progress further in international rankings and reputation. Those in leadership positions at the University must have superior academic profiles and the capability to serve as intellectual leaders.

The new VPRISI will be a respected academic administrative leader, with an exemplary track record of teaching, research, scholarship and service, and senior leadership experience with responsibility for promoting research and innovation. They will bring a significant profile of scholarship consistent with appointment to the rank of Full Professor, and a noteworthy presence on the local, national, and international research stage.

The VPRISI will have in-depth knowledge of the current issues facing higher education in general, and be well-versed in the culture of public research universities in particular. The successful candidate will provide effective leadership in a complex, tri-campus organization, foster an environment in which all individuals and groups can be successful in performing diverse kinds of research, and will embrace the pluralism of a research-intensive university located in a metropolitan centre.

Although the Advisory Committee recognizes that no one individual possesses the sought after qualifications in equal measure, it has developed a set of criteria to articulate the desired background, experience and personal qualities of the successful candidate:

## Leadership

- A proven ability to inspire a community in pursuit of its goals, and to lead institutional change where and as needed;
- Exceptional leadership and management skills, with a track record of success in a complex and collegial environment;
- A history of being a team builder and inclusive leader who develops rapport with others; works collaboratively

with other Vice-Presidents, the Chief of Government Relations, Deans, and other senior leaders as part of a team;

- Ability to effectively assess talents and abilities, inspiring and leveraging the knowledge and experience of a strong research and innovation executive team; delegate and monitor progress; and, support and encourage professional and personal development;
- A deep commitment to, and passion for inclusive excellence, and nurturing these valued features of the U of T;
- Understanding of and commitment to the TRC and the Calls to Action;
- Outstanding communication skills, exhibiting political astuteness, with the ability to articulate a position, build a strong argument, and present it clearly and convincingly to various stakeholders;
- The capacity to be goal-oriented and decisive while being a champion for collaborative processes;
- An excellent listener who synthesizes information before providing direction;
- A deep and abiding commitment to collegial governance, consultation, and consensus-building, enabling people to see opportunity rather than constraint;
- The ability to work with divergent interests in a way that promotes cohesion;
- An affinity for fundraising, friend-raising, and being a community liaison, and a strong commitment to building and maintaining collaborative relationships with internal and external stakeholders.

## Administrative Experience

- A proven track record for successfully utilizing superior analytical, organizational, and managerial skills to advance an academic unit and/or institution;





- A track record of successfully managing multi-faceted partnerships;
- Strong financial planning and management skills;
- Demonstrated success in leading and facilitating innovation and advancing knowledge translation and commercialization;
- Experience in international initiatives;
- A proven record of moving from vision to formulating and implementing strategic plans, with the participation and support of a diverse constituency.

#### Attitude/Style

- A personal style that balances firmness and fairness in problem resolution;

- An inviting and compelling communication style, which will help the VPRISI forge successful relationships with colleagues at the U of T and with members of the external communities with which the University engages;
- Superb entrepreneurial instincts, and an approach that encourages creativity and entrepreneurial activity by others;
- A capacity for striking the right balance between contemplation and action, and group discussion and individual autonomy;
- A demeanour that exhibits integrity, energy, openness, consistency, sound judgment, fairness, resourcefulness and confidence, coupled with a sense of humour, a respectful and accessible manner, optimism and enthusiasm.



# How to Apply

## Equal Opportunity

Regularly named one of Canada's Top 100 Employers and one of Canada's Best Diversity Employers, the University of Toronto is strongly committed to diversity within its community and especially welcomes applications from racialized persons / persons of colour, women, Indigenous / Aboriginal People of North America, persons with disabilities, LGBTQ persons, and others who may contribute to the further diversification of ideas. Please note that all qualified candidates are encouraged to apply, but applications from Canadians and permanent residents will be given priority. In accordance with the AODA, accommodation will be provided to individuals with disabilities throughout the recruitment process.

## Where to Apply

The new Vice-President Research and Innovation, and Strategic Initiatives will take office in January 2022 or as soon as mutually agreed thereafter, with consideration of candidates beginning mid-October 2021.

**Inquiries and/or applications, in confidence, should be directed to Gerri Woodford or Krutika Hotwani at [uoftvprisi@odgersberndtson.com](mailto:uoftvprisi@odgersberndtson.com).**

## Your Personal Information

At Odgers Berndtson, we have always respected the privacy and the confidentiality of the personal information provided to us in context with our executive search assignments. This has been a fundamental value in building trust with our candidates and clients. We are committed to keeping your information secure and managing it in accordance with our legal responsibilities wherever we operate in the world, including the Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act ("PIPEDA") in Canada.

For more information on your rights and to find out much more about how we process your personal data, a copy of our Privacy Policy is available for your review on our website.

By providing us with a copy of your resume and any subsequent personal information directly or from third parties on your behalf such as references, you understand that it has been furnished with your consent for the purpose of possible disclosure to our client, who has agreed to comply with our Privacy Policy. We will not disclose your personal information to clients without your prior knowledge and consent.



# Appendix A: The University of Toronto

*"The University of Toronto is committed to being an internationally significant research university, with undergraduate, graduate and professional programs of excellent quality." - U of T Mission*

The University of Toronto is consistently ranked as one of the world's leading institutions of higher learning, and is renowned for its excellence in teaching, research, innovation, and entrepreneurship, which drives economic growth and promotes social well-being around the globe. The quality and range of the University's programs – undergraduate, graduate, and professional – span all disciplines and professions and attract top faculty and students from across Canada and around the world every year.

Located in the vibrant and diverse city of Toronto, U of T is also renowned for its leadership in professional education, its pre-eminence in graduate education, its three historic federated universities (Victoria, Trinity, and St. Michael's); and its tradition of strong senior leadership. U of T is a truly global institution, with an extensive alumni network of over half a million people in over 190 countries and territories.

The University of Toronto encompasses 18 faculties and schools, more than 100 departments, and 170 research centres and institutes across three campuses. The University spans the cosmopolitan city of Toronto, with courses offered at campuses in downtown Toronto (St. George), Mississauga and Scarborough, and in the acclaimed clinical and research centres of its nine fully affiliated teaching hospitals. Together, they attract over \$1.4 billion in research grants and contracts each year. U of T also supports a vigorous program of commercialization and entrepreneurship through its 11 incubators and accelerators, and is known as one of North America's leading universities in the creation of start-up companies. With more than 22,000 faculty and staff, some 93,000 students of which 25% are international, and an annual operating budget approaching \$3 billion, the University of Toronto is one of Canada's Top 100 Employers and one of Canada's Best Diversity Employers.

Fully committed to teaching and research as complementary facets of scholastic achievement, U of T is ranked 18<sup>th</sup> in the world for teaching research, and innovation in the 2021 Times Higher Education World University Rankings, and also leads in disciplinary excellence with top ranked departments in fields ranging from neuroscience to geography to philosophy.

In 2020, U of T was ranked 18<sup>th</sup> in the world for the employability of its graduates. U of T alumni are major economic drivers, having founded 190,000 ventures across all major industries, generating hundreds of billions in annual revenues and employing millions of people globally. U of T graduates also include many thousands of distinguished researchers, teachers, creative artists, decision-makers, and persons of influence, including prominent federal, provincial, and municipal politicians, global business leaders, and eminent philanthropists.

President Meric Gertler has identified enhancing undergraduate education, deepening international collaboration, and leveraging the University's position in the Greater Toronto Area – one of the world's most diverse urban regions – as the University's top three strategic priorities. Additional information is available at [www.utoronto.ca](http://www.utoronto.ca).



## Appendix B: Toronto, Canada



Toronto is one of the world's most diverse cities, with more than 100 dialects and languages spoken, and representation from across all cultural groups. As North America's fourth largest city, its 6.4 million residents contribute to Toronto's economic, social, and cultural life. Despite its size, Toronto is known for its friendliness, safety and liveability. The [Economist](#) rates Toronto as the 6<sup>th</sup> safest city in the world, and in its annual Quality of Life Ranking, [Mercer](#) rated Toronto 16th in 2019.

Toronto is Canada's financial and business capital. As a dynamic, diverse, and expanding city, Toronto makes an ideal location for companies looking for a competitive edge. Toronto's economy is one of the most diverse in North America, and it is fast becoming a leading hub for technology startups—it is the third largest technology sector on the continent, which includes more than 15,000 companies and over 400,000 employees in areas ranging from artificial intelligence to quantum computing and more. The pace of residential building projects reflects the city's rapid rate of growth; Toronto leads all North American municipalities in new large-scale development projects with 185 high-rise buildings currently under construction.

Toronto is the third largest English-language theatre centre in the world, and is home to more than 70 film festivals, including the annual Toronto International Film Festival. The city boasts a wealth of creative talent within its rich musical, dance and art communities. It is also home to internationally recognized symphony, ballet, and opera companies—the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, the National Ballet of Canada, and the Canadian Opera Company. Toronto boasts more than 200 professional performing arts organizations, including the famous Mirvish Productions, and countless commercial and not-for-profit galleries and museums.

Toronto is a city of festivals, including Nuit Blanche, Winterlicious, Pride Week, and the Cavalcade of Lights Festival and Exhibit, which collectively attract more than 2.5 million residents and tourists each year. The city has over 50 major attractions including heritage sites, cultural centres, and zoos, and is home to seven professional sports teams.

For more information about Toronto, please visit [City of Toronto](#) and [See Toronto Now](#).



# Appendix C: Advisory Committee

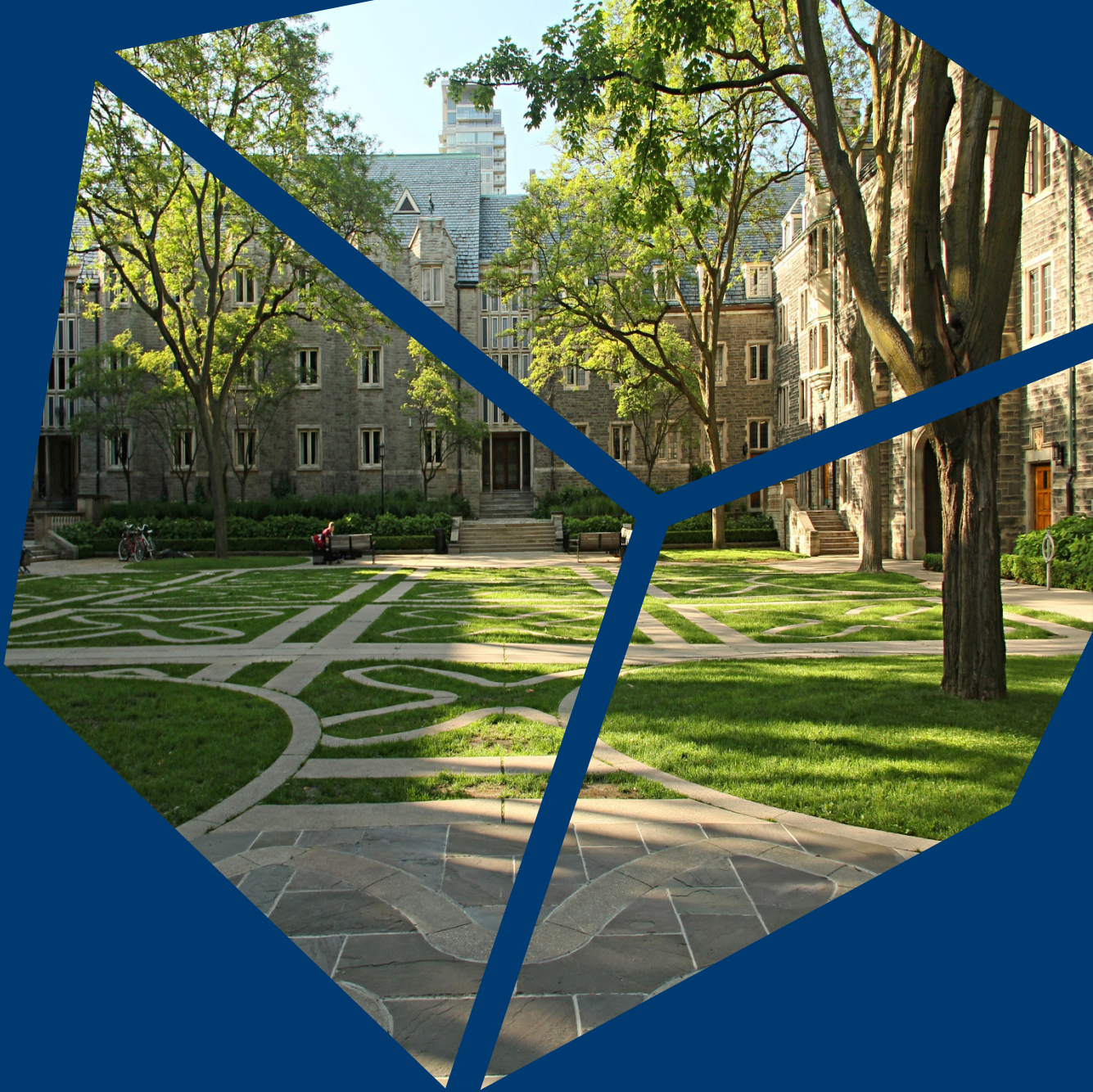
The following individuals make up the Vice-President, Research and Innovation, and Strategic Initiatives Advisory Committee:

- Professor Meric Gertler, President, *Chair*
- Professor Christine Allen, Associate Vice-President and Vice-Provost, Strategic Initiatives
- Professor Joshua Barker, Vice-Provost, Graduate Research and Dean, School of Graduate Studies
- Ms Judith Chadwick, Assistant Vice-President, Research Services
- Professor Irena Creed, Vice-Principal, Research and Innovation, UTSC
- Ms Samantha Ing-Esteves, doctoral candidate, Department of Molecular Genetics
- Professor Ramin Farnood, Vice-Dean, Research, Faculty of Applied Science and Engineering
- Dr. Nadina Jamison, Chief Strategy Officer, Office of the President (non-voting, *ex officio*)
- Professor Alison Keith, Director, Jackman Humanities Institute
- Professor Lisa Robinson, Vice-Dean, Strategy and Operations, Temerty Faculty of Medicine
- Professor Suzanne Stewart, Academic Advisor on Indigenous Research, Office of the Vice-President and Provost, Director of the Waakebiness-Bryce Institute for Indigenous Health, Dalla Lana School of Public Health
- Professor Lisa Strug, Director, Canadian Statistical Sciences Institute (CANSSI) Ontario Region, Departments of Statistical Sciences and Computer Science, Faculty of Arts and Science
- Professor Melanie Woodin, Dean, Faculty of Arts and Science
- Dr. Bradly Wouters, Executive Vice-President, Science and Research, University Health Network
- Mr. Yung Wu, CEO, MaRS Discovery District

## Committee Support

- Ms Sheree Drummond, Secretary of Governing Council
- Mr. Anwar Kazimi, Deputy Secretary of Governing Council





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