



# University of Pittsburgh

*Office of the Provost and Senior Vice Chancellor*

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**Patricia E. Beeson**  
Provost  
Senior Vice Chancellor

May 4, 2017

Dear Colleagues:

Together with Chancellor Gallagher, I am pleased to announce that Dr. Paul R. Cohen has accepted my offer to become the founding Dean of the School of Computing and Information beginning August 1, 2017. As a visionary leader and founding dean, we will be looking to Dr. Cohen to lead the development of a dynamic, multidisciplinary environment that supports discovery, innovation, and entrepreneurship driven by data and technology while also leading our efforts in the education of our students across campus in this critical area.

Dr. Cohen currently is a professor at the University of Arizona, and a Program Manager at the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA). His history of leadership in academia and government positions him well to foster the development of Pitt's newest school and to partner with other leaders across the university. Dr. Cohen earned his PhD in Computer Science and Psychology from Stanford University, and was a faculty member at the University of Massachusetts before joining the faculty at the University of Southern California, where he also served as the Director of the Center for Unexpected Events and as deputy director of USC's Information Sciences Institute. Prior to his current appointment at DARPA, he served as founding Director of the School of Information: Science, Technology and Arts at the University of Arizona, following service as head of Computer Science.

Dr. Cohen's scholarship and expertise are well suited to our ambitions for the new School. Throughout his career, Dr. Cohen has demonstrated his passion for expanding the traditional domains of computer and information science from narrow disciplines into unifying agents of inquiry that result in research of impact. He has an unusual depth of vision for the future of research and education in Computer and Information Sciences. This is evidenced by the far-reaching programs he has overseen at DARPA, including programs addressing areas such as communication between humans and machines, cancer biology, extracting knowledge from text, and global and national security. His vision is also evident in his desire to educate students in ways that provide both technical expertise and an appreciation for the context and challenges of the problems being solved.

Dr. Cohen is an energetic scholar with an unparalleled ability to bring together researchers from across disciplines to engage with challenging and important problems, and with a strong record of supporting and advancing academic excellence. An expert in Artificial Intelligence (AI), especially in validation of AI systems, his personal research has focused on using language, communication, and AI methods to understand complex interconnected systems. He is an elected Fellow of the Association for the Advancement of Artificial Intelligence.

Under Dr. Cohen's leadership, I am confident that the School of Computing and Information will become a center of excellence for engaging students and faculty across the university in the ever-expanding capacities of computing and information to accelerate knowledge discovery and creativity in a wide range of domains. His broad and inclusive vision reflects our aspirations for the School and the University.

Please join me in welcoming Dr. Cohen to the Pitt community as the founding Dean of the School of Computing and Information. I know that his enthusiasm and expertise will advance the School and will help the University of Pittsburgh continue to make an impact on our community and our world.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Patricia E. Beeson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Patricia E. Beeson