

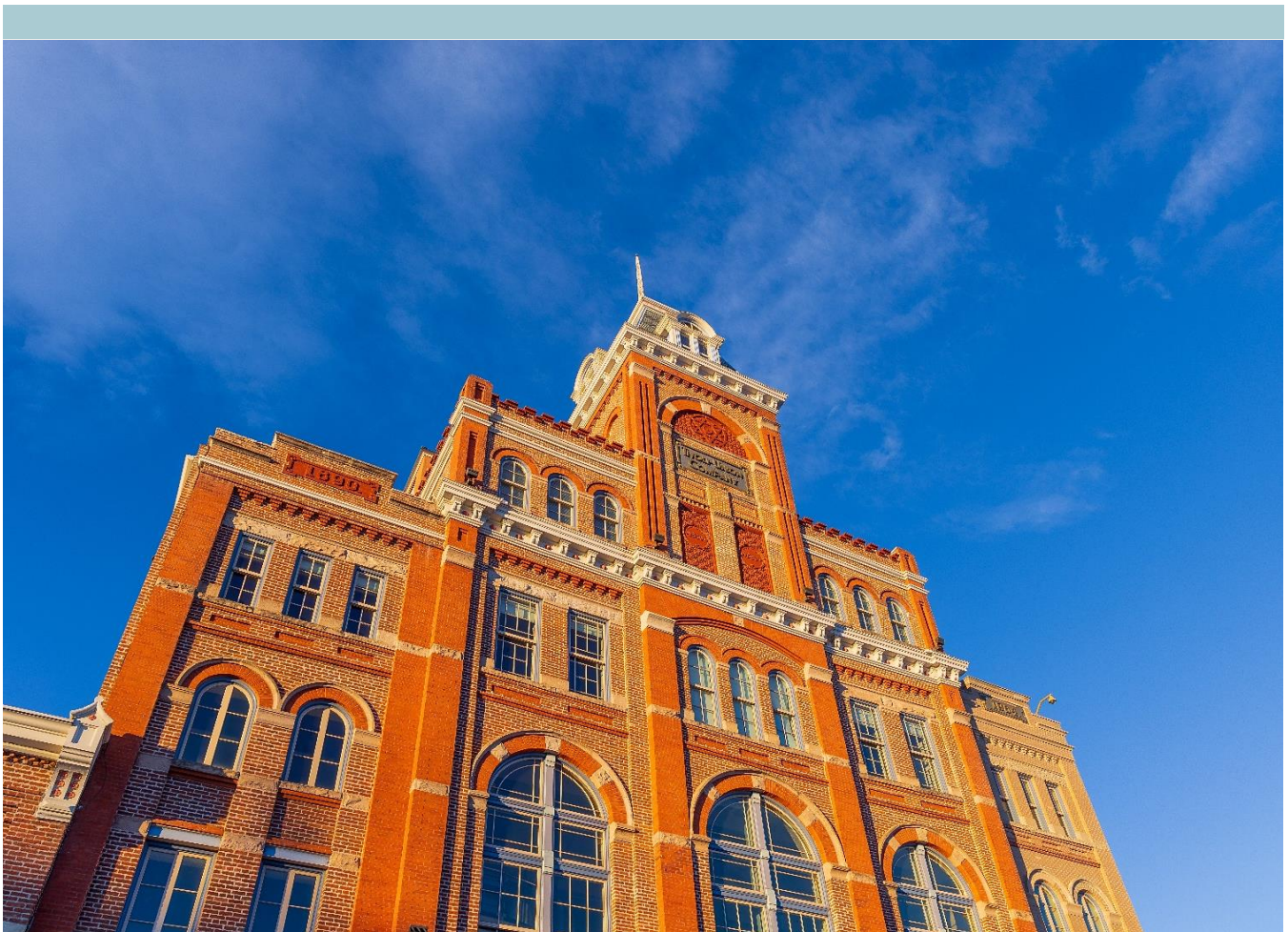


University of Colorado **Denver**

**Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor
for Academic Affairs**

Leadership Profile

Spring 2025



WittKieffer

Executive Summary

The University of Colorado Denver (CU Denver) seeks an innovative, forward-looking, and collaborative leader to serve as Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs.

CU Denver, part of the University of Colorado system, was officially founded in 1973. Located on the downtown Auraria Campus and stretching into Denver's central business district, CU Denver brings innovation, research, creativity, and learning to the heart of a global city. CU Denver is the state's premier public urban research university, with more than 100 in-demand, top-ranked bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degree programs.

Throughout its history, CU Denver has supported students from all walks of life—and its faculty and staff are deeply committed to providing an inclusive and transformative educational experience, leading the institution to be recognized by *U.S. News and World Report* as the #1 university in Colorado for social mobility for four consecutive years. The university educates over 13,500 students (70% undergraduate and 30% graduate). Students of color make up 46% of the undergraduate student body and 51% of undergraduates are first-generation college students. CU Denver is a Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI) and the first Rocky Mountain region campus to gain Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institution (AANAPISI) status, reflecting efforts to increase access and opportunity for those underserved by higher education. Nearly 1,000 international students come from all over the world to study at CU Denver. Learn more at: [About Us | The University of Colorado Denver](#)

The Provost will join CU Denver at a time of great excitement and momentum. They will draw upon the university's existing strength in teaching, research, and creative works, providing outstanding leadership that celebrates and uplifts the programs and people contributing to current successes, while working together with partners across the institution to imagine and implement changes and innovations that advance the academic enterprise. The right leader will have a tremendous opportunity to position this unique institution to enhance student outcomes and make a difference in the communities CU Denver serves—with impressive local and global impact. Reporting to [Chancellor Kenneth T. Christensen](#), who officially began his role on February 1, 2025, the new Provost will serve as chief academic officer. Together with the leadership team, Deans, faculty, staff, and students, the Provost will partner closely with the Chancellor to help lead and drive transformation of the university to simultaneously meet the urgent demands of the moment, as well as the needs of tomorrow.

As a unifying, empathetic, and institution-wide leader, the new Provost will support current and future academic innovations on a campus that has a strong history in both traditional and online education. The Provost will build upon a transformative academic, research, and creative works agenda and will partner closely with a new Vice Chancellor for strategic enrollment and student success, ensuring that CU Denver is able to optimize its spirit and history of innovation and is positioned as a leading contemporary institution. They will also work with the Executive Vice Chancellor for Finance and Administration to effectively deploy financial resources, fine tune the budget model, and ensure enrollment and financial projections are in alignment with targets across the academic enterprise. The university is committed to a nimble and responsive approach to higher education's changing landscape—one that addresses the evolving needs of students, including social justice, public health, and other challenges impacting its community.

The Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor has responsibility for academic and faculty affairs, with a comprehensive \$159 million portfolio comprised of 1,800 faculty and staff. The Provost oversees the Deans of the College of Architecture and Planning; College of Arts & Media; Business School; School of Education & Human Development; College of Engineering, Design and Computing; College of Liberal Arts & Sciences; School of Public Affairs; and affiliated academic and research departments. They also oversee the director of the Auraria Library. The new Chancellor seeks a bold and nimble academic leader who will embrace the enormous potential of this distinctive and entrepreneurial institution and the students, faculty, and staff that find themselves drawn to it. The successful candidate will be a seasoned, creative, and highly effective academic and administrative leader

with a strong record in research, scholarship, and/or creative work. CU Denver’s next Provost will have effective communication skills and be able to articulate the importance and nuance of a public, urban research university that serves a diverse student population and acts as an economic driver for the Denver metropolitan community and beyond.

CU Denver is committed to an ethical foundation and a sense of shared responsibility, transparency, and culture of trust. The new Provost must possess impeccable moral character and conviction in serving the greater good of the university and in partnering with its faculty in a vibrant shared governance environment. The Provost will help lead a university in its next wave of evolution, joining an energetic new Chancellor, a strong and evolving executive team, and a campus community committed to advancing inclusive and transformative educational experiences for a diverse student body.

For information on how to apply or to submit nominations, please refer to the section “Procedure for Candidacy” at the end of this document.



Role of the Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs

At the direction of and partnering closely with the Chancellor, the Provost is responsible for faculty and academic affairs across the CU Denver campus. The Provost oversees the academic management of the university's seven colleges and schools, the Auraria Library, and affiliated academic and research departments to articulate the university's academic and scholarly vision and realize their successful implementation.

CU Denver's seven colleges and schools each provide students with unique opportunities to develop and learn alongside an exceptional faculty and staff. The Provost works to build strong relationships with the CU Denver [Faculty Assembly](#) and [University of Colorado Denver Association of Lecturers and Instructors \(UCDALI\)](#), [Staff Council](#), and the [Student Government Association](#) approaching those partnerships with an open mind and intent to listen and, in collaboration, ensure that matters related to academic policy and decision making are ethical, relevant, and upheld.

The Provost ensures that the university's innovative high-quality programs, resources, and services are designed to help faculty achieve rank and career advancement, and that research and creative endeavors, and opportunities to advance the university's academic and scholarly excellence, are in place. It is also the Provost's responsibility to ensure that the university's pedagogical approach is appropriately reimaged for the 21st century world. The Provost should be a thought partner and leader with the Deans in prioritizing student success and developing new and innovative programs, traditional degree programs, and non-credit bearing credentials that position students for career success, including through cross-college collaborations that create new and amplify existing strengths and impact.

The Provost oversees a comprehensive, \$159 million portfolio including 1,800 faculty and staff across seven colleges and schools that together offer 133 academic degrees and over 100 certificate and specialty programs. They also oversee the Auraria Library, which serves not only CU Denver, but Metropolitan State University of Denver and the Community College of Denver.

[College of Architecture and Planning](#) is the only school in Colorado to offer a Bachelor of Science in Architecture and accredited graduate degrees in architecture, urban planning, and landscape architecture, as well as an interdisciplinary Ph.D. and interdisciplinary master's degrees in urban design and historic preservation, and certificates in design build, historic preservation, landscape architecture, classical architecture, interior design, and geographic information systems.

[College of Arts & Media](#) leverages its influential location in the heart of Denver's thriving arts industry to produce graduates who are ready to inspire, lead, and create. CAM offers top-ranked degrees and programs in film & television, media forensics, music & entertainment, and visual arts.

The [Business School](#) makes the most of being deeply embedded in the heart of Denver's fast-growing economy to open doors and lower barriers to success, drawing upon Denver's downtown business community as a partner in education. AACSB global accreditation places the CU Denver Business School in the top 5% of business schools worldwide.

[School of Education & Human Development](#) is a statewide and national leader for educational quality, access, and equity across the education lifespan, birth through higher education. Its undergraduate and graduate programs prepare and inspire education and mental health leaders to have a profound impact in fostering student opportunity, achievement, and success in urban and diverse communities.

[College of Engineering, Design and Computing](#) focuses on providing students with a comprehensive engineering education at the undergraduate, graduate, and professional level. Faculty conduct research that

spans five disciplines of bioengineering, civil engineering, computer science and engineering, electrical engineering, and mechanical engineering.

College of Liberal Arts and Sciences delivers a liberal arts and sciences education that is focused on helping find answers to the most inspiring and challenging questions of our modern world, with over 75 major and minor degree programs including the ability to transcend traditional academic boundaries.

School of Public Affairs offers degree programs in criminal justice and public affairs as well as professional certification and leadership training programs. The school is ranked by *U.S. News & World Report* as the top public affairs school in Colorado and #29 in the nation, and the #2 online graduate criminal justice program.

Direct Reports

In addition to the Deans of the colleges and schools, the following positions report to the Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor:

- Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Innovation & Strategy
- Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Planning & Institutional Effectiveness
- Associate Vice Chancellor for Faculty Affairs
- Associate Vice Chancellor for Research/Chief Research Officer
- Assistant Vice Chancellor for Graduate Education
- University Librarian and Director of the Auraria Library

Affiliated Areas

CU Denver and the [CU Anschutz Medical campus](#) enjoy a historic partnership, and a number of units and programs are consolidated between the campuses including some academic and student affairs functions, information technology, financial services, and facilities. The Executive Vice Chancellor of Academic and Student Affairs (EVC) for CU Anschutz has the authority over decisions affecting academic and student affairs at CU Anschutz. Given that some of the departments and services overseen by the Provost also support the Anschutz campus, the Provost, in partnership with the CU Anschutz EVC, ensures the effective provision of these shared services.



Opportunities and Expectations for Leadership

The following inter-related leadership opportunities should feature prominently in the new Provost's first few years at the university.

- **Provide Institution-wide Leadership in Partnership with a New Chancellor**

Chancellor Christensen seeks a Provost with the energy, entrepreneurial spirit, focus, and finesse to partner with him and with the faculty in envisioning the optimal academic future for CU Denver. The new Provost will be expected to take a vision and translate it into action, crafting a forward-looking and realizable plan and pulling the right levers so that the plan is executed. They will be an engaged and visible leader on campus, playing an instrumental and convening role across the institution, providing direction and support to academic and non-academic areas alike, serving as a critical conduit for information flow in all directions.

- **Champion Academic Quality, Relevance, Innovation, and Research**

The university seeks to meet the needs of humanity, and the new Provost will be expected to lead an optimization of pedagogical advances, faculty development, online learning, and flexible modalities that meet the needs of adult and working learners. Doing so will require the support of faculty to build new education models and work with employers, leaders, and institutional partners outside CU Denver to ensure the university continues to field programs that align with the evolving economic demands of Denver and Colorado.

The Provost will partner with the Deans and faculty to position the university as a problem solver on behalf of its community and the world via a thriving and growing research enterprise at the center of CU Denver, and by looking and collaborating across distinct colleges and optimizing an entrepreneurial ecology within which the university's research, scholarship, and creative activities can flourish. This will require growing a culture and implementing policies that prioritize and catalyze research, technology transfer and commercialization, increasing externally-funded sponsored projects, enhancing start-up packages, supporting the university's research administration, continuing to expand laboratory and other spaces, working to secure educational and career support for graduate students, and vigorously pursuing resources and partnerships to help subsidize the strength of the university's research enterprise.

- **Enhance the University's Digital Footprint**

The new Provost will be expected to evaluate and strengthen an already robust digital pedagogy that spans undergraduate to doctoral education and that bridges degree programs to lifelong learning. At present, CU Denver offers 41 [online](#) degree programs and certificates. These include 10 bachelor's, 17 master's, and 1 doctoral program, providing a high-quality education with maximum flexibility for students, many of whom are working adults who wish to learn when they can and from where they are. The university also offers degree programs and certificates that use a combination of [online and in-person modalities](#). A host of certificate, endorsement, and related programs complete CU Denver's online and hybrid offerings. Growing the university's digital footprint to impact learners where they are and when they can learn, expanding online programs, digital pedagogy, and the use of technology and artificial intelligence (AI) to add value in the digital and physical learning spaces and enhance student success will require collaboration with key partners at the system level and the public and private sector to design virtual education and credentialing that meet the needs of this next era of workforce.

- **Build Strong, Constructive Relationships Across the University Community**

The new Provost will embrace and enhance a strong commitment to shared governance structures and principles, resetting relationships, building trust, and fostering an inclusive and responsive campus climate. As a strategic leader on all aspects of university governance, it is expected that the Provost will be a collaborative, communicative, and transparent leader who engages with faculty, staff, and students appropriately and visibly, soliciting feedback and perspective in decision making for the good of the institution, championing the mission of the institution and the people who contribute to its attainment, and working across different constituencies to thoughtfully craft policy and programming. The Provost must be able to discuss the implications of various paths and decisions in a clear and transparent manner that promotes understanding, supports the university's direction, gains both input and buy in, and leads to the fortifying of a robust, resilient, and cohesive community.

▪ **Support Student Success**

CU Denver is a diverse academic community that attracts students of all ages and backgrounds. It is home to 51% first-generation college students and 46% students of color and is committed to supporting a holistic and inclusive approach to recruitment, retention, and student affairs that focuses on all stages of the student life cycle. The Provost will be asked to form a strong, active, and supportive partnership with a new Vice Chancellor for Strategic Enrollment and Student Success, who reports to the Chancellor and has a dotted reporting line to the Provost. The Provost will be responsible for supporting a community where every member takes responsibility for student success.



Professional Qualifications and Personal Qualities

The new Provost will be an innovative, agile, creative, collaborative, and proactive professional who embraces both an entrepreneurial mindset and a team-first environment and works with colleagues across the institution in a spirit of partnership, transparency, accountability, and fiscal responsibility. The Provost, in leading CU Denver's cohort of Deans, will take full advantage of the Deans' strengths as academic and administrative leaders to drive collaborative academic growth and impact across the campus.

The ideal candidate will have most if not all the following professional qualifications and personal characteristics:

- **Alignment with the mission:** A strong alignment with CU Denver's mission and educational potential, driven by a student-centered approach, belief in opportunity and the transformative power of education, understanding of research impact, commitment to community, and demonstrated impact in enhancing inclusive excellence for community members from all walks of life; an entrepreneurial mindset committed to exploring and executing new and innovative approaches to academic excellence in education, scholarship and engagement in an evolving higher ed landscape; deep understanding of faculty work and the faculty world, and an eagerness to tie into the university's academic and intellectual pursuits, with an understanding and appreciation of shared governance and the student experience, and the ability to maintain principled stances during challenges and crises.
- **Transformational reach:** A bold, optimistic approach to creative thinking, change management, and the possibilities for a university community that is working together for the greater good; an innovative mindset and an accompanying ability to galvanize free thinking in others and novel approaches, positioning the university as an impactful and positive force for the students and world of tomorrow; the ability to partner and collaborate across disciplinary boundaries in support of efficiency, excellence and student success; the ability to build upon and provide an elevating leadership that enhances a culture that reaches beyond standard methods, policies, practices, and approaches to achieve a transforming academic enterprise for all.
- **Leadership skills:** An ability to take a principled position, even in times of crisis; successful experience translating vision into action, substantive and decisive evaluation of academic programs, learning outcomes assessment, and accreditation, developing interdisciplinary programs, and the application of new learning modalities and technologies; demonstrated impact in fostering an inclusive and supportive campus culture for students, faculty, and staff from all walks of life; a successful record of creative leadership in generating external resources including such activities as successful grant development, partnership development, constituency building, and fundraising; ability to coalesce institutional priorities and achieve transformative results; ability to lead the harnessing of institutional research and data analytics to good effect; and a strong and informed commitment to shared governance, discussion, and solutions; demonstrated political savvy to navigate a complex landscape and work effectively and strategically with a wide variety of stakeholders.
- **Knowledge of contemporary issues in higher education:** Understanding of academic and research/creative affairs, institutional research, and the interplay between a robust portfolio of academic programs and the evolving landscape of student needs and enrollment; ability to recognize, appreciate, and be curious and conversant across a broad range of disciplines; understanding of the role of libraries, academic technology support, and emerging technologies; a proven and astute connection to the local, regional, and national higher education community regarding current economic and political realities from various perspectives and familiarity with current research and emerging trends; demonstrated understanding of online degree and certificate programs and their value and impact at a research university; unrelenting commitment to undergraduate and graduate education including familiarity with developing student success initiatives, using data-driven approaches to measure outcomes and success, and allocating resources appropriately to improve student performance including graduation rates, time to completion, and retention to ensure these remain above the state and national average and to close the equity gap; and an understanding of the opportunities and challenges attendant with being part of a large multi-campus system.

- **Management skills:** Demonstrated success in managing complex projects, groups, and organizations; ability to work with, supervise, and mentor others, plan and organize work, partner effectively with colleagues across divisions, and make decisions aligned with strategic priorities; ability to hold oneself accountable for execution and to establish a culture of accountability across the academic enterprise; significant experience in an academic administrative position in higher education that includes team building and collaboration, transparency in decision-making, respect for the opinions and voices of others, an understanding of and commitment to the role of shared governance in the academy, and the exercise of creativity, vision, and an entrepreneurial spirit in developing and achieving goals; strong and informed fiscal resourcefulness, including demonstrated experience in making strategic and difficult decisions about limited financial resource allocations for maximum impact on mission and an ability to work in partnership with finance and budget leaders to tune budget models, financial projections, and targets; capacity to provide outstanding leadership to institutional research, sharing data analysis and related information institution wide; and experience ensuring adherence to state, system, and institutional accreditation expectations and requirements and those of other relevant professional or programmatic accreditation agencies.
- **Communication skills:** Exemplary communication skills, ability to present information effectively and respond to questions from internal and external audiences with clarity, both orally and in writing, including the capacity to galvanize a wide range of audiences around a shared vision; demonstrated skill in seeking out various perspectives, listening with care, and working with others collaboratively to reach critical decisions, and the ability to communicate effectively about issues, decisions, and developments large and small; and a style of communication that builds trust and mutual respect.
- **Personal qualities:** A demonstrated confidence and ability as a senior leader with the humility and moral compass to be an effective part of a collaborative and collegial senior team; high levels of emotional intelligence, cultural competency, and empathy; a lack of overzealous ego and self-promotion, together with the desire to partner with others in service of the strongest possible effort and outcomes; an ability to listen and hear ideas and thoughts from a variety of interested parties and partners and to integrate the thinking and views of others into one's own; integrity and trustworthiness; flexibility, adaptiveness, optimism, and resilience.
- **Credentials:** A record of outstanding scholarship and teaching that inspires the respect of the academic community; an earned doctorate or other terminal degree and eligibility for an appointment at the rank of full professor with tenure in one of the university's departments.



About University of Colorado Denver

Overview

CU Denver strives to make education work for all through a commitment to transform lives, expand economies, and uplift communities. By resetting the playing field and increasing access to an excellent education, CU Denver is expanding access to lifelong education and advancing social mobility.

Located in the center of one of America's most vibrant and fastest-growing cities, the University of Colorado Denver is Denver's public urban research university. It educates a diverse student body through high quality academics, ambitious research, creative work, and civic engagement in the city it calls home. Leveraging its proximity to and partnership with public, nonprofit, and private sector employers, CU Denver's graduates gain the powerful combination of immersive classroom and real-world applied experiences that are in demand today. CU Denver provides well-educated top talent and a new generation of knowledge to fuel the future of Denver and the region.

CU Denver has a diverse student body of over 9,500 undergraduate and over 4,000 graduate students from all 50 states and 108 countries. Over 30% of undergraduate students are pursuing health-related degrees. The campus employs 1,800 faculty and staff and has an annual budget of \$394 million. CU Denver is located in downtown Denver. The university shares its campus with two other distinct and separate institutions: Community College of Denver and Metropolitan State University of Denver. The shared campus is called the Auraria campus and is the largest campus in the state. The three institutions maintain and manage the Auraria campus with a shared governance model through the Auraria Higher Education Center (AHEC). In addition to shared facilities (e.g., classrooms, labs, student union, library, health center) on this campus, CU Denver owns and operates three academic and administrative buildings in downtown Denver's urban core.

Learn more at [College Campus & Student Community Information | CU Denver and History of University of Colorado, Denver | CU Denver](#).

CU Denver by the Numbers

Students

- Approximately 14,000 students (state-funded students; 70% undergraduate / 30% graduate).
- 46% of undergraduates are students of color.
- 51% of undergraduates are first-generation college students.
- Over 130 student-led organizations.
- Undergraduate and Graduate students from 50 states and 108 countries.

Academics, Faculty, and Staff

- 7 colleges and schools.
- More than 130 undergraduate majors and minors.
- 1800 faculty and staff supporting student success.
- 12:1 average student-to-faculty ratio.

Alumni

- Over 100,000 alumni from more than 100 countries.

Finances

- \$832 million economic impact contributed to Colorado's economy.
- \$394 million annual budget.

2030 Strategic Plan

CU Denver's [2030 strategic plan](#) is a profound repositioning of CU Denver to be a public urban research university that works for all: learners of all kinds and at all stages of life, industries, and employers that need talent ready to hit the ground running, and communities requiring new solutions and discoveries. The plan has provided a strong and ambitious framework to guide action across the institution for the last several years. As CU Denver welcomes a new Chancellor in the fourth year of the plan's implementation, the university community will assess progress toward the plan's goals and determine a strategy that prioritizes efforts and initiatives to support their attainment over the next several years.

The University of Colorado System

CU Denver is part of the University of Colorado System, which has four distinct campuses and is led from a [system office](#) by [President Todd Saliman](#) and governed by a nine-member elected Board of Regents. The other three campuses are [CU Boulder](#), [CU Colorado Springs](#), and [CU Anschutz Medical Campus](#). The University of Colorado plays a profound role in the lives of individuals, businesses, and communities throughout Colorado, across the country, and around the world. More than a half million alumni are leaders in business, science, the arts, health care, and their communities. The university collectively contributes about \$17.2 billion to the Colorado economy. CU Denver's relationship with Anschutz, a world-class R1 university with six health professional schools offering over 40 degree programs, is a close one, and Anschutz collaborates with CU Denver on some administrative, academic, and student services.



Denver, Colorado

Denver, Colorado has established itself as a great, global city on many accounts. Set at the front range of the Rocky Mountains and known as the Mile High City, it is geographically stunning. Denver has a reputation for being extremely dynamic community where leaders across sectors are eager to partner to meet the needs of the city and its people. Many consider the Denver Metro area to have the perfect blend of outdoor adventure and metropolitan sophistication. It is a fast-growing and livable city for individuals and families and, in 2016, was named the best place to live in the United States by U.S. News & World Report.

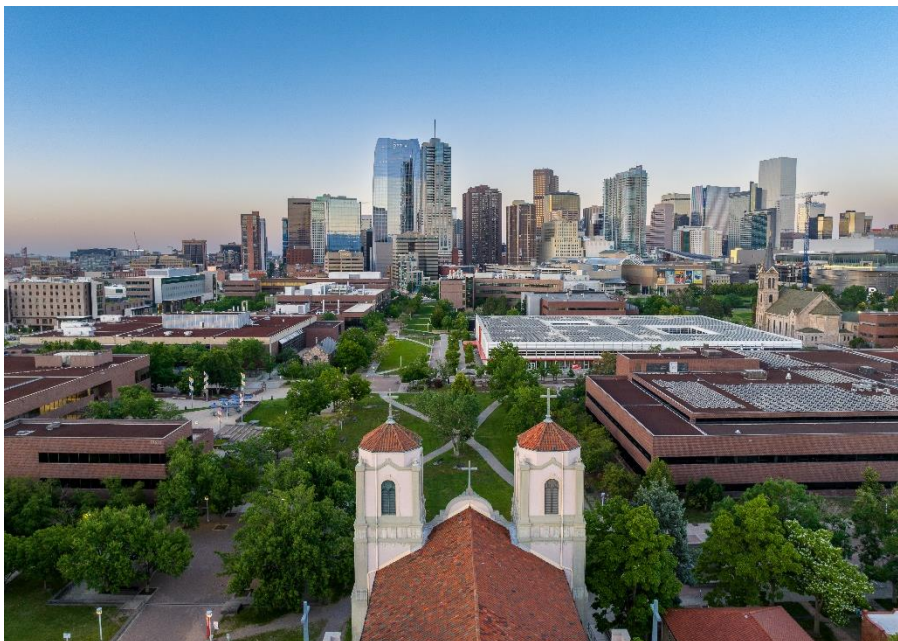
While the city itself has fewer than 700,000 residents, the seven-county metro area has a population approaching three million. The state of Colorado has ranked annually as one of the best states in which to do business, and Denver is known for its blend of large corporations and manufacturers as well as its vibrant small business environment. In 2024, Visual Capitalist named Denver one of the top 20 startup cities in the world (#9 in the United States).

Denver has a mild, dry, mostly sunny climate (whereas the mountains receive the majority of the snow) with 300 days of sunshine. The Denver metro area receives eight to 15 inches of precipitation a year. As such, parks and multiple outdoor activities are abundant year-round in Denver. The city itself has over 200 parks, and Denver is in close proximity to many prominent ski, golf, and recreation resorts.

Culture thrives in Denver. The city's diverse population supports culture through the Scientific and Cultural Facilities District (SCFD). This cultural district is home to many popular attractions like The Denver Performing Arts Complex — the second-largest arts center in the nation. SCFD also offers the Denver Museum of Nature and Science, The Denver Art Museum, The Denver Zoo, and the well-known Denver Botanic Gardens. Denver is one of only a few cities to offer eight professional sports teams and has built new stadiums in recent years. Excellent shopping and restaurants are found throughout the city, from Cherry Creek Shopping Center to downtown's pedestrian-friendly 16th Street Mall, just blocks from campus.

As might be expected of a thriving, vibrant city, Denver is home to exceptional public and private schools, colleges and universities, religious institutions, and vibrant neighborhoods.

For more information, visit: [Denver Colorado Vacations & Conventions | Plan Your Trip](#) or [Denver Metro Chamber of Commerce](#).





Procedure for Candidacy

All applications, nominations, and inquiries are invited. Applications should include, as two separate documents, a CV or resume, and a letter of interest addressing the themes in this profile. Professional references are not requested at this time.

Compensation and Benefit Information

Salary offers are determined based on final candidate qualifications and experience. The budgeted salary range that the University reasonably expects to pay for this position is \$350,000-\$400,000.

Benefits: The University of Colorado offers a full benefits package. Information on university benefits programs, including eligibility, is available at <http://www.cu.edu/employee-services>.

WittKieffer is assisting the University of Colorado Denver in this search. For fullest consideration, candidate materials should be received by March 14, 2025.

Application materials, nominations, and inquiries can be directed to:

Robin Mamlet, Lauren Bruce-Stets, and Bronwen Bares Pelaez, Ph.D. at

CUDenverProvost@wittkieffer.com

University of Colorado Denver is committed to recruiting and supporting a diverse student body, faculty and administrative staff. The university strives to promote a culture of inclusiveness, respect, communication and understanding. We encourage applications from women, ethnic minorities, persons with disabilities and all veterans. The University of Colorado is committed to diversity and equality in education and employment.

Commitment to Job Application Fairness: Applicants are not required to provide age or age-related information and may redact information related to age, date of birth, or dates of attendance at or graduation from an educational institution from any submissions during the initial application process.