

Position and Candidate Specification



University of Pittsburgh

Dean, School of Computing and Information (SCI)

PREPARED BY:

Anastasia Crosswhite

Mary Gorman

Shailaja Panjwani

Michael Steck

November 2021

THE UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH AND THE CITY OF PITTSBURGH

Since 1787, the University of Pittsburgh (Pitt) has been a visionary institution that has never stopped pushing the edge of what is possible. From research achievements to the quality of our academic programs, Pitt ranks among the best in higher education. Faculty members have made notable advances in the humanities and sciences, earning such prestigious honors as the National Medal of Science, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation “genius grant,” the Lasker-DeBakey Clinical Medical Research Award, and election to the National Academy of Sciences and the National Academy of Medicine. The University ranks among the top dozen institutions in overall federal research and development funding, and in the top five in funded projects from the National Institutes of Health.

As one of the largest and oldest institutions of higher education in Pennsylvania, the University is a state-related public institution and a member of the Association of American Universities. With a total enrollment of more than 30,000 students on the Pittsburgh campus, Pitt is internationally respected as a center for learning and research that is consistently ranked by the Wall Street Journal/Times Higher Education College Rankings as the top public university in the Northeast. Students come to Pitt from all 50 states, three territories, the District of Columbia, and more than 100 countries. Pitt’s inclusive community is an essential component of its excellence, and here, progress is always in progress.

The 132-acre Pittsburgh campus, in the vibrant and beautiful Oakland neighborhood, is co-located with the University’s health sciences schools and the highly ranked University of Pittsburgh Medical Center. Pitt has served as an integral partner and key player in driving the growth of the education and health services super sector in the Pittsburgh metropolitan region.

The University views the city as an extension of its campus, and Pittsburgh is no ordinary college town. The city is transforming from an industrial capital to a center of education, research, and innovation. Pitt [actively engages](#) with the surrounding community through its [Community Engagement Centers](#), community-driven partnerships, and volunteer service. The University was recently awarded the Carnegie Foundation’s Classification for Community Engagement in recognition of its institutional commitment to community engagement.

The city of Pittsburgh hosts a high concentration of influential nonprofits and, as an international center of emerging information technology, is home to companies such as Duolingo, one of Google’s national offices, and a Facebook Reality Lab. Autonomous vehicles have navigated the city’s streets since 2016, and Argo AI, Aurora (which acquired Uber ATG), Aptiv, and Denso all call Pittsburgh home. The city also has a long history in banking and manufacturing and is becoming a leader in advanced manufacturing technologies and nanotechnology. LinkedIn has named Pittsburgh a top city to launch a career, and the city’s reinvention since its days as a smoky steel town has received national acclaim. With an extensive network of urban parks, as well as world-class arts and cultural institutions, Pittsburgh feels like a big small town, with all the advantages of a large city, Midwestern friendliness, and East Coast vibrancy.

Beyond the Pittsburgh campus, the University has four regional campuses in Bradford, Greensburg, Johnstown, and Titusville, which collectively offer over 490 degree and certificate programs. More than 13,500 faculty, research associates, and staff members are employed on the Pittsburgh campus, and nearly 700 more work at the University's four regional campuses. Pitt offers generous [benefits](#) and values [work-life balance](#).

Pitt aims to forge new paths to mold brighter futures and embrace change as fuel for something greater. Alumni have won Nobel and Pulitzer Prizes, led corporations and universities, served in government and the military, pioneered in areas such as MRI and television, succeeded in Hollywood and The New York Times best sellers list, won Super Bowls and NBA championships, and been inducted into Halls of Fame. Through excellence in teaching, research, and service, the University of Pittsburgh is committed to making lives better and to the relentless pursuit of change, for good.

THE SCHOOL OF COMPUTING AND INFORMATION

The School of Computing and Information (SCI) builds on the results of more than a [century of progress](#). The community brings together scholars and learners from a broad range of disciplines who are united by a shared commitment to developing insights and solutions related to all human pursuits.

The school can trace its roots to 1901, and the founding of the Training School for Children's Librarians within the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh, the country's only program with a sole focus on children. In the early 1960s, the library school was transferred to the School of Information Sciences at the University of Pittsburgh – one of the earliest iSchools in the country – and Pitt remains a top-ranked program for Library Sciences.

The University's Department of Computer Science was established in 1966 to complement emerging technological paths of study, and both computer science and information sciences expanded over the next few decades. The late 1980s saw the establishment of the Intelligent Systems Program at Pitt.

In 2017, the School of Information Sciences, the Department of Computer Science, and the Intelligent Systems Program came together to form the School of Computing and Information – the first new school at Pitt in over two decades. SCI now has 64 full-time faculty – 23 hired in the last four years with four more slated to join in 2022 – as well as 77 part-time faculty. There are 45 full-time staff members, and in Fall 2021, 1,515 students were enrolled in SCI. The school includes the Departments of Computer Science, Informatics & Networked Systems, and Information Culture & Data Stewardship, as well as the Computational Modeling & Simulation Program and the Intelligent Systems Program.

Since its founding, SCI has become a four-year admitting undergraduate school, meaning undergraduate students can immediately dive into their computing and information coursework. The school offers [six undergraduate majors](#) and accelerated BS+MS programs in Computer Science and Information Science. The school recently launched new undergraduate majors in Data Science, Computational Social Science, and Digital Narrative and Interactive Design. Through [five master's programs](#), [six doctoral programs](#), and [six graduate certificates](#), graduate and doctoral students develop critical knowledge and conduct well-regarded research in both constant and emerging areas, such as the internet of things, health care, and artificial intelligence. Degree-seeking undergraduate and graduate students can engage in experiential learning through internships, cooperative education opportunities, and field and research experiences. In addition, SCI has launched the Professional Graduate Program Initiative to address the need and demand for continued skills and credentials. The initiative expands on the offerings of the existing Professional Institute, which helps working professionals gain critical skills in cybersecurity.

Despite its relative youth, SCI has taken full advantage of the rich collaborative environment at Pitt to establish fruitful partnerships including with the Departments of Biological Sciences, English, Mathematics, Political Science, and Statistics in the Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences, the Department of Biomedical Informatics in the School of Medicine, and the Pittsburgh Supercomputing Center. SCI students, faculty, and staff are also involved in Pitt's Community Engagement Centers in [Homewood](#) and the [Hill District](#) by providing STEAM programming for students in first through twelfth grades and driving computing skill-building through game design workshops, robotics, and computational thinking.

Faculty members are actively engaged in visionary research that transforms lives, and [current work](#) covers topics spanning Artificial Intelligence to Sustainable Urban Growth. Numerous [labs, centers, and institutes](#) are housed within the school and consider areas ranging from geoinformatics to education and language technology. Faculty have active research portfolios and their work is funded primarily by federal grants from the National Science Foundation, DARPA, the National Institutes of Health, the U.S. Geological Survey, the U.S. Airforce, and Institute of Museums and Library Sciences, as well as by foundations including the Ford and Mellon Foundations. In addition, building on the work of the Provost's [Committee on Data Science](#), the 2021-2022 academic year is the [Year of Data and Society](#) at Pitt.

SCI is committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion, and has both a diversity, equity, and inclusion [committee](#) and recently named the school's first [Associate Dean](#) for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. The school also supports underrepresented undergraduate students through [PittInclusion](#), a paid undergraduate research program in collaboration with the Google Explore-CSR program. The Diversity Librarian Fellowship and Residency Program, in partnership with the University Library System, provides hands-on experience in a large academic library system to students from underrepresented or marginalized communities pursuing the Master of Library and Information Science degree. SCI also supports women in computing and information through programming such as She Innovates (Pitt's women's hackathon), She Creates (focused on women and entrepreneurship), and summer camps for female middle school students and underrepresented high school students.

While the school has made significant progress in the short time since its founding, the community is excited to continue its development and looks to the next Dean to drive collaboration, innovation, diversity, and growth.

As the school's executive leader and reporting to the Provost, the Dean will develop and execute a strategic plan for SCI that leverages its unique position within the University of Pittsburgh to create innovative programs, partnerships, and distinctive opportunities for both students and faculty. The Dean will be responsible for strengthening existing departments and programs and further developing the capacity of SCI, including facilitating broader collaboration and synergies across the University and beyond. Leading with a distinctly entrepreneurial perspective, the Dean will combine academic thought leadership with managerial acumen, be adept at facilitating partnerships and collaborations, and serve as a trusted member of the Provost's leadership team.

OPPORTUNITIES AND EXPECTATIONS

The next Dean of SCI will fully leverage the school's existing areas of strength and interdisciplinary vision to:

- Effectively and broadly communicate a compelling vision for the future of SCI, pursuing internal and external funding opportunities to secure resources for the school as it continues to grow.
- Lead the continued development of a collaborative community and culture across the wide variety of disciplines that comprise SCI.
- Design and implement innovative programs and degree offerings, including professional master's degrees and additional relevant undergraduate programs, to attract a broad range of prospective students.
- Emphasize SCI's collaborative spirit across schools and academic units within the University, offering students and faculty opportunities to pursue distinct and innovative degrees and research opportunities.
- Position SCI as the University's anchor for computing, data science, and data management, and utilize the strength of the existing research computing infrastructure and human capital to establish SCI as a locus for interdisciplinary pursuits.
- Promote SCI's engagement with the city of Pittsburgh and the surrounding region, tapping alumni networks and the start-up community to create new learning, research, and collaboration opportunities for students and faculty.

The School of Computing and Information seeks a strategic, visionary, and transformational leader who understands the rapidly changing landscape of higher education and can position SCI as an innovative school that is agile enough to quickly adapt to new realities while maintaining strength in areas of historic excellence and relevance. The Dean will lead with an inclusive approach, engaging faculty, students, staff, and alumni to move the school forward while also operating with a distinctly entrepreneurial perspective, exploring new opportunities to increase SCI's reach, impact, and national and international reputation.

IDEAL EXPERIENCE

The Dean must be a respected leader with a track record of strong scholarship, an energetic and conscientious administrator broadly familiar with issues in higher education, a strong advocate for excellence in teaching and research, and an unwavering champion for diversity, equity, and inclusion. In addition, candidates must have achievement in research and scholarship that meet the requirements for obtaining tenure at the full professor level within SCI, including a terminal degree in Computer Science, Information Science, or a related field. While a range of academic backgrounds will be considered, ideal candidates will have demonstrated experience and success in the following areas:

- Serving in an academic leadership position, exercising the requisite administrative, financial, and organizational skills to work effectively and collegially with members of the faculty, staff, and university leadership to advance the academic enterprise.
- Recruiting and retaining diverse and distinguished scholars and teachers from a variety of disciplinary backgrounds.
- Creating and implementing high-quality academic programs and innovative credentials, effectively engaging with the university community.
- Developing financial support for a school or academic unit, leveraging both internal resources and external funding and fundraising opportunities.
- Establishing and enhancing ties with other schools, institutions, and industry partners.
- Leading research, teaching, and service missions, with enthusiasm and support for the engaged learning experiences of undergraduate, graduate, and professional students.
- Building diverse and inclusive teams, with a demonstrated commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion at all levels.

CRITICAL LEADERSHIP CAPABILITIES

Strategic Thinking and Visionary Leadership

In a school dedicated to bringing together learners from multiple disciplines within an environment of innovation, the next Dean will work to evolve the institutional vision by:

- Developing partnerships within the school and across disciplines and nurturing a culture that supports innovation, creativity, and entrepreneurial pursuits.

- Supporting existing departments and programs while aggressively seeking opportunities for increased growth and impact, utilizing existing resources, gathering new sources of support, and establishing collaborative partnerships across the University of Pittsburgh and beyond.
- Collaborating with faculty, staff, and students to translate vision and strategies into clear, actionable objectives and plans.
- Aligning the school's efforts to the University's strategic priorities and developing a shared understanding of how every member can contribute to the school's progress.

Collaborating and Influencing

To further shape the vision for SCI and to support the school's continued growth, the Dean must enthusiastically engage with supporters and potential partners of the school while also thoughtfully drawing on the resources and talents of internal partners by:

- Developing and effectively communicating a powerful narrative about SCI's ambitions, progress, opportunities, and goals.
- Leading the continued development of an open and collaborative culture within the school, emphasizing connections and interactions across the various departments and programs that comprise SCI.
- Engaging with other University leaders and faculty members to enhance SCI's programs and offerings, leveraging the school's distinctive position within the University to support interdisciplinary educational and research opportunities.
- Taking a central role in external relations to enhance fundraising aspirations, outreach efforts, and tangible financial results in support of SCI's development efforts.
- Seeking opportunities to partner with other schools, universities, and innovative companies, within the city of Pittsburgh and beyond.

Leading People

To strengthen SCI's ability to serve and support its constituents, the Dean must actively engage the broad community by:

- Listening to faculty, staff, and students to understand what drives them to excellence.
- Articulating a compelling vision for SCI that will inspire excellence and galvanize support from key stakeholders.
- Supporting a community and culture that encourages innovation, rewards thoughtful risk-taking, and empowers faculty, students, and staff.
- Demonstrating an open, accessible, and visible leadership and communication style.
- Reinforcing SCI's commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion, designing and implementing efforts to leverage and increase the diversity of students, faculty, and staff, and fostering a community that honors and includes all individuals.

THE SEARCH PROCESS

The University of Pittsburgh SCI Dean search committee is eager to receive input that will help it build a diverse pool of talented individuals. To that end, the search committee welcomes comments, inquiries, nominations, and applications, which may be submitted via email with supporting materials to:

PittSCIDean@SpencerStuart.com. Applications should include a cover letter addressing the experience and capabilities above, as well as a CV or resume. Applications received by January 20, 2022, will receive full consideration, though applications may be accepted for the duration of the search process.

The University of Pittsburgh is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer and values equality of opportunity, human dignity and diversity. EOE, including disability/vets.