



UNIVERSITY OF  
LEICESTER

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# Pro Vice-Chancellor and Head of the College of Life Sciences





# 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 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 and Head of the College of Life Sciences. The College comprises four schools: Biological and Biomedical Sciences, Healthcare, Medical Sciences (including Leicester Medical School) and Psychology and Vision Sciences.

This is a pivotal leadership role, reporting directly to the Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor and serving as a member of the Executive Board. You will shape and deliver an ambitious strategy over the next five years, driving excellence in research-inspired education and world-leading research, while ensuring financial sustainability and adapting to sector priorities.

The College of Life Sciences is home to internationally renowned researchers and global collaborations, creating an exciting environment for innovation and impact. You will lead strategic business development, foster partnerships with national and international stakeholders across education, research, government and industry and inspire a culture of excellence and innovation.

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 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





# College of Life Sciences

The College comprises four integrated teaching and research Schools:

- **Biological and Biomedical Sciences**
- **Healthcare**
- **Medical Sciences** (including the Medical School)
- **Psychology and Vision Sciences**

With over 1,300 staff and 4,000 students, we are a vibrant academic community working across laboratory, clinical, health and social science settings. The College plays a pivotal role in the University's strategic partnerships with NHS trusts and international collaborators.

## Global impact and partnerships

We drive world-changing research and promote global citizenship through strong international collaborations, including:

- **China** – Chongqing Medical University
- **India** – Apollo Healthcare and The Apollo University
- **Thailand** – Chulalongkorn and Mahidol Universities

Our commitment to global engagement is also reflected in initiatives such as the Displaced Students Programme, supporting those affected by conflict and displacement.

## Research excellence

Our researchers, both within the College and in NHS clinical settings, have earned international recognition. This was highlighted in the **Research Excellence Framework (REF) 2021**, where we ranked:

- **2nd** in Clinical Medicine (Unit of Assessment 1)
- **2nd** in Sports and Exercise Science (Unit of Assessment 24)

We also achieved **1st place in Medicine for student positivity in the National Student Survey (2024 and 2025)**.

## Teaching and learning

We offer a wide range of undergraduate and postgraduate programmes. Our Centre of Excellence in Teaching and Learning, supported by £4.85 million in government funding, ensures outstanding facilities, innovative teaching and exceptional resources – giving students the best possible experience.

## Our research

Our research spans from fundamental biological sciences to clinical specialties and health sciences. Strong partnerships with the NHS and industry allow us to translate discoveries into solutions for pressing global health challenges. With continued investment in infrastructure and a multidisciplinary approach, we deliver research that makes a real difference nationally and internationally.

## Equity, diversity and inclusion

We are committed to fostering a positive, inclusive and collaborative environment. The College proudly holds a Silver Athena Swan Award, recognising our sustained progress toward gender equality and cultural change across all Schools.

## NIHR Leicester Biomedical Research Centre (BRC)

A £26.1 million award from the National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR) supports pioneering medical research through the Leicester BRC – a collaboration between NHS organisations and universities which brings together academics and clinicians to translate scientific discoveries into potential new treatments, diagnostics and technologies.

Our six research themes include:

- Cardiovascular
- Respiratory and infection

- Lifestyle (including diabetes)
- Cancer prevention
- Environment and long-term conditions
- Health inequality

## International collaborations

- **India:** In April 2024, we launched a transformative partnership with **The Apollo University**, including the Centre for Digital Health and Precision Medicine (opened January 2025).
- **China:** Our Joint Education Programme with **Chongqing Medical University** offers a dual-award degree, preparing graduates as registered medical practitioners in China with strong bilingual skills.

## Institute for Precision Health

A joint venture with University Hospitals of Leicester, this institute positions Leicester as a global leader in precision health – advancing diagnostics, therapies and patient care. With £40 million in annual health-related research funding, we are driving innovation across priority areas.

## Institute of Structural and Chemical Biology

Our researchers explore the molecular machinery of life, using structural biology and chemistry to develop tools and therapeutics that manipulate macromolecular function – critical for drug development and biomedical research.







# The role

**Job title:**  
**Pro Vice-Chancellor and Head of the College of Life Sciences**

**Grade:**  
**10**

**Salary:**  
**Competitive**

**Department:**  
**College of Life Sciences**

**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, you will be offered a professorial position on a permanent basis.**

**Reference:**  
**12762**

## Role purpose

As Pro Vice-Chancellor and Head of College you will play a key role on the University's Executive Board to shape the University's future strategic direction and driving its implementation. You will be an academic leader accountable for the academic and financial management of the College.

You will lead on the development and implementation of College level strategies and operational management in line with the University's strategy, aims and objectives. You will be responsible for excellence in research, teaching, student experience, and enterprise, strengthening inter School collaboration, through effective leadership, annual planning and resource management. You will represent the College to a range of partners on a local, regional and national level.

Working with Heads of Schools and the Dean of Medicine, you will provide outstanding leadership and seek to identify creative and innovative ways of working, implementing service improvements to services and staff.

## Main duties and responsibilities

### 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 and implementation at college level.

- Provide academic and strategic leadership for the College proactively promoting the interests of the college both internally and externally.
- Provide outstanding leadership in people management, defining and setting standards of excellence in research and teaching.

### Strategic planning and operational management

- Manage financial, staffing and other resources to ensure achievement of the University's strategy and compliance with financial and other controls.
- Set strategic and operational objectives for the college, with respect to teaching, research and enterprise.
- With the Heads of Schools, and with and Deans of Education, Medicine, and Research and Enterprise, and Heads of Research Institutes and Research Centres, develop, implement and regularly review the College Plan, setting performance targets consistent with the University's strategic direction.
- Explore opportunities to further expand the College's portfolio in relation to teaching and learning, research and enterprise.

### People and resource management

- Manage and lead the Heads of Schools and College Deans of Education, Medicine, and Research and Enterprise to provide outstanding leadership, playing an active role in recruitment, management and development of people in conjunction with Human Resources and relevant policies and procedures.
- Work with the Heads of Schools and College Deans of Education, Medicine, and Research and Enterprise to achieve agreed income and other targets including proactively increasing enterprise and commercial opportunities.
- Actively promote cross-institutional structures and systems (whether related to research/academic programmes/portfolio matters or administration).

### Research and teaching

- Develop and implement coherent strategies to deliver and set high standards of excellence in research and teaching, ensuring operational frameworks exist to ensure delivery of the objectives.
- Ensure an effective strategy is implemented with regards to REF, KEEF and TEF, ensuring the attraction of research funding and effective bid and funding management.

### External representation

- 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.
- Promote the well-being of staff and students in the College, fostering a culture of respect in all aspects of operation and leading.
- Engaging with UHL and other health partners in the region.
- Promote the College as a place of international repute in which to study, research and work and encourage international collaboration and exchange.
- Work with the Dean of Medicine to ensure that the University is appropriately represented and engages with the General Medical Council, the Medical Schools Council and our key partner NHS Trusts; the latter may include as a University-nominated Non-Executive Director though this position is subject to the normal NHS appointment procedures.

## Qualifications, knowledge and experience

### Essential

#### \*Criteria to be used in shortlisting candidates for interview

- Significant personal research profile that aligns with one of the key strategic research priorities for the College.\*
- A national/international reputation for excellence in academic leadership.\*
- Successful record of leadership, strategic development and management gained within the academic sector.\*
- Recent demonstrable experience of leading a large complex unit e.g School, Department, Faculty.
- Ability to think strategically, develop vision for the future of the University/College with demonstrable experience of leadership and turning plans into action.
- The capacity to manage a substantial financial resource, with proven experience in the delivery of complex budgetary processes, ideally involving external partners.\*
- Experience of successfully managing staff, with the ability to combine both decisiveness and a consensual approach to management where necessary.\*



- A demonstrable track record of working with academic and NHS partners.\*
- A demonstrable track record of working successfully with colleagues from other health professions.\*
- Extensive knowledge of developments in the Higher Education arena, both nationally and internationally, and a high regard for research, scholarship, teaching and learning.

**Desirable**

- Fellowship of the Academy of Medical Sciences, or a similar standing.\*
- Knowledge and experience of distance learning will be an advantage.

**Skills, abilities and competencies**

**Essential**

- The capacity to maintain and encourage academic excellence and to understand the academic community.
- The ability to relate to and gain the confidence of colleagues from a breadth of academic disciplines, in particular those other academic areas in the College structure.
- Financial and commercial acuity, and the ability to formulate robust business plans to support the College’s strategic priorities.
- The capacity to articulate a genuinely creative and forward-thinking vision of the future of the College, taking into account developments in the competitive landscape as well as the particular characteristics of the current Leicester experience.
- The ability to secure widespread engagement in and commitment to such a vision, and to motivate colleagues around its delivery.
- The ability to respond to changes in the external political, policy and educational environments such that the College retains its place at the forefront of UK biomedical education and develops its reputation internationally.
- A commitment to the development of the College’s culture and systems in such a way as to facilitate the recruitment and retention of outstanding colleagues.
- Evidence of good negotiating and influencing skills.
- The ability to undertake a substantial ambassadorial role and to establish effective relationships with

government, the NHS, funding bodies, research councils and other stakeholder organisations in the UK and internationally.

- Outstanding communication skills, natural authority and a commitment to excellence in all areas.

**Professional registration**

**(Medically qualified candidates only)**

You must be registered with the GMC and abide by the codes of professional practice. Where the appointee undertakes clinical duties within the role, they are required to hold a licence to practice, have appropriate cover from a medical defence organisation, abide by the University regulations governing clinical academics undertaking clinical practice and hold an honorary clinical contract with the NHS organisation where clinical duties are undertaken.

**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.

**NHS research governance**

Where it is determined that the duties of this post for the purposes of research involve work with the NHS, it is necessary to ensure that the performance of the duties attached to the post are covered by NHS research governance arrangements and the appointee must comply with all such arrangements, which may include occupational health clearance and DBS clearance.

**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

**Freedom of speech**

The University is committed to upholding freedom of speech and academic freedom within the law throughout our recruitment processes. We ensure that all candidates are considered based on merit and suitability for the role, without regard to their lawful viewpoints or the expression of challenging or controversial ideas. Our recruitment policies and practices are designed to protect applicants from discrimination or adverse treatment on the basis of their opinions, and to foster an environment where open debate and diverse perspectives are valued as essential to our academic mission.

**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/12762/pro-vice-chancellor-and-head-of-college-of-life-sciences.html>

The deadline for applications is midnight on **14 January 2026**.

We anticipate that first stage interviews will be held on Friday 13 February 2026 and final stage interviews will be held on Friday 27 February 2026.

A presentation group with members of the College will take place before the interviews.





# 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

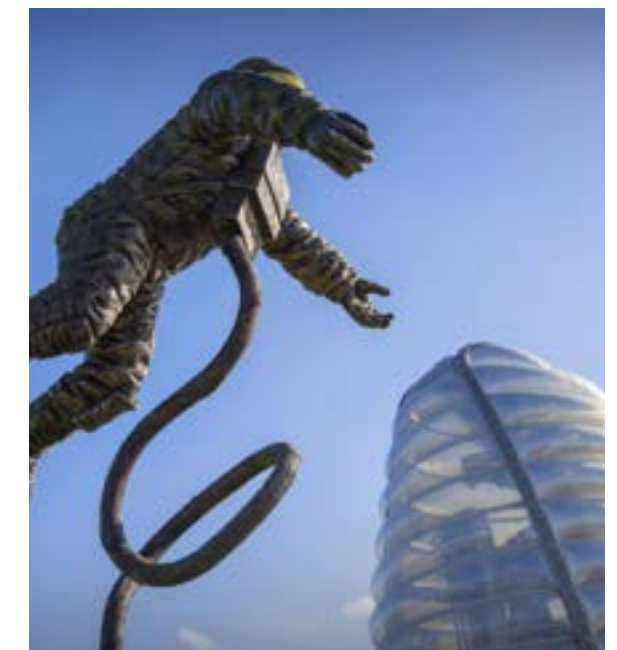


most important routes – the Fosse Way. Leicester's manufacturing industry reached its height in the 20th century, driven by world-renowned hosiery, textile, and footwear enterprises that shaped the city's identity and powered its economic growth.

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.



Leicester represents the largest economy in the East Midlands region.







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