



University  
of Windsor

# Campus Consultation

regarding the role of the  
Vice-President Research and Innovation

conducted November 2021 – February 2022

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## ABOUT THE CONSULTATION



In the fall and winter of 2021/2022, the University of Windsor engaged faculty, staff, and students in a campus consultation regarding the role of the Vice-President, Research and Innovation (VPRI), seeking input on the future directions and priorities of that office.

Led by Professor Myra Tawfik from the Faculty of Law and Dr. Rick Caron from the Department of Mathematics and Statistics and assisted by Mathematics and Statistics graduate secretary Kate Hargreaves, the consultation sought to provide opportunities for all voices across campus to provide their perspectives on the role of the VPRI going forward.

The consultation process involved one-on-one interviews, conducted virtually via Microsoft Teams, with the Deans of each Faculty, the President of the Windsor University Faculty Association (WUFA), the incumbent VPRI, the Executive Assistant to the VPRI, the Executive Director of the Office of Research and Innovation Services (ORIS), and the Academic Chair for the World Health Innovation Network. Group discussions were held with the Associate Deans responsible for research in each faculty as well as with ORIS staff ([see Appendix A](#) for a list of interviews and group discussions conducted). Feedback from these interviews and discussions was de-attributed and compiled to highlight common themes in the document that follows.

An online survey was made available following these interviews for campus community members to express their views anonymously through a series of open-ended questions. The UWindsor Research Ethics Board (REB) was consulted and determined that this survey was exempt from REB review. The survey, which ran from January 13 through January 21, 2022, was promoted in the UWindsor *Daily News* and by the University of Windsor Students Alliance (UWSA), Organization of Part-Time University Students (OPUS), and Graduate Student Society (GSS) via their social media channels (see Appendix C). It was also disseminated via email to all faculty, sessional instructors, and post-doctoral fellows. 67 individuals from eight faculties responded to the survey, including faculty, staff, and students.

This report summarizes the results of this consultation and aims to provide insight to assist with the appointment process for the next VPRI.

## KEY THEMES: INTERVIEWS

The consultation team conducted one-on-one and group interviews online via Microsoft Teams during December 2021 and January 2022 ([see Appendix A](#) for a list of interviewees).

Interviewees were prompted with the following questions:

- What emerging patterns do you recognize in the way research is conducted within your faculty, and how might these influence qualities you would like to see in the next VPRI?
- How do you see the role of the next VPRI in championing the diversity of research, creativity, and outreach of Indigenous scholars and other traditionally marginalized communities and vulnerable populations? How might the activities of the VPRI equitably support scholarly activities and research productivity?
- How do you see the role of the next VPRI in relation to innovation and entrepreneurship?
- Is there anything else you would like us to know on your views regarding the selection of the next VPRI?
- Are there individuals from your faculty we should ensure we contact for their perspectives on the VPRI search?

The following are the key themes that emerged from the interviews:

### Communication, Collaboration, & Championing Research

#### Championing UWindsor Research

The role of the VPRI as a ‘cheerleader’ for UWindsor research was a common theme in the consultations. Participants noted the importance of championing and raising the profile and reputation of the institution, which they argued will assist in continuing to attract and retain talent. This advocacy role also involves reputation building outside of academia and networking with different levels of government, industry, and granting agencies as well as the local community. The VPRI needs to tell the research story of UWindsor externally, using qualitative and quantitative metrics to represent the high quality of research at this institution. This reputational work is also imperative to improving and sustaining a strong research culture on campus and building pride amongst UWindsor researchers. Suggestions included social media and promotional campaigns, research showcases, and dedicated research communications staff in the Office of the VPRI to raise the profile of UWindsor’s research programs and successes.

#### Collaborative Decision-Making & Consultation

Participants suggested that the VPRI must engage in collaborative decision-making and consultation with faculties, including consulting with Deans, Associate Deans responsible for

research, faculty research councils, and staff in Research Ethics, Safety, Animal Care, and the Office of Research and Innovation Services (ORIS). Interviewees noted that this ongoing collaboration is paramount to enacting research strategies and ensuring transparency around funding equity, fund matching, overhead, and research finance and accounting. Faculty representatives suggested that the VPRI should establish strong relationships with every program on campus and meet regularly with representatives to determine the needs of all departments and how to best support their research enterprise. The VPRI should also be skilled in consensus building and ensuring that all voices are heard in the decision-making process.

#### Developing Industry & Community Partnerships

Various faculty representatives mentioned the role of the VPRI in developing partnerships outside academia with both industry and community bodies. Several participants mentioned increasing staffing to support research partnerships with one suggestion being the creation of a central industrial liaison position. Interviewees noted that the VPRI must have the pulse of emerging fields with one participant identifying the greenhouse industry as an interdisciplinary opportunity. Other areas identified for growth included health research and innovation, automotive/automobility, and cyber security, with the suggestion that UWindsor align efforts with research strengths in these fields, taking a pro-active and multidisciplinary approach. Participants also noted the importance of recognizing community-based research and establishing broader definitions of 'researcher' to include community partners and those outside traditional academic circles in order to work toward research equity. In addition, several interviewees noted that the VPRI will need to liaise on an ongoing basis with the City of Windsor, other local municipalities, the province, federal government, and other governmental bodies in order to facilitate research and avoid administrative delays.

#### Engagement & Visibility on Campus and in the Community

The visibility of the VPRI in the local community was mentioned frequently by interview participants who stressed that the VPRI must be engaged and visible both on campus and in the region. As the only university in Windsor-Essex, UWindsor and the Office of the VPRI have an important role to play with community and government partners, including supporting technology transfer and knowledge mobilization locally. The VPRI must therefore be engaged and approachable within the campus community as well as have a strong understanding of the region and the ability to establish strong relationships with partners in Windsor-Essex.

#### Comprehensive Research Administration

##### Supporting ORIS, Research Finance, Animal Care, Research Safety, & the REB

Many participants praised the work of research support staff, including in ORIS and the REB, but noted that these offices are under-resourced given their major role in facilitating research at UWindsor. They stressed that the VPRI must champion the needs of research support offices in order to facilitate research success on campus, including increasing staffing and funding as

necessary and providing consistent leadership and learning opportunities for these services. Participants also noted the importance of ongoing communication and a strong relationship between the Office of the VPRI and ORIS. It was suggested that the Research Finance department might benefit from being restructured as part of the VPRI's portfolio in order to streamline financial operations for researchers.

#### Administrative & Financial Experience

Interviewees noted that the VPRI must have an understanding of the research processes and administration at UWindsor, from dissemination of grant information, to grant writing, finance, hiring and staffing, post-award processes, reporting, and grant matching. Interview participants emphasized the need for the next VPRI to have strong administrative and budgeting experience in order to support research across campus and ensure that administrative and finance issues are not barriers to progress. This also involves supporting the work of ORIS, REB, and Research Finance, including advocating for the necessary finance modules to reduce barriers. Several participants noted that the administrative and financial process surrounding research at UWindsor disincentivizes researchers from pursuing grants or holding them at this institution. While they recognized that the administrative and financial processes around research are not part of the VPRI's current portfolio, they suggested that they should be considered for review by a new VPRI.

#### Equity, Diversity, & Inclusion (EDI)

Several interview participants emphasized that the VPRI's focus on EDI and Indigenization must not only entail adding diversity to faculties and research teams but facilitating marginalized populations to influence how research is conducted at UWindsor. The next VPRI must be committed to fostering Indigenous connections and reducing barriers to Indigenization, for example allowing Elders onto graduate committees for work on Indigenous issues. One participant noted that the prioritization of EDI should come from the VPRI's office as opposed to being initiated in individual faculties, highlighting that the Dimensions Charter should be championed on campus. Several participants suggested that moving EDI from grant proposals into practice is imperative and that the VPRI must be experienced with meaningfully enacting EDI. It was suggested that supporting community-based research with a focus on equity can also help contribute to this priority.

#### Innovation, Intellectual Property, & Entrepreneurship

When prompted about the innovation component of the VPRI role, most participants did not emphasize commercialization as an important aspect of the VPRI's mandate. While some participants did suggest that the Office of the VPRI should facilitate commercialization opportunities for researchers, particularly supporting students in this endeavour, many emphasized the importance of not prioritizing commercialization over research. Participants

also noted that a broader understanding of commercialization is necessary to move beyond a focus on patents and start-ups and involve disciplines across campus—particularly those outside of STEM— in opportunities for knowledge mobilization. One participant noted that this would require a broader mandate for the EPICentre or a re-consideration of its role on campus related to policy advising, knowledge transfer, and leadership. A transparent intellectual property (IP) framework for researchers, students, and the private sector was also noted, taking into account institutional obligations to the public sector and collective agreement.

### Research Across Disciplines

A major theme in the consultation was the need for the VPRI to support research across all faculties and disciplines, understanding differences in the way research is conducted, funded, assessed and disseminated across campus. This includes recognizing the different types of support required as well as acknowledging the role of creative work, community-based research, as well as service work and consulting. Participants stressed the need to support departments and faculties equitably, acknowledging that research in the arts and social sciences has traditionally received less focus and support when compared to STEM fields and that traditional metrics may not capture success in these areas effectively. Participants noted that research metrics must be sophisticated and acknowledge the work of all disciplines, which means moving away from a model that prioritizes funding dollars and traditional publications over other more nuanced measures of research success.

### Research Incentivization & Faculty Support

Many faculty representatives emphasized that the VPRI should facilitate the protection of faculty research time against other demands through supporting course release and other institutional policies that allow for research and grant writing to take place. They noted that the VPRI should advocate on behalf of research as a priority alongside teaching and service work. The VPRI's office can also incentivize the time investment faculty members make in grant writing and research, encouraging faculty at all levels to seek out grants and sharing information on relevant opportunities and the changing priorities of granting bodies. Several participants also noted the need for more direct support in grant writing and research finance administration.

### Facilitating Interdisciplinary Collaboration

As a leader on campus, the VPRI should have the pulse of the research happening across the institution and use this unique position to facilitate interdisciplinary collaborations. Collaborative research across disciplines was mentioned frequently as an increasing trend, and participants noted that it is paramount that the VPRI assist in reducing barriers to cross-disciplinary research endeavours. This also includes collaborations with other institutions and building international research teams.



### Student & Post-doctoral Research

Undergraduate research and experiential learning as part of the research umbrella were discussed by many participants as being important aspects of the research enterprise on campus. Participants noted that a greater focus is required on supporting undergraduate research, especially outside of STEM, including Outstanding Scholars and the UWill Discover conference, in order to drive graduate enrollment and research sustainability. Participants also highlighted the need to support graduate student research further and for the Office of the VPRI to be visible and engaged with graduate students. Interviewees suggested that the VPRI must also understand and value the relationship of research to graduate programs and funding as well as the importance of students to research enterprise. Post-doctoral fellows were also mentioned frequently in the consultation as an underserved group who fall outside student, staff, and faculty designations but contribute to research on campus. Interviewees noted that the VPRI's office should provide better support for these fellows to increase their sense of connection to the institution.

### Vision & Leadership

Participants in the consultation stressed the importance of the next VPRI possessing a clear and dynamic research vision for UWindsor, including the creation of a new strategic research plan to help define the research landscape at the institution going forward. The plan to implement this vision must balance consultation and action and take into account the diverse research needs across campus. Several participants noted that leadership and administrative skills are more important in a candidate than a reputation as a strong researcher, and many emphasized the importance of candidates having demonstrated experience setting specific institutional goals and enacting strategic plans to achieve them. With the trend toward interdisciplinarity, interviewees also emphasized that the VPRI must be a leader who can move team-based research forward, make connections, and liaise with politicians, government agencies, community partners, private enterprise, and other stakeholders effectively as well as represent research interests to executive UWindsor leadership.

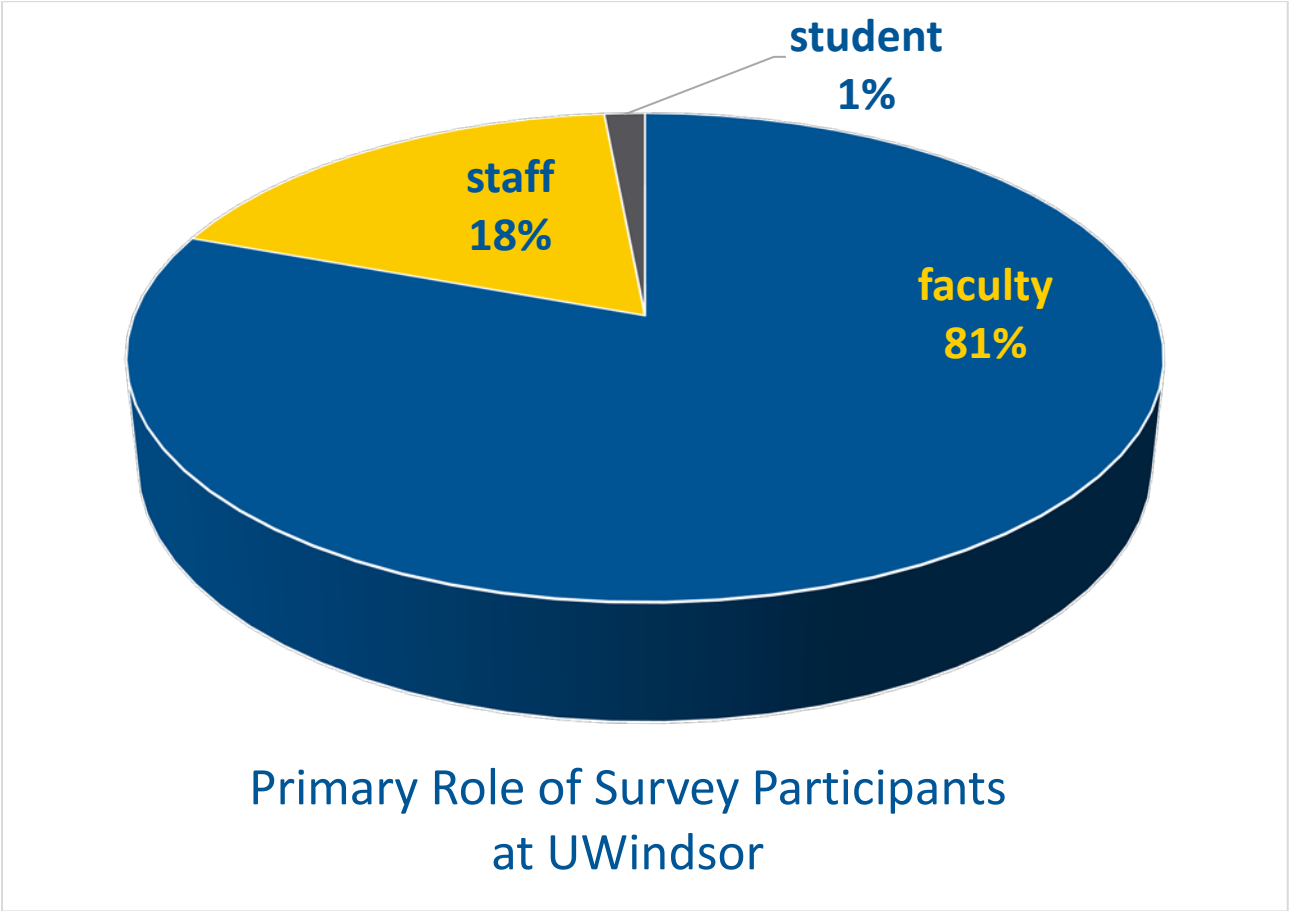
### Leading Multidisciplinary & International Teams

Leadership and experience leading international and multidisciplinary research teams was noted by interviewees as a valuable asset for the next VPRI. Several participants also noted the need to broaden the scope of the University of Windsor's international connections and the importance of the VPRI in facilitating these international partnerships. Several noted that the ongoing internationalization of research will require a broad vision for UWindsor's global partnerships, with a strong understanding of international relations, global affairs, and security.

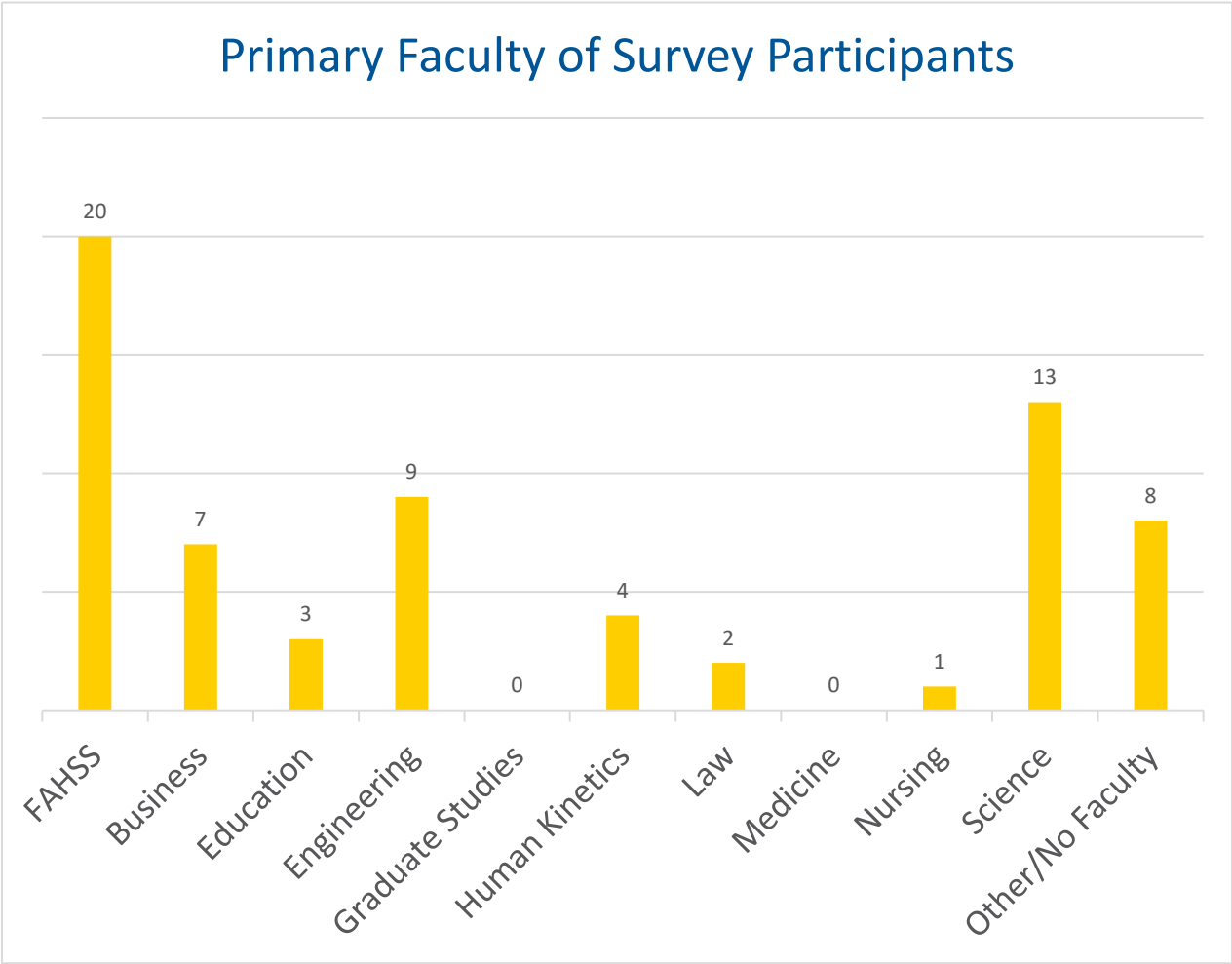
# SURVEY PARTICIPANTS

A total of 146 responses were recorded to the survey between January 13 and January 21, 2022. However, of those respondents, only 67 answered at least one of the open-ended survey questions (see [Appendix B](#) for survey questions and [Appendix D](#) from the full data from the survey). The following data represents the responses of those 67 participants.

Of these 67 respondents, 81% or 54 identified themselves as faculty, 18% or 12 identified as staff, and 1% or one self-identified as a student.



When asked to identify their primary faculty, the majority of survey respondents (20) chose the Faculty of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences (FAHSS), followed by Science (13) and Engineering (9). Eight respondents selected 'Other/No Faculty,' followed by the Odette School of Business (7), Human Kinetics (4), Education (3), Law (2), and Nursing (1). No participant identified Graduate Studies or Medicine as their primary faculty.





## KEY THEMES: SURVEY RESULTS

The following key themes—which frequently echoed the content of the interviews and group discussions—emerged from the responses to the online survey:

### Challenges & Opportunities

#### Challenges

The predominant prospective challenges for the next VPRI identified by survey respondents were related to **budgeting and funding**, including resources for research support services, funding for research from within the University and funding bodies, and the challenges of ongoing fiscal austerity in the post-secondary sector. Increasing competition for funding was also noted as a challenge, including competition for grants and industry partnerships as well as for students and researchers.

Participants also identified **reputation** and communication of research success as challenges, with many noting that poor self-perception at UWindsor is a major barrier to institutional success and morale. The challenge of reputation also includes building UWindsor's profile locally, nationally, and internationally through strong research communications, ensuring that UWindsor is known and trusted as a research-intensive institution.

The **COVID-19 pandemic** and the associated disruption to research was also a frequently mentioned challenge, including the financial impacts and the logistics of getting the research processes at UWindsor back on track in all faculties.

Several participants noted the **lack of research culture** on campus and the challenge of building an institutional culture that prioritizes research excellence. Respondents noted that improving attitudes toward the research landscape on campus and building bridges to faculties and researchers will be a challenge for the next VPRI. Survey responses suggested that improving the research culture will involve ensuring that all researchers on campus feel supported, regardless of their discipline. Participants also cited the need to prioritize research alongside teaching and service, with some noting that research efforts often receive less focus and resourcing.

Another commonly highlighted challenge was the **silos mentality** surrounding research at UWindsor, which acts as a barrier to interdisciplinary and interdepartmental collaborations. Participants saw an opportunity for the VPRI to facilitate connections between departments and faculties in order to build a stronger research culture and inter-faculty cooperation.

**Fairness and transparency** regarding support of faculties and departments was also highlighted frequently with an emphasis on ensuring that non-STEM faculties are prioritized alongside their STEM counterparts and that all researchers on campus feel supported in their efforts. Respondents noted that accountable and clear performance metrics suitable to the various

disciplines can increase transparency in allocations of funding, research chairs, and other resources and recognitions.

While not part of the VPRI's portfolio, many participants noted the **administrative** barrier presented by the current system, especially the Research Finance module, and the role of red tape in disincentivizing research. These struggles are also linked to the reported **under resourcing of support services**, including ORIS, the REB, Research Finance, Animal Care, and Research Safety, that support research activity on campus.

Several participants also noted that the VPRI must be actively engaged in challenging **racism, white privilege, colonization, and marginalization of 2SLGBTQIA+ researchers** in order to work toward equity at UWindsor.

### Opportunities

Respondents also identified numerous opportunities for the next VPRI, many of which centred around various fields in which UWindsor has demonstrated research excellence and potential for further growth and success. These include **health care, automobility, border issues, Great Lakes research (GLIER), climate change, social justice, sustainability, research related to older adults, and agriculture**. Respondents noted that UWindsor has many strong researchers and research groups and that these successes should be celebrated and promoted.

Participants also noted that the next VPRI has an opportunity for a fresh start in terms of relationships and attitudes on campus and to build stronger research partnerships, technology transfer opportunities, and partnerships with industry and community organizations. One participant cited the wealth of potential partners within the Windsor-Essex community as an untapped resource.

Additional opportunities highlighted included supporting student innovation and increasing mentorship opportunities for students and early-career faculty as well as recognizing and celebrating the successes of UWindsor researchers in order to contribute to the positive reputation and self-perception of the institution.

Respondents also noted an opportunity in supporting diverse researchers and taking meaningful action on EDI as key aspects of the research strategy on campus going forward.

### Communication, Collaboration, & Championing Research

#### Championing UWindsor Research

A common concern among survey respondents was UWindsor's reputation as an institution. Many respondents expressed that the University's reputation is poor and does not adequately reflect the research being done. The role of the next VPRI will therefore require work to rebuild UWindsor's reputation as a research-intensive institution and celebrate research excellence. Respondents suggested that the reputational issues exist not only within the

community and local region, but nationally, in the view of other Canadian universities and granting organizations, as well as internationally, and that this reputation acts as a barrier to grant success, industry partnerships, and research progress. Participants suggested that the VPRI must be an engaged and passionate champion of UWindsor research locally and beyond, including being visible and accessible within the community. Some also suggested the importance of publicly highlighting UWindsor's research successes via showcases, social media, news media, and other means to shine a light on UWindsor's research and innovation programs.

#### Collaborative Decision-Making & Consultation

Participants frequently stressed the need for the VPRI to maintain open communication and regular consultation with faculty members, Deans, AAU heads, Associate Deans, research institutes, students, staff, and research support services such as ORIS. Survey respondents noted that the VPRI must be an active listener who engages in ongoing dialogue and maintains open lines of communication with all stakeholders on campus, taking advisement from various groups and individuals as appropriate. It was also suggested that the VPRI must represent research interests to the University executive and be a respected voice at that table for high-level administrative decision-making as it relates to advocating for research enterprise. This requires that the candidate be a strong communicator with demonstrated outreach and interpersonal skills. The next VPRI should be a collaborative and consultative decision maker who is both open-minded and responsive to communications from stakeholders, ensuring that everyone concerned is heard.

#### Developing Industry & Community Partnerships

Another major theme in the survey responses was the need for the VPRI to develop and maintain relationships with various governmental, industry, and community partners. Respondents emphasized a need to connect with organizations in the Windsor-Essex region and facilitate more technology transfer and knowledge exchange in the local community. The importance of a strong commitment to and knowledge of the local region and the research impact of UWindsor locally was also highlighted. In addition, the VPRI will need to facilitate connections to the City of Windsor and other local municipal governments as well as maintain relationships with the provincial and federal governments and relevant organizations, partners, and granting bodies, including but not limited to the tri-council. Finally, having connections or the demonstrated ability to establish partnerships with the private sector was noted as an asset as well as experience assessing market demands and matching these to research priorities.

#### Engagement & Visibility on Campus & in the Community

Many respondents noted that the VPRI should have a full-time presence at UWindsor, including housing their own research projects at this institution if possible. Visibility on campus and accessibility to UWindsor community members was noted as a strong priority by respondents who emphasized that the VPRI should be approachable and engaged at the institution and

locally. Several respondents expressed that they would like to see a more active role for the Office of the VPRI and less delegation to research support staff and committees.

#### Honesty, Fairness, & Transparency

Transparency and fairness in decision-making was strongly emphasized as a priority by many survey respondents, including fairness in awarding research chairs, funding, and resources and transparency about metrics. These metrics should be clear, inclusive, and accountable, as well as being developed with an understanding of the different research outputs and needs of various disciplines. Participants noted that metrics cannot be tied solely to funding dollars and that creative works and book publications need to be considered more seriously as metrics of success. Many respondents noted that support, respect, and understanding of all disciplines is necessary, including supporting social science and humanities research to the same degree as STEM research. Several respondents suggested that the next VPRI should be a social scientist or interdisciplinary researcher as opposed to a scientist due to the need to understand and support research in the social sciences and humanities. It was also mentioned that UWindsor requires greater representation in regards to SSHRC adjudication in order to further support FAHSS research efforts.

#### Comprehensive Research Administration

##### Research Ethics

When prompted about the role of the VPRI regarding research ethics, the majority of respondents noted that the relationship between the two bodies should be at arm's length, stressing the independence of the REB. However, many participants also noted that the VPRI should have an engaged and collaborative role in research ethics, noting the need to advocate on behalf of resources, staffing, and support for the REB to streamline processes and reduce bottlenecks. It was also suggested that the VPRI should play a role in maintaining and disseminating clear ethical standards to researchers on campus.

##### Research Finance

Transparency and fairness in the distribution of funds was highlighted frequently in survey responses, as was a clear decision-making process surrounding budget models and overhead. Many respondents emphasized the unsuitability of the current financial module and the difficulties presented by the grant administrative process. Participants stressed the need to streamline this process and suggested that the VPRI's office could be involved in advocating for more staffing and support for Research Finance, including possibly moving Research Finance into the ORIS portfolio to provide consistent pre- and post-award support. Several respondents praised ORIS and research support staff's efforts but noted the need for more resources to reduce logistical challenges surrounding research administration. Other concerns related to funding were the need for more seed money for new projects, grant matching of external funds, and bridge funding for ongoing projects with non-renewed grants. Other participants



noted issues with the current model of overhead, suggesting that the amount is too high and acts as a barrier to attracting and housing grants and industry partnerships at this institution.

#### Research Infrastructure

Research infrastructure concerns included the need for increased space and investment in upkeep of core facilities and equipment on campus, especially within the sciences. Some respondents also noted the need for better computer software, including data storage and data management services for researchers.

#### Supporting ORIS, Research Finance, Animal Care, Research Safety, & the REB

Many survey participants cited the under resourcing of research support services on campus, including ORIS, Research Finance, Animal Care, Research Safety, and the REB, as a challenge. While they praised the work of the staff, respondents noted that more staffing, financial resources, and infrastructure, including appropriate office space, are needed to increase the efficiency of research supports and reduce administrative delays and barriers. Participants also noted that the VPRI should have demonstrated strong administrative experience and financial knowledge in order to understand and provide leadership to research administration at UWindsor.

#### Equity, Diversity, & Inclusion

The importance of EDI and the active role of the VPRI in promoting EDI at UWindsor was emphasized frequently in survey responses. Respondents noted that the VPRI should be a spokesperson for EDI on campus, advocating for active hiring, promotion, mentoring, and support of underrepresented and marginalized groups. The candidate should have demonstrated anti-racism and anti-white-supremacy work and a commitment to Indigenous inclusion, Reconciliation, and decolonization. Several participants suggested that the VPRI could facilitate the implementation of active EDI plans, strategies, and training for campus community members as well as building and repairing partnerships with racialized communities through active outreach and collaboration. Several participants cited the need to challenge racism at UWindsor in all areas, including research, through active and accountable strategies, and multiple participants suggested that the VPRI should be a person from a marginalized group. Further, some respondents noted that the VPRI should consult and work collaboratively with the VP EDI and WUFA toward building equity on campus and that a budget earmarked for EDI is needed within the VPRI's portfolio. There was also the suggestion that the VPRI could advocate for central research resources for Indigenous researchers at UWindsor and actively include the role of Indigenous knowledge as part of strategic research priorities.

#### Fostering Research Excellence

A major theme in survey responses was the need to foster an atmosphere of research excellence and an active research culture at UWindsor. This includes supporting the current

research strengths of the institution and building upon them. Participants suggested that start-up, seed funding, and pilot grants for new projects and emerging researchers could contribute to this goal as well as increased budgets to support research overall. Bridge funding for non-renewed grants was noted as another part of this strategy. Faculty members also emphasized the importance of course release to allow them the time and resources for research projects and participation in grant adjudication. This suggestion was frequently mentioned as part of the broader goal of incentivizing research, which also involves rewarding and recognizing research accomplishments, including book publications and non-funded research. Respondents suggested building incentivization into the strategic plan and prioritizing key research areas. Revisions to tenure and promotion requirements that recognize broader forms of research output were also suggested, and several respondents noted the need for more research chairs. It was also noted that mid-career and established researchers may need incentive to reinvigorate their research careers and that models for incentivization need to be discipline-specific in order to reflect the needs of each department.

#### Support for Researchers

Researchers expressed the need for additional support throughout the research process, from the dissemination of information about available grants, to assistance with grant writing, grant capture, and both pre-and post-award administrative support. Several participants noted the need for the next VPRI to have extensive expertise related to tri-council funding processes in order to facilitate an increase in tri-council participation and success in all faculties. However, they also cited the need to support and recognize non-tri-council research opportunities, both those related to the private sector and unfunded projects. Participants noted the need for the VPRI to provide assistance in obtaining and administering large grants, requiring experience in this area. Further professional development opportunities in grant writing and general mentoring for new researchers were also noted as valuable supports for researchers, and participants suggested that the VPRI advocate for these services.

#### Facilitating Interdisciplinary Collaboration

Given the trend toward interdisciplinary collaboration, many participants noted that the VPRI should play a major role in facilitating these partnerships and forming interdisciplinary teams on campus as well as with other institutions nationally and internationally. As a central advocate for UWindsor research, the VPRI should draw on demonstrated experience in forming these types of partnerships to assist researchers in finding and following up on collaborative opportunities as well as breaking down siloes separating departments.

#### Innovation, Intellectual Property, & Entrepreneurship

Many survey participants noted the importance of supporting innovation alongside traditional research as part of the VPRI's portfolio. However, many others noted that this component is not as important as traditional research and that balance is needed to avoid over-emphasizing

commercialization. One respondent emphasized that nonprofit researchers require the same supports as those engaged in commercial endeavours with another suggesting that the VPRI should ensure that there is no pressure to engage in commercialization. It was further suggested that faculty members who wish to engage in technology transfer and knowledge mobilization require more support and resources and that student innovation should also be supported. Respondents suggested that the VPRI should have demonstrated experience in intellectual property (IP), tech transfer, and knowledge mobilization in order to facilitate the creation of transparent IP arrangements that protect researchers and the institution. Another suggestion included incentivizing innovation by recognizing it as part of tenure and promotion as well as allocating more dedicated staff to assist researchers with IP, tech transfer, and commercialization opportunities.

### Student & Post-doctoral Research

While only one student completed the survey, several other respondents noted that the VPRI's office should support student research at both the undergraduate and graduate level, including recruitment of graduate students in research-intensive areas and funding undergraduate researchers. International students were highlighted as a group requiring particular focus related to both EDI as well as scholarships. Student support via the EPICentre was also suggested to bolster that organization's mandate and promote student innovation.

### Research & Teaching

Several survey participants noted the need to ensure that teaching commitments do not prevent faculty from engaging in research. However, it was also noted that applied research and a holistic approach to research and teaching would be beneficial. To that end, it was suggested by one participant that the VPRI have experience with teaching at the post-secondary level. Another comment suggested the importance of integrating faculty research with graduate mentorship, supervision, and teaching.

### Vision & Leadership

A major theme in survey responses was the need for visionary leadership. Respondents stressed the need to challenge the status quo and existing attitudes and for the next VPRI to strive for better with an openness to institutional change. Respondents suggested that this requires continual self-evaluation of strategies and goals and a willingness to be flexible. Participants stressed that the candidate must have demonstrated planning and leadership experience and success at reaching and evaluating goals. This person must be innovative and willing to challenge the way things have been done in relation to the organization of programs and funding to improve the research landscape and morale of the institution. Respondents also noted the importance of support, compassion, and coaching experience in facilitating progress.

### Internationalization

As part of the leadership component, several participants noted that the VPRI must be a leader on an international scale to raise the profile of UWindsor globally. This involves encouraging and facilitating international research partnerships on a large scale. Participants noted that the VPRI must have an up-to-date and in-depth understanding of the global economy, industry, international security, and research and commercial trends in order to facilitate international partnerships effectively.

### Strategic Research Plan

Many participants noted that a new strategic research plan is necessary to propel the University forward. The VPRI will need to facilitate the creation of a plan that not only involves clear and measurable goals but transparent plans and strategies to reach them along with ongoing assessment and accountability. Several respondents also stressed aligning this research plan with research priorities and existing areas of excellence at UWindsor in order to highlight areas of growth and success.

### Key Qualities for the next VPRI

Some of the key qualities survey respondents noted as important for the next VPRI are as follows:

- Visionary leader
- Respectful and fair
- Motivated, passionate, and engaged
- Proactive and willing to take on a challenge
- Able to solve problems and make difficult decisions
- Patient, with realistic expectations
- Innovative and flexible
- Excellent communicator with strong interpersonal skills and discretion
- Strong administrative and financial background
- Existing connections with relevant bodies and partners
- Commitment to and knowledge of local community
- Honest and transparent
- Collaborative decision maker / team player
- Experience facilitating major grants and multidisciplinary teams
- Demonstrated EDI competence and commitment
- Leader within research field with a strong publication and funding record

## Suggestions from Survey Respondents

Some survey respondents provided suggestions for how the hiring committee might proceed with consideration of candidates. These included the following:

- Candidate should be selected internally
- Candidate should be selected externally
- A global search should be conducted to find the best candidate
- Candidate should have a PhD
- Candidate should have strong reference letters
- Candidate should be a marginalized person
- Candidate should be a social scientist or interdisciplinary researcher
- The VPRI position is unnecessary and should be eliminated with other roles taking on its responsibilities
- ORIS and VPRI staff should have an active role in the hiring process
- Local political officials, Indigenous leaders, and local industry representatives should meet with candidates during the hiring process
- A hiring committee should be created from among the top-funded researchers at UWindsor







## RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations concerning the job description and interview questions aim to highlight the key priorities established by respondents in the consultation:

### Suggested content for the job description

- A record of academic leadership of disparate academic groups, demonstrating the ability to listen to and acknowledge different perspectives and to build consensus.
- A record of academic leadership that demonstrates an understanding of all aspects of research administration, including grant application, grant management, grant finance, and employment of HQP ranging from undergraduate students to post-doctoral fellows.
- A record of community outreach that demonstrates an ability to create meaningful partnerships within the region and the province as well as nationally and internationally.
- A working knowledge of tri-council funding agencies and other provincial and national research agencies.
- An understanding of national and international research trends and an ability to determine opportunities for UWindsor researchers.
- A demonstrated commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion.

### Suggested interview questions

- Where do you see research enterprise at UWindsor under your leadership in five years? What path will you take to deliver that goal?
- How have you delivered on long-term strategic goals and plans in the past, and what was the outcome?
- How would you increase the reputation and profile of research at UWindsor?
- What are your plans regarding leadership approaches to support and strengthen integrity in research culture? What is your experience?
- What steps would you take to prioritize equity, diversity, and inclusion in research practice at UWindsor?

## **CONCLUSION**

As research and innovation is by its nature constantly evolving, this report aims to capture the current perspectives of the diverse UWindsor community regarding the future direction of the role of the Vice-President, Research and Innovation.

This consultation solicited the feedback of stakeholders from across campus with the intention of providing an overview of common concerns and priorities as they relate to the University of Windsor's research landscape.

This document aims to provide a summary of this feedback to assist the University administration as the search and interview process for the next VPRI proceeds.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

We thank Kate Hargreaves for her exceptional administrative support that includes the organization of the meetings, synthesis of the feedback, creation of the survey and summary of the results, and the creation of this report. Her skills and dedication were critical to the successful and timely completion of the task.

## APPENDIX A: INTERVIEWS CONDUCTED

The team conducted virtual interviews via Microsoft Teams with the following stakeholders:

### Deans

Cheryl Collier, Dean, Faculty of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences

Ken Montgomery, Dean, Faculty of Education

Bill Van Heyst, Dean, Faculty of Engineering

Debbie Kane, Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies

Linda Rohr, Dean, Faculty of Human Kinetics

Reem Bahdi, Dean, Faculty of Law

Debbie Sheppard-Lemoine, Dean, Faculty of Nursing

Mitch Fields, Dean, Odette School of Business

Chris Houser, Dean, Faculty of Science

### Associate Deans, Research

Brent Lee, Associate Dean, Research, Faculty of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences

Kara Smith, Associate Dean, Research, Faculty of Education

Majid Ahmadi, Associate Dean, Research and Graduate Studies, Faculty of Engineering

Lori Buchanan, Associate Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies

Chitra Rangan, Associate Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies

Cheri McGowan, Associate Dean, Research, Faculty of Human Kinetics

Paul Ocheje, Associate Dean, Research, Faculty of Law

Jody Ralph, Associate Dean, Graduate Programs, Faculty of Nursing

Fazle Baki, Associate Dean, Programs, Odette School of Business

Zhenzhong Ma, Associate Dean, Academic, Odette School of Business

Dan Mennill, Associate Dean, Research, Faculty of Science

### Office of Research and Innovation Services (ORIS)

Heather Pratt, Executive Director, Office of Research and Innovation Services (ORIS)

Vesna Kaps, Contract/Technology Transfer Manager, ORIS

Sara Kenno, Research Coordinator, Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council, ORIS

Michelle Nevett, Science Research Coordinator, ORIS

Nicole Noel, Research Funding Officer - Institutional Projects and Communications, ORIS

Ingrid Qemo, Health Research Coordinator, ORIS

Tom Schneidenburger, Data & Mobility Science Project Manager, ORIS

Tina Suntres, Innovation Administrative Coordinator, ORIS

### Windsor University Faculty Association (WUFA)

Anna Lanoszka, President, Windsor University Faculty Association

Anne Snowdon, Academic Chair, World Health Innovation Network (WIN), Odette

### Office of the Vice-President Research & Innovation

K.W. Michael Siu, incumbent Vice-President Research & Innovation (VPRI)

Amy Davie, Executive Assistant to the VPRI



## APPENDIX B: SURVEY QUESTIONS

The following survey was available from January 13, 2022 until January 21, 2022 via Qualtrics:

**This survey is part of a consultation to explore campus perspectives on the role of the Vice-President Research & Innovation (VPRI). All members of the UWindsor community are invited to share their anonymous feedback.**

**Note: the UWindsor Research Ethics Board has been consulted and has determined that this survey is exempt from REB review.**

**What is your primary role at the University of Windsor?**

- Faculty
- Staff
- Student
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

**What is your primary faculty at the University of Windsor?**

- Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences
- Business
- Education
- Engineering
- Graduate Studies
- Human Kinetics
- Law
- Medicine
- Nursing
- Science
- Other/no faculty \_\_\_\_\_

**What do you consider to be the top priorities for the next Vice-President Research & Innovation (VPRI) at the University of Windsor?**

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**What qualities are important in the next VPRI?**

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**What challenges or opportunities do you anticipate for the next VPRI?**

---

**What should be the role of the next VPRI in regards to**

- research ethics?

---

- research finance, cost-sharing, and allocation of funds?

---

- **incentivization of research?**

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- **research equity?**

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- **collaboration with faculties and departments?**

---

- **collaboration outside UWindsor?**

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- **technology transfer, commercialization, and intellectual property?**

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**Is there anything else you would like us to know regarding the selection of the next VPRI?**

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**If you would like to be contacted for an individual consultation regarding the role of the VPRI, please email [mthsta1@uwindsor.ca](mailto:mthsta1@uwindsor.ca) before January 21, 2022.**

## APPENDIX C: PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS

The below graphics were used to promote the survey via social media and email:



**HAVE YOUR SAY**  
ON THE ROLE OF  
**VP RESEARCH  
& INNOVATION**



SURVEY RUNS UNTIL 4PM EST JAN. 21  
[WWW.UWINDSOR.CA/MATH/VPRISURVEY](http://WWW.UWINDSOR.CA/MATH/VPRISURVEY)




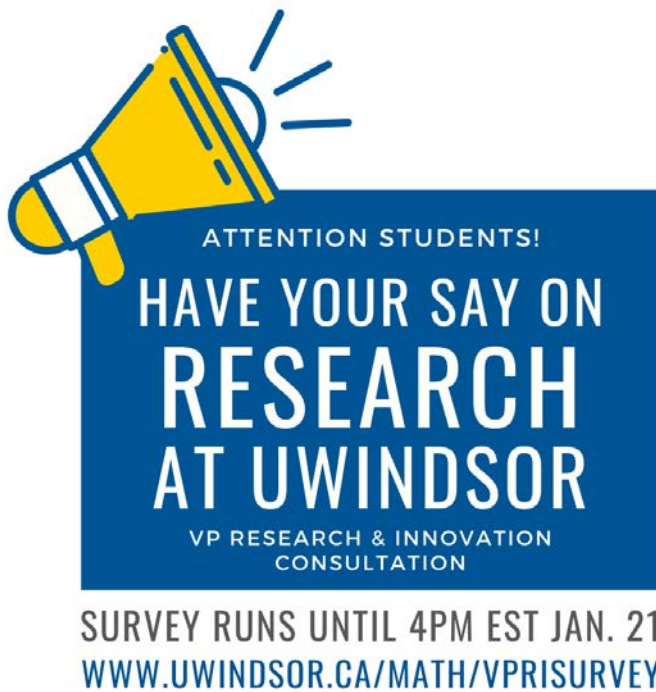
ATTENTION STUDENTS!  
**DO YOU CONDUCT  
RESEARCH  
AT UWINDSOR?**

---

**HAVE YOUR SAY**  
ON THE ROLE OF  
**VP RESEARCH  
& INNOVATION**



SURVEY RUNS UNTIL 4PM EST JAN. 21  
[WWW.UWINDSOR.CA/MATH/VPRISURVEY](http://WWW.UWINDSOR.CA/MATH/VPRISURVEY)



ATTENTION STUDENTS!  
**HAVE YOUR SAY ON  
RESEARCH  
AT UWINDSOR**

VP RESEARCH & INNOVATION  
CONSULTATION

SURVEY RUNS UNTIL 4PM EST JAN. 21  
[WWW.UWINDSOR.CA/MATH/VPRISURVEY](http://WWW.UWINDSOR.CA/MATH/VPRISURVEY)