



UNIVERSITY OF
LEICESTER

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Executive Director of International



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).

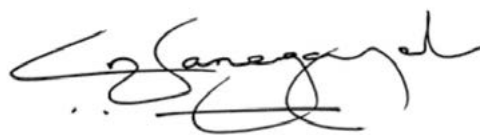
The REF2021 results published by Research England show Leicester moved up 23 places to rank 30th overall, one of the biggest climbs of any UK university. This is our best-ever performance in a research assessment exercise – a testament to the quality and impact of our academics' work and our vibrant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

We are seeking an exceptional candidate to join us as Executive Director of International and to deliver the University's strategic ambitions for internationalisation and global reputation.

Reporting directly to the President and Vice-Chancellor and as a member of the Executive Board, you will lead the University's international strategy, global engagement, international student recruitment and transnational education partnerships. You will oversee key international functions and partnerships, represent the University externally, and influence policy and practice at national and international levels.

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 Internationalisation Strategy, which positions Leicester as a globally connected institution. It ensures that our values – inclusive, inspiring, and impactful – are embedded across all areas of university activity. From championing interdisciplinary research to fostering international partnerships, the Office plays a pivotal role in amplifying Leicester's reputation and influence worldwide.

The Executive Director of International will work at the heart of this strategic environment, reporting directly into the President and Vice-Chancellor and Working alongside senior leaders, the Executive Director of International will influence decisions at the highest level, ensuring Leicester's international strategy is not only implemented

but championed across the institution in order to shape the University's global footprint and make a lasting impact on our global reputation and reach.

Connecting across the globe

We are proud to be a truly global community. One in every three of our students comes from outside the UK, bringing a rich diversity of perspectives and experiences to our campus.

Our students and staff represent over 100 countries worldwide, and we maintain a strong presence across eight key regions: South Asia and India, Canada, China, East and South East Asia, the Middle East and North Africa, Sub-Saharan Africa, and Pakistan. This global reach is central to who we are and how we connect with the world.

Addressing global healthcare

In 2023, The University of Leicester signed a Memorandum of Understanding with one of the world's largest integrated healthcare service providers, The Apollo Hospitals Group. The Memorandum was intended to strengthen existing links with India and sets out a

mutual desire to promote international cooperation and explore collaborative education and research programmes, particularly in the fields of healthcare management, healthcare and data science.

Since its launch, Our partnership with Apollo continues to grow, marked by the launch of the Centre for Digital Health and Precision Medicine (CDHPM). The Centre focuses on advancing care in cardiovascular health, acute and emergency medicine, and multi-morbidity. Other developments include:

- The new 2+1 BEng in Computer Science (with specialisations in AI, Data Science, or Software Engineering), began in September 2025, allowing students to study in India before transferring to Leicester. We are also launching two new health focussed Master's programmes developed in collaboration with Apollo: the MSc Mental Health Nursing and MSc Computational Health Data Science are both aimed at addressing global healthcare workforce needs.
- The new 2+2 Clinical Fellowship pathway will enable international medical graduates to gain UK medical registration through placements in Apollo Hospitals and the NHS, alongside distance MSc study.

Record Turing Scheme funding

We have received over £1.4 million in Turing Scheme funding – the largest-ever grant for global student mobility. The award supported more than 540 students in 2024/25, enabling overseas experiences from law in Hong Kong to space science in Italy. The initiative promotes global citizenship and inclusivity, offering transformative academic, research, and volunteering opportunities across more than 15 countries.

New routes for students

We launched a number of new international Pathways programmes in 2025, including a STEM International Foundation Year and three International Year One courses in Marketing, Business and Management, and Human Resource Management. These programmes offer international students' alternative routes into undergraduate study, with tailored academic and language support. Jointly delivered by the College of Business and CITE, the initiative reflects Leicester's commitment to global inclusion and student success in a supportive academic environment.

NCUK partnership

We have partnered with global pathway provider NCUK to offer new routes for international students. NCUK students from over 40 countries can now progress directly into undergraduate and postgraduate studies. This collaboration reflects our commitment to inclusive, research-inspired education and global engagement.

Strengthening ties with Shanghai

We have signed a new agreement with Shanghai Polytechnic University (SSPU), deepening collaboration in teaching, research, and academic exchange. The agreement includes progression routes for SSPU students into Leicester's MA in Translation programmes. The partnership builds on Leicester's longstanding relationship with Chongqing.

Chongqing graduates make history

The University of Leicester and Chongqing Medical University celebrated the graduation of their first dual honours cohort in Clinical Sciences and Clinical Medicine in June. Launched in 2019, the joint programme offers Chinese students the opportunity to study in both countries and earn degrees from each university and acts as a bridge between nations with global impact.

International Partnership with Thailand

In August 2025, The University of Leicester marked its commitment to Thailand and Vietnam through a series of education partnership agreements with Thai's top ranked universities, including Chulalongkorn University, Mahidol University, Bangkok University, Khon Kaen University and Assumption University, as well leading cultural destination the National Science Museum. These partnerships will pave the way for Thai students to study in Leicester, open the door to research collaborations and promote bilateral knowledge exchange.



The role

Job title:

Executive Director of International

Salary:

Competitive

Department:

President and Vice-Chancellors Office

Hours/Contract:

Full time, permanent

Reference:

13002

Role purpose

As a member of the Executive Board, and reporting directly to the President and Vice-Chancellor, the Executive Director of International will lead the University's international strategy, driving global engagement, partnerships, and reputation. This senior leadership role is responsible for shaping and delivering strategic plans that enhance the University's international profile, increase and diversify international student recruitment, grow transnational education, and strengthen global collaborations. The postholder will oversee key international functions and partnerships, and will represent the University externally, influencing policy and practice at national and international levels.

As a member of the Executive Board, you will also shape the University's future strategic direction and drive its implementation.

Main duties and responsibilities

Strategic leadership

- Play an active role in the Executive Board, assisting in achieving the University's Strategic Plan and goals, contributing to University planning and to the formulation of policies and procedures and taking a lead on specific issues.
- Provide strategic leadership and expertise across the University, working with Heads of College, International Deans and Professional Services Directors.

- Develop and lead the implementation of international strategies aligned with the University's overarching strategic plan.
- Provide leadership to the International Deans, through dotted-line oversight for international academic priorities.
- Lead major international projects and initiatives with significant strategic impact and resource investment.
- Build institutional resilience and mitigate any risks associated with international student recruitment and global partnerships.
- Work with the Pro Vice-Chancellor Education and Pro Vice-Chancellor Research and Enterprise to develop education and research partnerships, deliver the University's international strategy and extend our reach.
- Lead the development of Distance Learning partnerships in order to drive growth in new and emerging markets.
- Chair the University's Internationalisation Board, ensuring alignment of international activities with institutional priorities.

Portfolio oversight

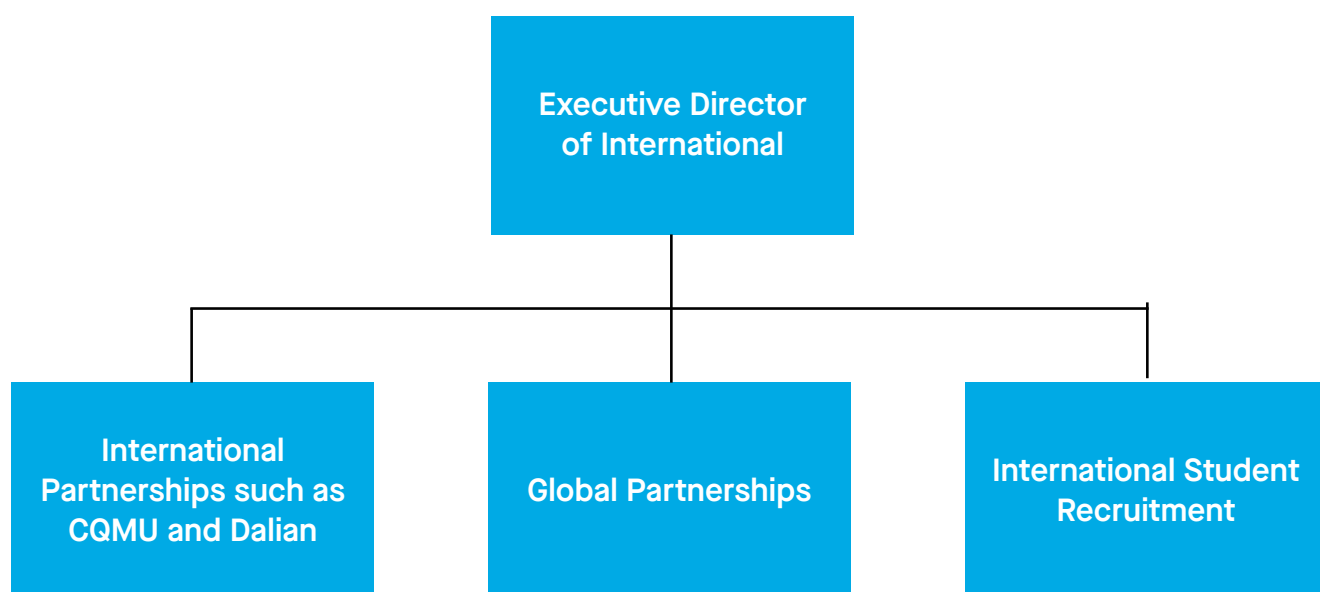
- Provide strategic leadership and oversight of:
 - Global Partnerships
 - International Student Recruitment
 - International teaching and research partnerships including those with CQMU, Dalian, Apollo and other transnational education and research partners.

International engagement

- Provide leadership and direction on the University's global ranking to deliver clear and sustainable improvements to support our international ambition.
- Represent the University in international forums, sector groups, and negotiations.
- Build and maintain strategic relationships with overseas institutions, governments, and agencies.
- Build and embed a strong international focus and community across all of the University's locations both nationally and internationally.
- Promote the University's international reputation and influence globally.
- Promote the University values of high standards of professionalism in teaching and research focusing on the needs of students and other stakeholders, collegiality, interdisciplinary, integrity and community service.

Operational oversight

- Lead a combined internationally focused team that will work collaboratively to drive student recruitment growth through multiple channels will be created. This team will combine the International Recruitment team in the Future Students Office with the Global Partnerships Division to streamline processes and drive efficiencies across international activities through shared resources and combined knowledge and expertise. The Director will also work with academic and professional services colleagues across the University using leadership and influencing skills to drive initiatives and deliver objectives.



- Ensure services and operations within the international portfolio are shaped to meet current and future customer needs.
- Oversee compliance with quality assurance, financial (tax), legal, and regulatory frameworks across international activities.

Financial and resource management

- Lead financial planning for international operations, ensuring effective budget control, value for money and tax efficiency.
- Explore and implement efficiency improvements across international services using the University's cost per acquisition model.

People management

- Lead and manage senior staff across international functions (International Recruitment Team in the Future Students Office and the Global Partnerships Division), developing talent and raising performance. Responsibility for staff in the Sanctuary Unit and Study Abroad Teams.
- Foster a culture of continuous improvement, innovation, and excellence.
- Lead and influence key stakeholder across the University to ensure international activities are prioritised, progress is made and success is celebrated.

Qualifications, knowledge and experience

Essential

*Criteria to be used in shortlisting candidates for interview.

- Significant relevant senior experience or in-depth experience in a specialist international field – with either Academic or Professional Services career experience.*
- Proven track record of strategic leadership in international higher education.*
- Experience of managing substantial budgets and resources.*
- Demonstrable understanding of global higher education trends, policy, regulation and market knowledge.

Desirable

- Demonstrable understanding of the University's strategic direction and international ambitions.
- Demonstrable experience of developing innovative solutions for strategic change.

Skills, abilities and competencies

Essential

*Criteria to be used in shortlisting candidates for interview.

- Strong interpersonal skills including negotiation, influencing, and networking at national and international levels.*
- Highly developed knowledge of systems and services across functions and their global relevance.
- Ability to generate new ideas and approaches and lead innovation.
- Excellent planning and organisational skills with a clear link to strategic objectives.
- Significant experience of managing complex projects over seas and the resilience to overcome any potential barriers and challenges.*

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/13002/executive-director-of-international.html>

The deadline for applications is midnight on **22 February 2026**.

First stage interviews will be held remotely on **2 March 2026** and final interviews will be held in person on **20 March 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.

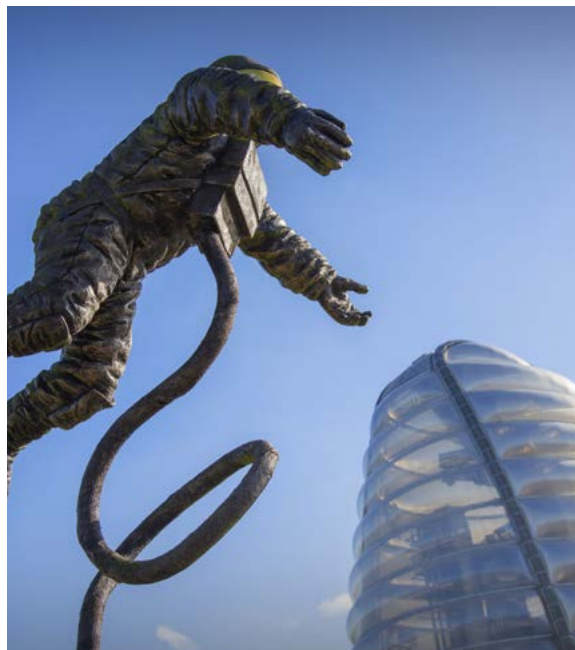
The city benefits from a large number of public parks including Abbey Park and also Victoria Park which is adjacent to the University. Leicester is steeped in history, dating back to the original Iron Age settlement which was to become an important Roman trading centre with a commanding position on one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