

Lesley University

CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS

Search Profile

**VICE PRESIDENT OF
EQUITY, INCLUSION,
AND JUSTICE**

The Opportunity

Lesley University, grounded in its mission of social justice and a leader in preparing graduates who shape a more just, humane world, seeks a strategic, collaborative and courageous leader to serve as its inaugural Vice President of Equity, Inclusion and Justice (VPEIJ).

Reporting to the President, Lesley seeks an individual who embodies this new vision and who will work with the President, senior leadership team, deans of its four colleges, students, faculty and staff to collectively forge a new strategic plan for the University and diversity, equity and inclusive excellence—one that spotlights tangible efforts to recruit and retain students, faculty and staff, black and of color, as well as from other diverse backgrounds; to advance a culture and climate that celebrates access and equity for all. The Vice President will actively address immediate anti-racist training for all—leadership team, including the Board of Trustees, the faculty, staff and students; and to aggressively work with the President and senior leadership to develop an infrastructure and best practices—both within the Office and across the institution—to imbed both structures and processes that will be measurable, enduring and hold the members of the Lesley community together, accountable for success.

The successful candidate will be a creative, thoughtful thinker and role model for inclusive excellence, with knowledge of innovative emerging practices within the higher education context and demonstrable success in leading meaningful and accountable organizational change. The Vice President will possess the ability to partner with the President and be able to develop and implement strategic plans. The Vice President will evidence nuanced and matured emotional and social intelligence capabilities as well as cultural competence and communication skills—nurturing cooperative relationships and fostering courageous conversations to unify the community around an enduring strategic vision for the dignity of all. Experience in using data and research to create measurable goals and accountability will be a necessary asset. A terminal degree relevant to the duties of the position and/or real world experience where one has had the opportunity to evidence the requisite leadership capabilities are both ideal. Experience in student affairs, academic affairs, marketing and communications, as well as corporate or not-for-profit experience is most welcome.

Lesley University is poised to capitalize on its rich history of innovation and inclusion, a unique portfolio of programs centered around the “human arts” and enviable location in Cambridge, MA. Based on earned degrees in the last five years, Lesley is the largest educator of teachers and licensed mental health professionals in New England and is the founder of the field of expressive arts therapies. Lesley’s College of Art and Design (LA+D) with programs in animation, illustration, filmmaking, fine arts, photography, and design, has one of the highest placement rates among the 53 Association of Independent Colleges of Art and Design (AICAD) Art schools; is one of the leading private art schools in the US and one of the very few with a VFX minor. This expertise in education, counseling and arts therapy, and visual arts and communication, provides a strong foundation for making an impact on these disciplines and being a leader in how these areas interconnect to impact the future.

Confidential Inquiries may be made to our leadership transition counsel, Archer-Martin Associates, Nancy Martin and Patty Kepenash at 508-325-6161, and via e-mail at lesley@archermartinassociates.com.

For full consideration please forward, in confidence, your letter of interest and CV/Resume, which includes your contributions to Equity, Inclusion and Justice at Lesley@archermartinassociates.com.

At Lesley University we strive for a supportive and equitable environment where people - regardless of race, physical ability, age, neurodiversity, sexual orientation, gender identity, and other protected personal identities - can participate equally and fully as their true selves in all aspects of the university life. We are committed to diversity, equity and inclusion throughout the fabric of our institution.

Role and Opportunities for Leadership

Reporting to the President, the Vice President of Equity, Inclusion and Justice (VPEIJ) serves as a member of Lesley's senior leadership cabinet. This inaugural Vice President will champion compositional diversity of students, faculty and staff; spearhead cultural change to promote inclusive teaching and learning environments; promote diversity of perspectives; add new ideas and values into curricula; actualize the infrastructure design of the Office of Equity, Inclusion and Justice; and maintain accountability as the data-savvy leader for continuing progress and achievement of agreed-upon goals. The Vice President will serve as the leader for the strategic vision and plan, the institution's voice, and work to create permanence for Lesley's vision of Equity, Inclusion and Justice.

To accomplish this agenda, the Vice President has the opportunity to:

I. Partner with the President

The Vice President will enjoy a close working partnership with the President to define, articulate and implement the optimal goals for inclusive excellence at this moment. This individual will work with the senior leadership and deans to accomplish these agreed upon goals. The Vice President will work directly with the President to ensure clear communication between her and the University's constituent voices.

II. Provide Visionary and Strategic Leadership

While Lesley has diversity, equity and inclusion as one of its 5 Pillars of the 2030 Strategic Vision, it has ambitions for immediate action and focus on the Equity, Inclusion and Justice vision. The community welcomes the centrality and immediacy of prioritizing race, ethnicity, sexual orientation (LGBTQIA+) and gender identity and embraces its broader construct, which also includes mental health, linguistic diversity, neurodiversity, thought, religion, and socioeconomic diversity.

The new Vice President will take the opportunity to listen and learn from the many knowledgeable community members who stand ready to support and to participate in grounding the Vice President in the history and current assessment of programs and attitudes. The Vice President may choose to initiate an external assessment report, if one has not been started during this search.

A strategic plan for Equity, Inclusion and Justice will incorporate the ongoing work of the Lesley University Diversity Committee.

III. Actualize an Infrastructure Design for the Office of Equity, Inclusion and Justice

The University's design imbeds the goals of access and equity, campus climate and curriculum and learning within both the key functional areas across the University, as well as in an expanded Office of Equity, Inclusion and Justice.

The design imbeds the principles of inclusive excellence into:

- a. Academic Affairs—initially an advocate becomes a member of many faculty hiring committees so everyone becomes fluent in best practices for faculty hiring, and a member of the Provost's Office is designated for teaching, learning and development activities as well as for faculty onboarding and retention initiatives and establishes a mechanism of accountability within the structure of Faculty Assembly that reports directly to the Vice President of Equity, Inclusion and Justice.



Role and Opportunities and Expectations for Leadership

- b. Human Resources—so that the goals of the Office of Equity, Inclusion and Justice become a part of everyone’s job description; a written DEI statement becomes part of every job application; HR becomes responsible for diversity hiring and training for staff and administrative positions.
- c. Enrollment Initiatives—Designate individuals within the division to focus on communities where Lesley has or can develop community-based programs, partnerships, and relationships with community colleges.
- d. Student Affairs—With centralized advising comes the opportunity to have retention and advising become everyone’s responsibility, including a designated director who is a trainer and leader in Equity, Inclusion and Justice, student success work, including attention to first-generation college students, bi-lingual and immigrant learners.
- e. Marketing and Communications—to ensure the website is consistent about acknowledging, celebrating and elevating all the voices of inclusive excellence.
- f. Institutional Research—Designate a person within the existing Institutional Research office to focus on Equity, Inclusion and Justice and to develop a data driven scorecard showing the progress across the various constituent groups in the community.

Within this matrix organization, the President and the Vice President of Equity, Inclusion and Justice will jointly set the DEI goals for the Vice President and senior leadership team members to accomplish. They will jointly measure progress toward these goals.

Within the new Office of Equity, Inclusion and Justice are the following positions: A Chief Diversity Officer, who will be the new Vice President of Equity, Inclusion and Justice; Director of Multicultural Affairs (MASI); Associate Diversity Officer/Executive Director of USI; two Student Success Coaches of USI as direct reports; EO/Title IX Coordinator; three Graduate Assistants reporting to the Director of MASI; and one reporting to the EO/Title IX Coordinator. During the search for the Vice President, there are two (2) open positions, which have ongoing searches. It is anticipated that the vice presidential search could be completed by the time finalists are identified for these open positions. The new Vice President will have the opportunity to weigh in on the longer-range structure of the Office in consultation with the President and the Lesley University Diversity Committee.



IV. Serve as a Champion for Equity, Inclusion and Justice

The Vice President will be able to empower silent voices, to understand various stakeholders' perspectives and to enable them to be truly heard and be equal partners in the community.

Students want a champion who will put their concerns front and center and serve as a bridge to facilitate dialogue among students, faculty and staff.

The Vice President will work with the President and the Interim Chief Human Resources Officer to educate offenders and to address repeat offenders.

V. Execute Equity, Inclusion and Justice Strategies to Produce Tangible Results and Advance Transformative Cultural Change

The Vice President of Equity, Inclusion and Justice will focus on the assessment and implementation strategies received by the Diversity Committee, a Diversity Assessment Initiative and the new Diversity Strategic Plan.

The Vice President must recognize and take action to produce some short-term results useful to students while they are at Lesley and longer-term initiatives that will require more time to fully emerge.

Central to success is the function of ongoing data analysis and assessment by the Vice President of Equity, Inclusion and Justice, who serves as Lesley's data-savvy narrator of successes and progress.



Professional and Personal Capabilities and Qualities

The Vice President of Equity, Inclusion and Justice will be a visionary and strategic leader who can inspire the members of the Lesley community to shape and define its authentic voice for the future of diversity, equity and inclusion for the University and beyond.

The ideal candidate will:

- o evidence the leadership capability to partner with the president in bringing about and maintaining inclusive excellence across the university, setting accountable goals and bringing about systemic change while communicating effectively with the community;
- o serve as a role model for students, faculty and the Lesley community;
- o have demonstrated expertise in successful, accountable systems of organizational change;
- o possess expertise on issues of diversity, equity and inclusion;
- o preferably hold an earned terminal degree relevant to the position and demonstrative depth of content knowledge in the areas of diversity, equity, and inclusion or equivalent experience in the content or field;
- o evidence experience preferably in administration in a higher education setting—this experience could be within the field of diversity, equity and inclusion, and it could also be in academic affairs, student affairs, communications and marketing, human resources, enrollment. Experience in another not-for-profit or for-profit setting will be considered;
- o evidence experience in the theory and practice of change management and organizational leadership;

Professional and Personal Capabilities and Qualities

- o possess highly effective emotional and social intelligence with particular aptitude as an empathetic listener;
- o demonstrate the ability to make sure all voices are heard;
- o Have the courage, humility, and experience to lead as well as engage in difficult and necessary conversations and to make courageous decisions even if they might be controversial, unpopular, or against the status quo;
- o evidence authentic communication capabilities;
- o be capable of developing trusting and respectful relationships with students, faculty, staff, alumni/ae, the Board of Trustees as well as members of the Boston community and beyond;
- o possess political astuteness and strong interpersonal skills in order to successfully navigate a higher education culture that has a faculty union and a community of exciting entrepreneurs and caring, passionate individuals;
- o possess an appreciation and respect for data in making informed, persuasive decisions—so to develop measurable goals and reliable systems of accountability;
- o be a person whose professional work and experiences are reflective of the Lesley mission.





Lesley
UNIVERSITY