

Position Description

National Search

Executive Director

Robert J. Jones Urban Research and Outreach-Engagement Center (UROC)

University of Minnesota

Office for Public Engagement

Office of the Executive Vice President and Provost

The University of Minnesota, the public land-grant research university of the State of Minnesota, seeks a collaborative leader with a strong academic background in community-engaged research and partnership development for the position of Executive Director of the [Robert J. Jones Urban Research and Outreach-Engagement Center](#) (UROC), the University's placed-based research and community engagement center situated in the community of North Minneapolis. The Executive Director position is a 100 percent time annually renewable academic administrative appointment, to be held concurrently with a tenured faculty appointment in an academic department at the University.

The Executive Director reports to the Associate Vice President for Public Engagement and serves as the intellectual, academic, strategic, and administrative leader of UROC. Since opening its doors in November 2009, UROC has become a hub for over 75 unique University projects and initiatives, all of which have engaged community partners as key participants in the projects' development and implementation. The center leverages the strengths of the University with the expertise and resources of partners across community sectors to advance publicly engaged research, teaching, and learning; improve quality of life; nurture mutually beneficial and sustainable University-community collaborations; discover solutions to critical urban issues; and build new models of urban development benefiting all metropolitan communities.

The Executive Director position requires a blend of academic and managerial skills, as well as understanding of contemporary approaches to higher education public engagement. Successful candidates will have a distinguished record of scholarship and leadership commensurate with appointment to a tenured senior faculty position (associate or full professor) at the University, including experience in the areas of community-engaged research, urban engagement, and community partnership development. Successful candidates also will have experience managing or leading campus-community collaborations and program development efforts.

The University has formed a search committee composed of University faculty and community representatives, chaired by Michael Oakes, professor in the School of Public Health.

All inquiries, applications, and nominations should be directed in confidence to the search committee, as noted at the end of this position description.

About UROC and the Role of the Executive Director

As a University research and engagement center within the office of the Executive Vice President and Provost, the Robert J. Jones Urban Research and Outreach-Engagement Center supports the strategic goals and priorities of the campus-wide strategic plan, *Driving Tomorrow*. The center is aligned with other University urban initiatives as well as with the University's broader public engagement and community outreach agendas, including advancing the goals articulated in the University's recently recalibrated *Twin Cities Campus Public Engagement Action Plan*. (See *Appendix 1, The University of Minnesota*.)

The Executive Director will provide overall leadership to:

- advance the vision, mission, reputation, and goals of UROC and the University of Minnesota;
- build UROC's community-focused urban research agenda through the active engagement of University faculty from across disciplines and the engagement of members of the local and broader communities;
- optimize UROC's full potential as a innovative place-based university center that fosters the advancement of community-engaged urban-focused research of meaningful impact; and
- further the advancement and institutionalization of the University's broader public engagement agenda.

The Executive Director will provide strategic leadership for the center's ongoing growth and development, working collaboratively with faculty, staff, community partners, and other internal and external stakeholders to advance the center's aspirations, activities, and impact. Current program priorities, developed mutually with the community, focus on *education and lifelong learning, health and wellbeing, and economic and community development*.

Key areas of strategic focus include expanding UROC programming, more deeply engaging University faculty, developing strong evaluation metrics aligned with innovative community-based research and teaching models, and maintaining a strong base of stakeholder support that ensures optimal impact and long-term success. The Executive Director is also responsible for the effective administration of the center, including management and oversight of programs, budget, staff, facilities, communications, planning, and other functions and activities.

Terms and conditions of the appointment are negotiable, with up to 25% FTE of the appointment available for the candidate to advance scholarly work within an academic department.

Responsibilities

The primary responsibilities of the Executive Director are to:

- Provide overall executive management and leadership for planning, coordinating, and administering the Urban Research and Outreach-Engagement Center and its collaborations, operations, affiliated programs, and staff
- Ensure the full achievement of UROC's mission as a place-based research and engagement center that fosters collaborative work between University researchers and community partners
- Broaden engagement of community partners and University faculty and staff in mutually beneficial urban research and engagement initiatives; develop and strengthen strategies for responding to community and University interests, for fostering exchange and innovation, and for developing collaborative relationships and programs

- Provide expertise on the development of high quality campus-community partnerships and the cultivation of community-engaged research initiatives across a broad range of disciplinary contexts
- Oversee relationships with programs and initiatives housed within the center, including managing processes to ensure alignment and documentation of collaborative work
- Facilitate collaborations among internal and external partners in ways that align with the University's strategic plan and academic research priorities around urban grand challenges
- Establish key policies that will further the UROC's goals and impacts
- Direct, supervise, and manage the day to day work of UROC's leadership team, which is composed of UROC's research director, a community outreach liaison, the Center's operational business manager, and front office staff
- Advance the University's development as an engaged research university through the production of high community-impact research and education initiatives
- Support a scholarly agenda for strengthening the study and practice of urban community engagement
- Oversee the selection and convening of the UROC Executive Advisory Committee to support UROC's mission and vision
- Ensure the optimization of the center's space to ensure the full achievement of UROC's mission
- Collaborate with the Associate Vice President for Public Engagement, University foundation staff, and others to identify viable funding opportunities for UROC, plan and implement a development strategy focused on long-term sustainability, and work with internal and external stakeholders to secure funding
- Oversee the UROC's budget and manage the allocation of resources in line with UROC's priorities
- Set the agenda and priorities for UROC's external grants and other revenue sources
- Manage all aspects of the physical building, including procurement of equipment and management of space usage; and
- Revise or establish operating procedures and systems as needed to ensure the full achievement of UROC's mission.

Required Qualifications

- A doctoral degree in a related field
- A distinguished record of scholarly achievement in an academic discipline, commensurate with appointment as a tenured associate or full professor at the University of Minnesota
- Demonstrated knowledge of and interest in urban-focused research, teaching, and outreach/engagement
- Demonstrated strong academic background in community-engaged research and partnership development, with knowledge and understanding of best practices in building mutually beneficial campus-community partnerships, participatory research, and community-engaged scholarship—especially in the context of urban communities
- Substantial experience in leadership and management positions that has included overseeing multiple budgets, managing and reviewing personnel, facilitating strategic planning, developing

external partnership development, and implementing multifaceted programs in community and/or university settings.

- Experience working with academics and community practitioners from varied disciplinary perspectives
- Successful record of supporting and advancing equity, diversity, and inclusion
- Demonstrated strengths in administrative management (including budget management)

Preferred Qualifications

- A strong record of successful public engagement scholarship and activity, preferably with community-based organizations, local government, and non-profits
- Experience guiding a multi-faceted, decentralized program or department to establish a common vision, mission, and goals and to work collaboratively across units
- Demonstrated strengths in communicating effectively in community as well as university settings
- Successful record of obtaining and managing external funding
- Experience designing and overseeing program evaluations
- Demonstrated effectiveness as a leader in a highly collaborative, team-based organization

Nominations, Applications, and Inquiries

Applications and nominations of candidates should be sent to the search committee via email to: urocsrch@umn.edu. All candidate information will be held in *strict confidence*—the names of all nominees and applicants are confidential will not be made public without permission of the applicant.

To be considered as a candidate for this position: please send a letter of application that details interest and specifies how your record meets the stated qualifications. Include a curriculum vitae and contact information for three professional references. To nominate a potential candidate, please submit a letter including a brief statement of the nominee's qualifications for the position. Email letters of application or nomination to urocsrch@umn.edu.

References will not be contacted without the approval of the candidate. The search committee will conduct its review of applications in fall 2017. Applications and nominations will be accepted until the position is filled.

The University of Minnesota is committed to the policy that all persons shall have equal access to and opportunity in its programs, facilities, and employment without regard to race, color, creed, religion, national origin, gender, age, marital status, disability, public assistance status, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression.

The University of Minnesota—Mission:

The University of Minnesota, founded in the belief that all people are enriched by understanding, is dedicated to the advancement of learning and the search for truth; to the sharing of this knowledge through education for a diverse community; and to the application of this knowledge to benefit the people of the state, the nation and the world. The University's threefold mission of research and discovery, teaching and learning, and outreach and public service is carried out on multiple campuses and throughout the state.

Appendix 1

ABOUT THE UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

Founded in 1851, the [University of Minnesota](#) is one of the most comprehensive universities in the country and ranks among the most prestigious research universities in the world. The University has scholars of national and international reputation as well as a strong tradition of education and public engagement. It has the special distinction of being both Minnesota's land-grant university, dedicated to serving the public good; and its globally engaged flagship research institution, charged with positioning the state at the forefront of emerging knowledge and educating highly skilled workers, professionals, leaders, and global citizens to thrive in a diverse and changing world.

The University of Minnesota system comprises 5 campuses; the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities, the flagship campus; as well as system campuses including the University of Minnesota, Crookston; University of Minnesota, Duluth; University of Minnesota, Morris; and University of Minnesota, Rochester. The University also encompasses regional Extension offices, research and outreach centers, clinics, labs and K–12 educational outreach programs throughout the state.

The University enrolls approximately 67,000 students, including nearly 51,000 in the 17 colleges and schools of its flagship campus in the Twin Cities. With 150 undergraduate, 179 masters and 103 doctoral degree programs on the Twin Cities campus, as well as professional degrees in law, education, dentistry, medicine, nursing, pharmacy, public health, social work, and veterinary medicine, the University offers its students tremendous breadth and depth of opportunity spanning the liberal arts, sciences, agriculture, and a range of professions.

The University is the state's economic and intellectual engine. With its 23,000 employees, large student population, and research centers and health care services, it has an annual statewide economic impact of \$8.6 billion. In 2014, the University had \$877 million in externally sponsored research, sustaining an upward trajectory. The University ranks in the top 10 among all U.S. public research universities for research expenditures, as reported by the National Science Foundation.

As one of an elite few land-grant universities that also are world-class research institutions, and one of few major land-grant research institutions situated in a major metropolitan area, the University consistently has advanced the land-grant mission with exceptional vigor—distinguished by a comprehensive commitment to integrating public engagement deeply into teaching and learning, research and discovery. The University also strongly embraces equity and diversity as foundational values, and has made both engagement and diversity central to the vision and goals of its ten-year strategic plan.

In the respected Shanghai Jiao Tong rankings, the University of Minnesota is ranked 30th in the world among all universities and 10th among all public universities in the United States. As a comprehensive and globally engaged research university with many top-ranked academic programs, the University of Minnesota Twin Cities has a geographically diverse graduate and professional enrollment and ranks 16th as a destination for international students in the United States, with about 7,000 such students from 137 countries. Eighteen percent of students on the Twin Cities campus are students of color or Hispanic, and 13 percent are international students. In 2015, the University of Minnesota Twin Cities received the Higher Education Excellence in Diversity Award from *Insight into Diversity* for the fourth year in a row. The University is ranked by *Forbes* as one of the country's 10 best educational employers.

The University of Minnesota Twin Cities is in the second year of implementing an ambitious ten-year [strategic plan](#) to accelerate advancement of excellence in research, teaching, and outreach. The plan builds on the strengths and special opportunities of the campus. With a theme of “Driving Tomorrow,” the plan aims to create a more nimble, innovative, and integrative university that will bring its resources more powerfully to bear on “Grand Challenges”—the most pressing and complex challenges of the state

and world. Supporting goals focus on exceptional research and curriculum integrating grand challenges; reciprocal engagement that leverages the University's dynamic location; field-shaping researchers and teachers; and building an invigorated campus culture of innovation and achievement. The Twin Cities campus received the Community Engagement Carnegie Classification in 2005 and 2015.