



UNIVERSITY OF
LEICESTER

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Pro Vice-Chancellor, Research and Innovation



We are Citizens of Change





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Welcome from the President and Vice-Chancellor

Diverse in our makeup and united in ambition –
we pursue excellence in knowledge and learning to
transform our community, our world and beyond.
We are Citizens of Change.



PROFESSOR SIR NISHAN CANAGARAJAH
PRESIDENT AND VICE-CHANCELLOR

Dear Applicant,

Thank you for your interest in this exciting opportunity to help shape the future of one of the UK's most ambitious and forward-thinking universities.

I was delighted to launch the University's Citizens of Change strategy in November 2021. This bold vision commits us to: research-inspired education, world changing research and a focus on people, partnerships, and impact.

At the heart of this strategy are three core values: inclusive, inspiring, and impactful. These values define who we are today and the University we aspire to be in the future.

We believe equity, diversity, and inclusion are essential to creating a thriving place to work and study. With staff and students from over 100 countries, we proudly embrace a rich diversity of perspectives, beliefs, and approaches that enrich both our University and the city of Leicester.

Our recent achievements reflect this commitment to excellence. In the past year, Leicester has been crowned Daily Mail University of the Year 2025 and shortlisted for Times Higher Education University of the Year 2024 and The Times and The Sunday Times University of the Year 2025. We ranked 28th in The Times and The Sunday Times Good University Guide 2026 and climbed from 36th to 33rd in the Complete University Guide. We also secured a top 15 position for student satisfaction in the 2025 National Student Survey and recently ranked 26th globally for Research Quality in the Times Higher Education World University Rankings 2026.

In 2023, we were awarded an overall Gold rating in the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF), signifying outstanding student experience and outcomes. This places Leicester among a select group of institutions excelling in both teaching and research, reinforced by our top 30 performance in the Research Excellence Framework (REF).

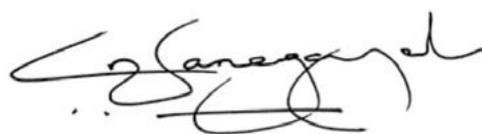
The REF2021 results published by Research England show Leicester moved up 23 places to rank 30th overall, one of the biggest climbs of any UK university. This is our best-ever performance in a research assessment exercise – a testament to the quality and impact of our academics' work and our vibrant research environment

We are seeking an exceptional candidate to join us as Pro Vice-Chancellor, Research and Innovation to provide institution-wide leadership of research and innovation for the University.

Reporting to the Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor, and as a member of the Executive Board, you will lead the creation, development and implementation of the University's research strategy and ensure that the priority activities identified are delivered and supported across the University as well as the University's research performance, doctoral college, and innovation strategy.

This is a significant and challenging role for a candidate of the highest calibre – someone with vision, drive, and the ability to leave a lasting legacy of achievement.

If Leicester sounds like the place for you, and you have the skills, experience, and ambition to make a difference, we look forward to hearing from you.



PROFESSOR SIR NISHAN CANAGARAJAH
PRESIDENT AND VICE-CHANCELLOR



Our reputation speaks for itself, with global recognition for our discoveries and contributions to advancing knowledge.

About the University of Leicester



The University of Leicester is a dynamic and inclusive institution, celebrated for our inspiring academic programs, ground-breaking research, and supportive community.

Founded over 100 years ago as a symbol of hope for the future, we are the only university in Europe established by its community as a living legacy to those who made sacrifices during the First World War. This is reflected in our motto, *Ut vitam habeant* – ‘so that they may have life.’

Based in one of the UK’s and Europe’s most culturally diverse cities, our identity and mission have been shaped by this rich tapestry. Students and staff from around the globe come together to engage here, contributing an incredible array of perspectives, beliefs, and approaches that enhance both our university and the vibrant city of Leicester.

We play a vital role in the regional economy, serving as a leading employer and an active supporter of music, arts, sports, and culture. Each year, we contribute over £360 million to Leicester’s economy, underscoring our commitment to the community.

Our commitment to excellence is evident in our recent investment of over £500 million, which has transformed our campus into a world-class environment with state-of-the-art facilities designed for the future. This includes the newly developed Freeman’s neighbourhood – a lively space for students to live, learn, and connect.

As Citizens of Change, our researchers are dedicated to tackling some of today’s most pressing challenges, from combating viruses and diseases to improving air quality, protecting our natural environment and promoting social justice. The diversity of our research reflects the rich variety of our community, creating a broad impact on society.

Our reputation speaks for itself, with global recognition for our discoveries and contributions to advancing knowledge. Our standing in the league tables positions us among the leading universities in the UK.

While we take pride in our heritage and accomplishments, the University of Leicester is resolutely focused on the future. Our spirit of discovery inspires innovative thinking, empowering us to seize new opportunities as we embark on our second century.

16,778
undergraduate
students



£340 million
research portfolio (live grants)
from over 250 funders



5,099
postgraduate
students



4,215
staff



31%
international
students



£396 million
turnover



2025 Statistics



President and Vice-Chancellor's Office

The President and Vice-Chancellor's Office is the strategic heart of the University of Leicester. It provides overall direction for the institution, ensuring that our mission as a world-class university is delivered through excellence in education, research, and global engagement. The Office shapes the University's long-term vision, safeguards financial sustainability, and drives transformation in response to sector-wide challenges and opportunities.

At its core, the Office leads the implementation of the University's Citizens of Change strategy and oversees major initiatives such as the research strategy, which helps to position Leicester as a leader in delivering research-inspired education. It ensures that our values – inclusive, inspiring, and impactful – are embedded across all areas of university activity and from championing interdisciplinary research to fostering international partnerships, the Office plays a pivotal role in amplifying Leicester's reputation and influence worldwide.

The Pro Vice-Chancellor, Research and Innovation will work at the heart of this strategic environment. Working with members of the Executive Board and Senior Leadership Team, you will be accountable for the creation, development and implementation of the Research

Strategy, and ensure that the priority activities identified are delivered and supported across the University. You will lead the development, implementation and impact of the University's Research and Enterprise Strategy across the University, by defining objectives and priorities in terms of research, innovation and enterprise through the University's planning processes.

World changing research

As Citizens of Change, our researchers are committed to addressing the most pressing challenges of our time. This includes combating disease, protecting and improving our environment, advancing social justice, and working towards a sustainable future.

Last year was a landmark year for research at the University, with awards reaching an unprecedented £106.3 million. This achievement shows our enduring commitment to innovation, impact, and interdisciplinary collaboration, and emphasises the brilliance of our academic community in an increasingly competitive funding landscape. The College of Social Sciences, Arts and Humanities achieved its best-ever performance in research grants with £17.6m secured, reflecting the quality and impact of its academic work.

Exploring humanity's role in space

The University secured a record £10 million from the Leverhulme Trust to establish the Leverhulme

Centre for Humanity and Space. Based at Space Park Leicester, the Centre will explore humanity's evolving relationship with space through arts, humanities, and social sciences. Over 10 years, the centre will address governance, sustainability, and the cultural impacts of space exploration, shaping global understanding of life beyond Earth.

Global study on health in prisons

The Wellcome Trust has awarded the University a £3.3m grant for a global study on drugs and mental health in colonial and post-colonial prisons. The interdisciplinary project spans Guyana, the Caribbean, and Indian Ocean nations, combining historical research with creative and community-based methods.

Medieval manuscript study

A €2.5 million ERC Advanced Grant has been awarded to lead the INSULAR project, an ambitious study of early medieval insular manuscripts. The research will uncover the influence of Anglo-Saxon and Irish scholars across Europe, using cutting-edge digital and biomolecular techniques to illuminate cultural and intellectual networks of the past.

Transforming cultural access

Leicester has played a leading role in launching the Museum Data Service (MDS), a ground-breaking digital platform uniting over 100 million records from UK museums. Developed with Art UK and Collections Trust, and funded by Bloomberg Philanthropies and AHRC, MDS revolutionises access to cultural collections for researchers, curators, and the public. This inclusive, sustainable service enables secure data sharing and discovery across institutions, fulfilling a century-old vision through digital innovation. Institute launch in Westminster, The Leicester Institute for Policy was officially launched at an event in Westminster, that united researchers and policymakers to tackle global challenges. The Institute will harness Leicester's research excellence to shape policy and improve lives locally, nationally, and internationally.

New Institute for health and care

The University of Leicester and University Hospitals of Leicester NHS Trust have launched the Institute for Excellence in Healthcare (IEH) to expand research opportunities for nurses, midwives, allied health

professionals, and pharmacists. Backed by NIHR and Leicester BRC, the IEH will offer fellowships, PhDs, and support for embedding research into clinical practice. This initiative aims to improve patient outcomes and strengthen Leicester's position as a national leader in healthcare research and innovation.

Strategic partnership

The University of Leicester and the Office for National Statistics have signed a Memorandum of Understanding to advance health research. Building on collaboration during the COVID-19 pandemic, the partnership will combine data and research expertise to address urgent public health challenges.

Boost for phage research

Leicester's Centre for Phage Research has received a £4 million donation from entrepreneur Jimmy Mayer, in memory of his late wife Becky. Renamed The Becky Mayer Centre for Phage Research, it will expand its pioneering work on bacteriophages viruses that target antibiotic-resistant bacteria. The funding will support biobank growth, advanced equipment, and pre-clinical trials, cementing Leicester as a global leader in the fight against antimicrobial resistance.



£2m to study gene regulation

We received £2 million from the Wellcome Trust to investigate how genes are switched off during early development. The research focuses on X-chromosome inactivation, a key process in preventing gene imbalance. Using super-resolution microscopy, her team will explore how RNA and proteins interact to silence genes. The eight-year project aims to advance understanding of developmental disorders and improve stem cell therapies, while training future researchers in cutting-edge techniques.

Science and technology funding

Researchers in the Planetary Science and Astrophysics groups were successful in the 2024 Small/Large Grants round, bringing in over £4.6M to support postdoctoral researchers. Projects include a 5-year 'Large Award' to support Mercury science from the Bepi Colombo mission and 3-year 'Small Awards' to explore giant planet atmospheres and auroras from the James Webb Space Telescope.

Climate tipping points

Professor Valerio Lucarini, from the School of Computing and Mathematical Sciences, is part of a £5 million project funded by the Advanced Research and Invention Agency (ARIA) to develop early warning systems for climate tipping points. Valerio will lead on work for the 'Advancing Tipping Point Early Warning' (AdvanTip) Project, which will focus on the Subpolar Gyre, an ocean current system that could tip quickly and soon.

Net zero land use research

UKRI has announced £14 million in funding for five research projects under the Land Use for Net Zero (LUNZ) Programme. Led by the LUNZ Hub, the projects will explore soil health, agricultural systems, and land use change. This transdisciplinary initiative aims to accelerate the UK's net zero transition while supporting nature recovery, food production, and community resilience through evidence based policy.

Tackling chemical health risks

The University is leading a new £5.5 million Health Protection Research Unit in Chemical Threats and Hazards, funded by the NIHR. Based at the Centre for Environmental Health and Sustainability, the unit is

investigating how everyday exposures, like air pollution, noise, and household chemicals, impact health. The unit is developing new detection technologies and evidence to inform public health policy and protect communities across the UK.

Co(I)laboratory research

Community organisations in Leicester and Leicestershire are being invited to co-create research projects with regional universities through a £2.3m expansion of the Co(I)laboratory programme. Led by the Universities Partnership and backed by Research England, the initiative funds 27 new PhD studentships focused on civically engaged research. The programme empowers people from non-traditional academic backgrounds to tackle regional challenges. Partners gain access to training, resources, and networks, fostering inclusive collaboration between academia and communities to drive growth, improve wellbeing, and deliver meaningful change.

Knowledge Exchange Framework

The University achieved 'very high engagement' in four key areas of the 2024 Knowledge Exchange Framework, including research partnerships and local growth, placing us in the top 20% of Higher Education providers in England and exceeding the average for universities of our size and type. We also ranked in the top 40% nationally for business and community engagement. Flagship initiatives like Space Park Leicester and the Museum Data Service highlight the University's commitment to impactful collaboration. These results reflect our strategic focus on translating research into real-world benefits for society, the economy, and the environment.

Researcher satisfaction rises

Postgraduate researcher satisfaction at the University has significantly improved, with 81% expressing overall satisfaction in the 2024 Postgraduate Research Experience Survey – up from 73% in 2022. The University also achieved its highest-ever response rate, with 900 participants. Improvements in supervision and professional development, driven by targeted training and collaboration, reflects our commitment to enhancing the postgraduate research experience.



The role

Job title:

Pro Vice-Chancellor, Research and Innovation

Salary:

Competitive

Department:

President and Vice-Chancellors Office

Hours/Contract:

Full-time. This appointment is initially for a four-year period, with the potential for a further four-year term. When the term is completed, the role holder will be offered a Professorial position on a permanent basis.

Role purpose

Reporting to the Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor, the Pro Vice-Chancellor, Research and Innovation will provide institution-wide leadership of research and innovation for the University. Working with members of the Executive Board and Senior Leadership Team, you will be accountable for the creation, development and implementation of the Research Strategy, and ensure that the priority activities identified are delivered and supported across the University. You will oversee the University's research performance, doctoral college, and innovation strategy.

The role will require an experienced individual who possesses outstanding leadership and interpersonal skills, and who has an excellent profile across the academic community with well-established and strong networks externally across the HEI sector and key national and international stakeholders.

Main duties and responsibilities

Leadership in research and enterprise

- Lead the development, monitoring implementation and impact of the University's Research and Enterprise Strategy and measuring implementation and impact of the strategy across the University, by defining objectives and priorities in terms of research, innovation and enterprise through the University's planning processes.
- Promote and champion the research agenda within the University, encouraging staff to develop and embrace research opportunities, including in relation to early career researchers and developing research leadership in the University.
- Provide high-level advocacy for the University within the Research arena, including representing the University's Research agenda in key international and domestic fora.
- Develop close relationships with senior colleagues in national funding agencies; and developing and extending the University's links with European research funding agencies.

- As a member of the Executive Board, working closely with the Provost and Heads of College to maximise research performance and impact.
- As Chair of the Innovation Board, develop effective strategy, policy and process for the development of spin-out companies and other innovation and enterprise activities.
- Enable inter-disciplinary work across research and innovation and enterprise activities through the development of effective structures and resource allocation approaches.
- Facilitate local, regional, national and international collaboration in research: representing the University to develop the innovation agenda.
- Oversee the work of the Doctoral College, including its strategy and the facilitation of translating research and scholarship into learning opportunities for students.
- Optimise the University’s international and collaborative research engagement, including transnational research funding opportunities, transnational research programmes and joint research facilities and institutes.
- Working closely with Heads of College and their Directors of Research and Enterprise, lead the University’s REF strategy and be accountable for its development and implementation.

General management

- As Chair of the University’ Research and Enterprise Committee, oversee the implementation of relevant University policy and procedures in colleges/schools.
- Work effectively with members of Senate and Council in the strategic management and leadership of the University.
- Develop a portfolio of cross-university activity as directed by the President and Vice-Chancellor.
- Provide strategic oversight of Research and Enterprise Services, working closely with the Registrar and Secretary.
- Undertake such other duties as fall within the scope of the post as allocated by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor following consultation with the post-holder.
- Chair the Research and Enterprise Leadership Group, which includes the College Deans of Research, Director of Research and Enterprise Services, Deputy PVC and Dean of the Doctoral College.

Qualifications, knowledge and experience

Essential

*Criteria to be used in shortlisting candidates for interview

- Successful record of leadership, strategic development and management gained within a research-intensive higher education institution.*
- Significant academic track record with distinction in research, innovation, enterprise and teaching.*
- Demonstrable experience of leading continuous organisational change and development.*
- Experience of working as part of a leadership team.*
- Significant experience of managing resources, both people and financial.*
- Research leadership: demonstrable experience of securing, rewarding, nurturing research including the securing of external grants.*
- A track record of facilitating the highest quality research, learning and teaching, administrative and service outcomes through the active recruitment, development and management of people and financial resources.*
- Extensive knowledge of developments in the higher education arena, both nationally and internationally, and a high regard for research, scholarship, teaching and learning.
- Track record of successful co-operation and collaborative working relationships, both internal and external.

Desirable

- Experience as a Head of School/Department or Head of College with line management and budgetary responsibility.*

Skills, abilities and competencies

Essential

*Criteria to be used in shortlisting candidates for interview

- Visionary leadership and the ability to inspire and motivate colleagues at all levels in the University.
- Proven capabilities as a leader, with a flexible, inclusive and collegial management style appropriate to the complexity and diversity of the University.

- Ability to think strategically and to develop a vision for the future of the University in and beyond the context of the University's Research and Enterprise Strategy.
- Incisive analytical skills and the ability to make logical, well-balanced and reasoned decisions.
- Ability and willingness to execute difficult decisions quickly and effectively, when needed.
- Excellent negotiating skills, flexibility and open-mindedness.
- Outstanding written and oral communication skills, representative of the University.
- Demonstrable commitment to the promotion of equality, diversity and inclusion.
- Willingness to travel both nationally and internationally on behalf of the University.
- Respect for all members of the University's staff and student body, and the ability to develop and maintain good working relationships with colleagues, students and external contacts.
- High level of proficiency in English, sufficient to undertake research, teaching and administrative activities utilising English Language materials and to communicate effectively with staff and students.

Criminal declaration

If you become an employee, you must inform your manager immediately, in writing, if you are the subject of any current or future police investigations/legal proceedings, which could result in a criminal offence, conviction, caution, bind-over or charges, or warnings.

Supporting university activities

As a University of Leicester citizen, you are encouraged to support key university activities such as clearing, graduation ceremonies, student registration and recruitment open days. We encourage all staff as citizens to work flexibly across the University if required. If supporting these activities is likely to affect your workload, please speak to your line manager in the first instance.

University values

Inclusive – We are diverse in our makeup and united in ambition. Our diversity is our strength and makes our community stronger.

Inspiring – We are passionate about inspiring individuals to succeed and realise their ambitions. We challenge our

community to think differently, to get involved, and to constantly embrace new ideas.

Impactful – As Citizens of Change we will generate new ideas which deliver impact and empower our community.

Equity and diversity

We believe that equity, diversity and inclusion is integral to a successful modern workplace. By developing and implementing policies and systems that challenge stereotypes across all aspects of our work, we have a culture that recognises and values the diverse contributions of our staff which benefits everyone. Our strong values of inclusivity and equality support our efforts to attract a diverse range of high quality staff and students, and identify our University as a progressive and innovative workplace that mainstreams equality, diversity and inclusion.

How to apply

Applications should consist of a full academic curriculum vitae detailing relevant qualifications and experience, full employment history and achievements. CVs should be accompanied by a covering letter describing briefly how candidates meet the criteria outlined in the person specification, why the appointment is of interest and what they believe they can bring to the role.

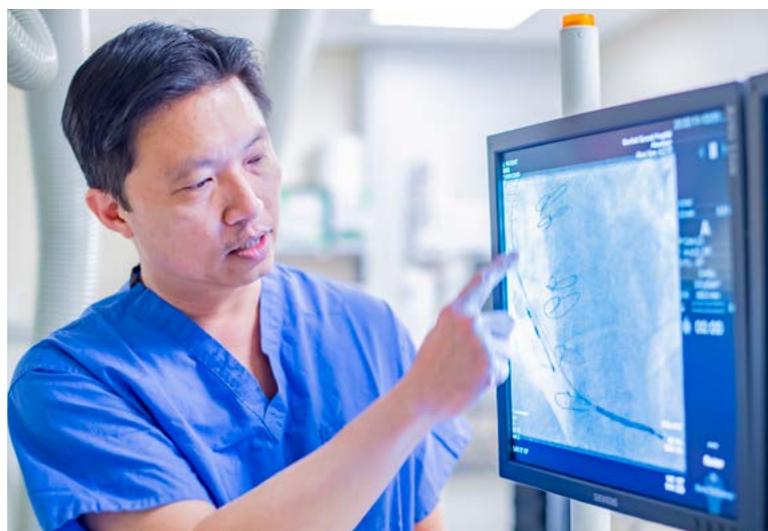
Applications can be made through our recruitment system Eploy. Please click on the below link to apply:

<https://jobs.le.ac.uk/vacancies/13166/pro-vice-chancellor-research-and-innovation.html>

The deadline for applications is midnight on 12 April 2026.

First stage interviews will be held remotely on 7 May 2026.

Final stage interviews will be held in person on 19 May 2026.





Living in Leicester

Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland are rich in culture, heritage, and leisure activities, from our vibrant multicultural city, to the beautiful market towns and rural villages.

Often described as the heart of rural England, the area features beautiful country villages, the National Forest, great rivers and castles and a cosmopolitan city centre, making it an exciting and diverse place to live and work.

Leicester is one of the UK's ten largest cities and represents the largest economy in the East Midlands region. It has a bustling and diverse atmosphere and recent regeneration (to the tune of £3 billion) has made this cosmopolitan city even more exciting. Leicester is home to the state-of-the-art Curve theatre, as well as large and multicultural festivals. It is famous for its diversity and offers an amazing chance to dive into many different cultural

celebrations. Leicester celebrates Diwali (the Festival of Light) with spectacular lights, stunning street parades and dazzling fireworks. This is attended by 35,000 people and is the largest celebration of the festival outside of India. The city also hosts an annual Pride Parade (Leicester Pride), a Caribbean Carnival and the largest comedy festival in the UK.

The University, working in close partnership with the city, has been the inspiration behind two of Leicester's most famous tourist attractions. The award-winning National Space Centre – the UK's largest attraction dedicated to space exploration – and the King Richard III Visitor Centre which retells the dramatic story of the University's discovery of England's most infamous King. Leicester is well-known as a sporting capital – hosting the country's best-supported rugby team the Leicester Tigers as well as Leicester City Football Club and Leicestershire County Cricket Club.

The city benefits from a large number of public parks including Abbey Park and also Victoria Park which is adjacent to the University. Leicester is steeped in history, dating back to the original Iron Age settlement which was to become an important Roman trading centre with a commanding position on one of Britain's



Leicester represents the largest economy in the East Midlands region.

most important routes – the Fosse Way. Leicester’s manufacturing industry reached its height in the 20th century, driven by world-renowned hosiery, textile, and footwear enterprises that shaped the city’s identity and powered its economic growth.

On Leicester’s doorstep is the National Forest, offering cycling, riding and walkways, adventure activities and some of the most impressive landscapes in the region, including Charnwood Forest and Swithland Reservoir. To the east is Rutland Water, one of the largest man-made reservoirs in Europe, which supports a wide range of water sports. Leicester and the surrounding region offer a wide choice of property to buy or rent. In the city itself, there is a diverse mix of housing and apartments. Both new and older properties, including substantial homes, can be found in leafy parts of Leicester within easy reach of the University. Alternatively, there is property available in the attractive villages and market towns in Leicestershire and Rutland such as Market Harborough and Oakham. House prices are markedly less than those in London.





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