An Invitation to Apply for the Position of

Executive Director of
The Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity
The Ohio State University

“The Ohio State University must be a leading light along the arc toward greater inclusion, justice and understanding…”

President Michael V. Drake
March 31, 2015
Investiture Ceremony

THE SEARCH

The Ohio State University, a top 20 public research land-grant university and the state’s flagship, invites nominations and applications for the position of Executive Director (ED) of the Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity. Established in 2003, The Kirwan Institute is an interdisciplinary engaged research institute named for former university president William E. “Brit” Kirwan in recognition of his efforts to champion diversity at Ohio State. The mission of the Kirwan Institute is to create a just and inclusive society where all people and communities have an opportunity to succeed. The Institute’s goal is to connect individuals and communities with opportunities needed for thriving by educating the public, building the capacity of allied social justice organizations, and investing in efforts that support equity and inclusion.

Reporting to the Office of Academic Affairs, through the Vice Provost for Strategic Planning and Implementation, the Executive Director is responsible for leading the Kirwan Institute’s education, research, and outreach missions. As a scholar leader, the ED is expected to develop a compelling vision and strategic plan for the Institute; maintain Kirwan’s reputation as a leading voice for equity and justice both nationally and locally; build relationships and create new opportunities for Ohio State faculty to collaborate and engage in research and scholarship aligned with Kirwan’s mission; and maximize current revenue streams and attract new philanthropic support.

This is a tremendous opportunity for an active scholar of race and ethnicity to build upon the Kirwan Institute’s strong foundation and national reputation. The ED will bring a commitment to
interdisciplinary engaged research and an instinct for institutional collaboration. The next ED will be a distinguished scholar with the talent and inclination for setting a strategy and managing a professional staff and budget.

The Ohio State University has retained Isaacson, Miller to assist in this important search. Please direct all inquiries and applications as indicated at the end of this document.

THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

The Ohio State University, founded in 1870 as a land-grant university, rapidly became one of the nation’s finest comprehensive public universities and is a member of the Association of American Universities (AAU) – the only public university in Ohio with AAU status. As of fall 2017, the university community consisted of just over 66,000 students, 7,000 faculty, and 25,000 professional and administrative staff. In addition to the Columbus campus, Ohio State comprises four regional campuses (Lima, Mansfield, Marion, and Newark) as well as the Agricultural Technical Institute at Wooster. Additionally, as a global university, Ohio State has opened offices – Global Gateways – around the world. The university houses 15 colleges, spanning the entire spectrum of a comprehensive public university. Ohio State’s endowment now exceeds $3.5 billion.

The Ohio State University is a world-class institution of scholarship, learning, and public service. The university’s undergraduate program is ranked sixteenth among all public universities in the U.S. News and World Report. Graduate and professional education programs at Ohio State are all consistently rated the best of all similar programs in Ohio and in the top quartile nationally. Annual research expenditures near $850 million.

Columbus, Ohio’s state capital and largest city, is a diverse city in terms of race, ethnicity, nativity, culture, income, identity, and opportunity. The city is nested in Franklin County where racial diversity includes approximately 23% Black, 5% Asian, 5% Latinx, and 3% multiracial residents. Columbus is also home to the nation’s second largest Somali immigrant community, with an overall immigrant population that is over twice the state average in relative size. Columbus is the only city in Ohio to experience sustained population growth with projections estimating that it will add an additional million people by 2050. Last year, Columbus beat out more than 70 competitors nationwide to be named the U.S. Department of Transportation’s Smart City, and Ohio State is the lead research partner in the effort. University scientists and facilities play a central role in implementing the $140 million program to develop model innovative transportation strategies for the region and nation.

On March 31, 2015, President Michael V. Drake, MD, took the oath of office as Ohio State’s 15th president. During his tenure, Ohio State has seen record highs in applications, graduation rates, academic excellence, diversity and donor support, and increases in NIH and NSF research funding. The university has received national recognition for its commitment to teaching and learning as well as excellence in patient safety and clinical outcomes at the university’s Wexner Medical Center.
Ohio State’s founding as a land-grant institution drives the university’s mission to uplift lives through scholarship. President Drake challenged the university to re-commit to its motto of Education for Citizenship, identifying food insecurity in Ohio as a critical target. In addition to financial support and current efforts from the colleges, the Discovery Theme initiative, and community partnerships, President Drake issued a challenge to the university community to bring its full power to bear on one of society’s most profound needs both locally and globally.

Today, Ohio State finds itself at the precipice of transformational change with great momentum in applications, graduation rates, academic excellence, diversity, donor support, and more. The Ohio State Board of Trustees adopted a comprehensive and inclusive strategic plan in 2017. The effort aligns with and builds on the 2020 Vision for the university, introduced by President Drake at his 2015 Investiture, and will guide and inform the priorities of Framework 2.0, a plan for the physical environment of the Columbus campus.

For more information about the strategic plan and Framework 2.0, visit https://president.osu.edu/strategicplan/.

THE KIRWAN INSTITUTE FOR THE STUDY OF RACE AND ETHNICITY

Since its founding in 2003, the Kirwan Institute strives to provide innovative, compelling, and strategic research to both academic audiences and the broader community. Much of the Institute’s research is applied and policy oriented, providing informed direction and assistance to social justice advocates, communities, funders, and policy makers. The Institute operates with a staff of 18 on a $2 million budget that consists of funds from the university and external funding partners such as government entities and foundations.

The Kirwan Institute’s core strategic priorities are: 1) engaged research; 2) community outreach; and 3) outreach and communication.

Leadership

The founding Executive Director of the Institute was Dr. john a. powell, serving in the role from 2003 to 2012. Under his leadership, the Institute took a national leadership role in researching, developing, and advocating for regional solutions to problems associated with racialized space. To advance this work, Professor powell developed an “opportunity-based” housing model that provides a critical and creative framework for thinking about affordable housing, racialized space, and how residential location affects individual destiny. The central principal of this model is that residents of metropolitan regions are situated within a complex and interconnected web of opportunity structures that significantly shapes their quality of life. These opportunity structures include education, health care, employment, transportation, civic engagement, and others. From 2012 to 2017, Sharon Davies served as the Executive Director and built on the work established by Professor powell. Under her leadership, the Institute leveraged its national reputation to build meaningful partnerships with communities and organizations throughout Columbus and central Ohio to advance its mission. In May 2017, Dr. Arthur R. James was
appointed Interim Executive Director of the Kirwan Institute while the university conducts the search for the next permanent Executive Director.

*Engaged Research*

Through its engaged research approach, the Kirwan Institute staff partner with community entities to develop impactful research projects. Through the Opportunity Communities Model, the Institute advocates for equitable investment in all people and neighborhoods to improve the health of entire regions. This research model brings an intersectional analysis to focus areas such as housing, education, jobs, transportation, health, and criminal justice. The Institute is particularly interested in how Structural Racialization and Race in Cognition create and sustain barriers to opportunity. The framework for engagement and capacity building around sources of inequity include the following:

- Policy, Law, and Civil Rights Research
- Opportunity Mapping
- Communications, Field Building, and Engagement

*Community Outreach*

The Kirwan Institute plays a critical role as a trusted convener, collaborator, and strategic partner to many organizational and community advocates. Strategic partnerships and collaboration are a priority, enabling the Institute to expand the reach of its research through the diverse work of community partners. Staff frequently share information and assist in strategy development.

*Outreach and Communication*

The Kirwan Institute creates original research and reports to share with its partners, grassroots activists, researchers, community leaders, and policy-makers. The Institute’s staff and representatives regularly attend conferences and meetings to share knowledge and exchange ideas. They also regularly use multimedia and social media platforms to communicate the findings and implications from Institute research.

A comprehensive index of the Institute’s projects can be found on the Kirwan Institute’s website.

**OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR THE NEXT EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

Given the current social and political climate in the United States, the Kirwan Institute’s mission, output, and impact are more critical than ever. The Executive Director must be a strong advocate for the work of the Kirwan Institute within the Ohio State University and the broader community. The ED must advocate for a just and inclusive society where all people and communities have an opportunity to succeed through the engagement in campus and community initiatives. To achieve these goals, the Executive Director will address the following opportunities and challenges:
Develop a compelling vision and strategic plan for the Institute.

Building on its history of engaged research and scholarship, the Executive Director has a unique opportunity to join a well-respected and established Institute and to help reimagine its future role. The ED will guide the creation and implementation of a strategic plan for the Institute to ensure stability and increase impact. Under the leadership of the next ED, the Kirwan Institute will serve as the nexus for research, programs, and events at Ohio State related to the study of race and ethnicity.

The Kirwan Institute’s impact and reach began at the national level and in recent years has fortified its connection with the local community. A key task for the next ED will be to maintain the national and regional influence while bringing a fresh focus to increasing the visibility and collaborations within Ohio State University.

Maintain Kirwan’s reputation as a leading voice for equity and justice both nationally and locally.

The next Executive Director will set an example for high caliber, high impact research consistent with the Institute’s mission. The ED will be a thought leader on issues of race and ethnicity with an established record of scholarship and will be expected to develop the Institute’s programs to create broader impact. The Executive Director will work closely with Institute leadership and staff to coordinate programming and research initiatives that encourage critical thinking and innovative research, challenge stereotypes, and develop the skills necessary for civil dialogue around differences and creative positive change.

Build relationships and create new opportunities for Ohio State faculty to collaborate and engage in research and scholarship aligned with Kirwan’s mission.

In support of the university’s research mission, Kirwan will serve as a hub for scholars focused on issues of race and ethnicity throughout Ohio State. The next Executive Director will draw upon existing external partnerships to further the work of the Institute and will be expected to proactively seek new opportunities for connections and scholarship with Ohio State faculty, staff, and students. The ED will develop and support the implementation of innovative strategies to engage faculty and increase the size and influence of stakeholders committed to the Institute’s mission. The ED will work collaboratively and effectively with academic leadership to find opportunities for synergy between the Institute and university departments and centers and make clear the value the Institute can bring in recruiting and retaining outstanding scholars and graduate students to Ohio State.

Maximize current revenue streams and attract new philanthropic support.

The Executive Director will maintain and leverage existing relationships and cultivate new opportunities with private donors, foundations, and other stakeholders to expand the scope of the Institute’s reach and areas of policy expertise. The ED will be an ambassador of the Institute
and the university and work to identify and tap new sources of external support necessary to support research and outreach priorities of the Institute. To that end, the next Executive Director will also partner with University advancement to find new philanthropic opportunities aligned with the Institute’s mission.

**Enhance the Institute’s structure and staff to achieve greater impact.**

The Executive Director will provide guidance, support, and leadership for the Institute’s professional staff and graduate students through the implementation of strategies that allow for individual and professional growth. Additionally, the ED is expected to support the recruitment and retention of high caliber and productive staff through innovative strategies and partner with them to create a culture of inclusive excellence that results in the Institute being an attractive destination for top talent. To support the implementation of a new strategic plan, the Executive Director will have an opportunity to reorganize the Institute’s structure and hire key staff positions, including an Associate Director to support its new strategic direction and overall effectiveness, and a Research Director. Additionally, the ED will engage an advisory board of university faculty and staff to strengthen the research mission, campus position, and work of the Institute. Similarly, the Executive Director will have an opportunity to create an external advisory structure that supports the Institute’s strategic direction.

**QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE**

The successful candidate will bring many of the following professional qualifications, skills, experiences, and personal qualities:

Ohio State seeks a leading scholar with a track record of scholarly distinction and an inclination and talent for administration and collaboration. The successful candidate should have a genuine attraction to the mission and unique culture of a decentralized flagship, land-grant research institution.

The successful candidate will be an academic scholar, eligible for tenure at the rank of full professor at Ohio State. In addition, the candidate will have many of the following professional qualifications, skills, and experiences:

- An advocate for the work of the Kirwan Institute within the Ohio State University academic community, as well as the broader external community.
- An advocate for a just and inclusive society where all people and communities have an opportunity to succeed through engagement in campus and community initiatives;
- A thoughtful leader capable of leading a strategic planning process and with demonstrated experience in staff supervision and professional development;
- A collaborative administrative leader who understands the role of cross disciplinary research within the university and the Institute’s role as a resource for faculty and students interested in the ties between race and ethnicity;
• An effective collaborator who understands intersectionality and can apply theory to practice;
• An outstanding advocate and mentor with experience developing educational programming and a reputation for advancing the field of race studies by developing the next generation of scholars;
• An excellent communicator who can effectively advocate for the Institute within the university community and external communities with an ability to work across boundaries and translate intellectual ideas to diverse audiences;
• An engaged thought leader who can think broadly about the Institute’s impact on the national climate and initiate dialogue on race beyond the university;
• A compelling fundraiser who can work with potential funders to demonstrate the value and potential impact of the Institute’s work and success in obtaining extramural funding from a variety of sources;
• A creative and committed institution builder who will serve as an influential voice within a diverse community of faculty, staff, students, and community, national, and international partners.

TO APPLY

The Ohio State University has retained Isaacson, Miller, a national executive search firm, to assist in this search. All inquiries, nominations, and applications should be directed in confidence to

Ponneh Varho, Vice President
Keight Kennedy, Managing Associate
Isaacson, Miller
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Suite 700
Washington, DC 20036
www.imsearch.com/6485

Electronic submission of materials is strongly encouraged.

To build a diverse workforce, The Ohio State University encourages applications from individuals with disabilities, minorities, veterans, and women. EEO/AA employer.