Contents

A Snapshot of the University 3
The President and Vice-Chancellor 5
Candidate Qualifications 7
The Appointment 9

CONTACT INFORMATION

Colleen Keenan | Partner and Head, National Academic Practice
colleen.keenan@odgersberndtson.com

Odgers Berndtson
Suite 3300, Royal Bank Plaza, South Tower, 200 Bay Street
Toronto, Ontario M5J 2J3
Canada
A Snapshot of the University

Established in 1964, the University of Guelph is a research-intensive, comprehensive university, with nearly 27,000 undergraduate and over 3,000 graduate students. The University’s main campus resides on the ancestral lands of the Attawandaron people and the treaty lands and territory of the Mississaugas of the Credit. The University of Guelph plays an integral role in the educational, business, and cultural life of the province of Ontario, through the impact of its teaching, research, and community service, and through its special mandate to serve the Province in support of the agri-food sector and veterinary medicine. Guelph’s seven colleges conduct leading edge teaching and research in the physical and life sciences, arts, business, social sciences, and agricultural and veterinary sciences. In addition, through a collaboration with the Humber College Institute of Technology and Advanced Learning in Toronto, the University of Guelph-Humber offers a unique blend of theoretical and applied learning that allows students to earn both a university degree and a college diploma. The University’s Ridgetown Campus in southwestern Ontario is a leader in applied agriculture, animal sciences, and environmental sciences.

Guelph is recognized for its academic reputation, for being student-centered, and for its strong sense of community. At the core of its identity is a focus on sustainability and improving life, a commitment that has found deep resonance within the community. An excellent comprehensive university with world renowned agriculture and veterinary colleges, the University is strong, vibrant, distinct, and highly successful across a range of measures. Its faculty have a strong track record of generating new knowledge and discovery. The University applies its knowledge and discoveries to shape understanding and effect lasting positive change. The University is deeply committed to mobilizing research into action and has a robust track record of successful commercialization, particularly in the food and agriculture space. U of G discoveries are fueling job creation, supporting sustainable food production, protecting the environment, improving the quality of life, and empowering those who are frequently marginalized. Within the University, research is infused into teaching. It creates experiential educational opportunities that enrich the student experience and provide transferable skills that make graduates more competitive in the job market.

The pandemic, of course, has presented a wide range of challenges for the University of Guelph, for all universities, and for society as a whole. There will be an immediate need for the President to continue bringing the community safely back together, and to work with faculty, staff, and students to embrace new ways of teaching and learning, new forms of scholarship, and new ways of interacting and connecting as members of a community.
There is no question that the pandemic has exposed both challenges that need to be addressed and opportunities that need to be capitalized upon. Even as the University recognizes the very real work to be done to imagine a post-COVID, just and inclusive, innovative and sustainable university, it remains an exciting time for Guelph. There is enthusiasm for, and commitment to, the University’s Strategic Framework (currently undergoing a refresh), which identifies five key themes that have been widely embraced by students, faculty, staff, alumni, and partners. This Framework has set the direction for the future, and its pillars remain strong and relevant, even in the face of the disruptions and difficulties of the last year and a half.

The focus on improving life and on sustainability remains more relevant and pertinent than ever. There is a feeling that Guelph is poised to take a real place on the world stage – as its areas of research and scholarly excellence align with some of the most pressing issues facing our planet today.
The President and Vice-Chancellor

The 9th President and Vice-Chancellor arrives at both an exciting and challenging juncture, as the University builds on its successes, addresses deep challenges, and reimagines its future with the many changes wrought by the pandemic.

A commitment to and understanding of the principles of sustainability – environmental, social, and governance – will be of paramount importance for the new President as the University faces the future. Core to this is a deep responsibility for, and dedication to, the pursuit of an equitable, diverse, and inclusive campus. The pandemic, along with the many other significant events in the last year, has shone a light on inequity, not just on the Guelph campus but globally. There is a deep desire by members of the University community to forge a path to a more just, equitable, and fair society and there is much work to be done at the University to achieve this goal. The community will look to the President, both for empathy, concern, and commitment, but also for knowledge about and understanding of the issues, and the desire and drive to lead the community to lasting change.

The President will foster an environment that encourages dialogue and a diversity of perspectives. The University of Guelph is a community that embraces collaboration and collegiality and comes together to support what is in the best interest of the University. It is a University that celebrates engaged, open, and transparent communications between the Board and the Senate, and sees this strong relationship as core to its culture. The President must value, embrace, and support collegial governance, be a good and meaningful listener, and be deeply committed to engaging all citizens in imagining the University’s future and pursuing that vision together.

Governments across the country will continue to adjust their approaches to funding universities as economies recover from the pandemic, and the President needs to provide courageous leadership and have a vision around building capacity even in a difficult budgetary climate – ensuring that the financial and human resources are in place for the University to realize its goals. While the University is on a stable financial footing, thanks to careful planning and vigilance, it still must respond to the challenging and evolving fiscal landscape. The President must be comfortable embracing philanthropy and fundraising responsibilities, must identify diverse, innovative channels for sustainable funding to support excellence in research and pedagogy, must continue to cultivate and foster productive partnerships with industry, and must have the ability to envision and develop novel strategies for attracting and/or generating resources that will allow the University to grow. At the same time, careful stewardship, transparency, and good governance will be more critical than ever, and the President will need to bring a firm hand and strong focus on long-term sustainability.

Teaching and learning have, of course, been irrevocably altered by the pandemic, and the challenge moving forward will be to find the right balance between in-person and online learning, to make the right investments in both virtual and physical infrastructure, and to provide the right
supports to faculty, staff, and students as they adjust to a new and rapidly evolving post-secondary environment. To ensure that the University of Guelph continues to be at the forefront of both teaching and research innovation, the President must have superb entrepreneurial instincts, and a natural tendency to set high standards and encourage big ideas. They will be a champion for excellence in teaching.

As higher education becomes more globalized and institutions make strategic decisions in order to remain competitive, the President will work with colleagues to expand the international dimensions of Guelph’s research portfolio, including by communicating research successes more broadly and forming international research and scholarly partnerships. Increased internationalization as a whole – including bringing more international students to Guelph and supporting them to thrive and succeed, ensuring the campus is a welcoming and inclusive place for people from all backgrounds, and providing local students with robust and varied international experiences – is also a goal for the University and the President will play a key role in its achievement.

Working alongside an outstanding senior leadership team, the President will provide guidance and direction on all of these fronts, driving transformation in an era of uncertainty, while being mindful of, and attentive to, the very real challenges members the University community are facing as they adapt to and embrace new ways of working, learning, and living.

As the President addresses all of these challenges and pursues these opportunities, ensuring an outstanding student experience will be front and centre. This has always been a hallmark of the University of Guelph, and is especially important as we move into a new era and students recover from the disruption of these last 18 months. The President will continually elevate the quality of the student experience, ensure that communication with the student community is engaging and constructive, and ensure that students are prepared for increasingly diverse and evolving career options, all while working with the whole campus to adjust to new modalities of teaching and learning. Continuing the focus on enhancing student services will be a priority, as will be the focus on the well-being and mental health of all members of the Guelph community. This is an important issue across the campus, and one that will remain at the forefront.

The President will lead the campus through a delicate balancing act – honouring and valuing the very strong underpinnings of the University and the ongoing relevance of, and enthusiasm for, the University’s Strategic Framework, while navigating through the uncharted waters of a post-pandemic world. The new President will build on the excellence and momentum that is already in place, nurture the community through the transitions ahead, and bring energy and vision to imagining the future of the 21st century university.
Candidate Qualifications

The successful candidate for President and Vice-Chancellor of the University of Guelph will be an inspiring and globally-minded leader, with impressive scholarly credentials in their field, a deep concern for the student experience, an unwavering commitment to equity and inclusion, and a strong and distinguished administrative track record earned in a complex environment. They must respect and thrive in a collegial culture, and have a natural tendency toward inclusivity, consultation, and transparency. Above all, they will be a person of unassailable integrity, someone whose words and actions are rooted in a strong ethical foundation. The President must be brave and bold, while consulting carefully and thoughtfully, as they chart the path forward -- building on Guelph’s considerable strengths and exploring new directions.

Although the Presidential Search Committee recognizes that no one individual possesses the sought-after qualifications in equal measure, it has developed a set of criteria to articulate the desired background, experience, and personal qualities of the successful candidate:

Leadership

- An abiding commitment to collegial governance, the ability to work within existing governance frameworks, and a willingness to embrace, listen to, respect, and celebrate the diversity of views held by Guelph’s constituents.
- An understanding of, and a deep commitment to, equity, diversity, and inclusion. This must be combined with a track record of success in fostering a community that is not only diverse, but truly inclusive.
- Outstanding communications and relationship-building skills, and the ability to meaningfully connect with the wide range of stakeholders who make up the University community.
- A proven ability to lead institutional change, to articulate a vision and strategy for the University of Guelph, and then inspire the community in its pursuit of its goals.
- An entrepreneurial mindset, and the courage and creativity to think boldly about the future of the University.
- The courage, judgment, and wisdom to make important decisions when they have to be made, to delegate effectively to ensure that they are implemented, and to hold people accountable for their actions.
- A genuine commitment to students and to the quality of their experience – both academically and as citizens of a community – and a track record in their own career of advancing and improving the lives of students.
- Experience in mentoring and leading a high-performance team, and the skills to both delegate and to empower to ensure that everyone is working to their highest and best ability.
- Strong strategic planning skills, and sound experience in leading an institution through complex planning processes – from inception and creation of ideas and strategies, to execution and implementation.
Personal Qualities

- A natural personal style that connects easily with others, that balances firmness and fairness in problem resolution, and that demonstrates an active interest in the lives of students, faculty, staff, and alumni as individuals in the Guelph community.
- The passion and energy to engage with students, faculty, staff, and alumni as the University articulates and pursues its goals.
- Empathy, humility, and selflessness, which are all deeply held values at the University of Guelph.
- Integrity and character, courage and fortitude, along with superb communications skills, a high level of energy, and a good sense of humour.
- A compassionate leader, a good listener, and an empathetic colleague.

Administration and Management

- A solid track record as an administrator in a complex, post-secondary environment.
- Experience in change management and in responding to diverse and unexpected external pressures, and a track record of working with a diverse team of administrators and faculty to ensure academic and operational excellence in a constantly changing environment.
- Experience managing in a challenging fiscal situation, sound business acumen, and well-developed people management skills.
- The skills and ability to keep a focused eye on financial sustainability, and to find creative and innovative ways to both contain costs and to increase revenue.
- Experience in, and a comfort level with, working effectively with a Board and Senate, combined with a commitment to first-class governance.

Scholarship

- An advanced terminal degree and a record of success in both teaching and research.
- A demonstrated commitment to ensuring academic excellence, to the value of academic integrity and freedom, and to the pursuit of knowledge in all of its forms.
- An enthusiasm for interdisciplinary work, and the ability to motivate and inspire faculty and students to pursue collaborative and creative ways to pursue knowledge and solve problems.
- A deep appreciation for the importance of teaching, research, and public engagement, and a track record of actively supporting, encouraging, and fostering innovation and excellence in all three.

Government and Community Relations

- Experience in building strong partnerships with government, funding bodies, industry, other educational institutions, and community groups, and a comfort level and sophistication to enable success in working with senior stakeholders across both the public and private sectors.
- A track record as a persuasive and effective advocate, with a particular knowledge of, and affinity for, government and industry relations.
- Issues management experience, especially in the high-profile areas that may require presidential comment in the media or other public fora.
- Experience and comfort with leading and actively participating in the institutional advancement function at Guelph, including fundraising, communications and marketing, and donor and alumni relations.
The Appointment

Key Dates

Consideration of candidates will begin in late June 2021, with the expectation that the 9th President will take office in the summer 2022.

How to Apply

Nominations and/or applications should be submitted, in confidence, to Colleen Keenan at guelphpresident@odgersberndtson.com.

Your Personal Information

At Odgers Berndtson, we have always respected the privacy and the confidentiality of the personal information provided to us in context with our executive search assignments. This has been a fundamental value in building trust with our candidates and clients. We are committed to keeping your information secure and managing it in accordance with our legal responsibilities wherever we operate in the world, including the Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act (“PIPEDA”) in Canada.

For more information on your rights and to find out much more about how we process your personal data, a copy of our Privacy Policy is available for your review on our website.

By providing us with a copy of your resume and any subsequent personal information directly or from third parties on your behalf such as references, you understand that it has been furnished with your consent for the purpose of possible disclosure to our client, who has agreed to comply with our Privacy Policy. We will not disclose your personal information to clients without your prior knowledge and consent.

Equal Opportunity

The University of Guelph is strongly committed to employment equity and especially welcomes applications from all qualified candidates, including members of visible minorities, Indigenous persons, members of diverse sexuality and gender identities, and persons with disabilities. All qualified candidates are encouraged to apply.

The University and Odgers Berndtson will take all reasonable steps to accommodate the varying needs of applicants during the recruitment process. If you require accommodation to participate in the recruitment process, please inform Odgers Berndtson.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

In accordance with the Accessible Canada Act, 2019 and all applicable provincial accessibility standards, upon request, accommodation will be provided by both the University and Odgers Berndtson and throughout the recruitment, selection and/or assessment process to applicants with disabilities.

Fostering equity, diversity and inclusion in recruitment practices is a key aspect of the Odgers Berndtson search process. Should you choose to self-identify as a member of a designated group please access: https://form.jotform.com/202334630121034