



EAST TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY

Working Group
on Research and Innovation

Deliverable #1:
Structure, Position Description, and
Implementation

August 1, 2019

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Deliverable #1 - Working from the premise that [a senior/vice presidential level role to lead strategies in research, innovation, and economic development] will be created, and using the Organizational Design Elements provided, turn this concept into reality by developing the position and its place in the ETSU organizational structure to include: (1) an organizational structure to support this function while collaborating with the academic enterprise of the University; (2) a description of the role and responsibilities for this position; and (3) a timeline/process for implementation.

Introduction

As stated in the charge to all working groups and task forces, “the purpose of this University-wide emphasis on operational alignment is to assure that the University’s organizational structure and leadership team is aligned with our mission and with our strategic initiatives. This intensive review will increase focus, reduce redundancy, identify accountability, and best position the institution for the next ten years.” The work of the Research and Innovation Working Group (RIWG) seeks to position ETSU to meet the institution’s regional stewardship mission as well as the ETSU 2036 vision of our institution becoming “a nationally preeminent center of research and scholarship that contributes to the intellectual, social, cultural, and economic benefit of our region.” To do so, the RIWG believes, will require significant investment in research and innovation infrastructure and a cultural shift among ETSU administrators, staff, faculty, departments and colleges. In alignment with the 2015 Research Strategic Plan, the RIWG defines research broadly to comprise traditional research, scholarship as defined by Boyer (1990), and creative activity that leverages university and regional intellectual, social, cultural, health and economic assets. Innovation, too, is defined broadly as the process of making changes to something established by introducing something new (O’Sullivan D & Dooley L, 2008). Despite broad definitions, the RIWG contends that, in a resource constrained environment, focusing research and innovation investments in ETSU’s current and potential strengths is necessary. The 2019 Research Strategic Plan outlines current and future strengths from the perspective of the RIWG.

The RIWG recognizes and appreciates the uniqueness of the institution. For example, ETSU is the only member of the Association of Academic Health Centers located in the Appalachian Region that is not located in a major metropolitan area. Identifying benchmark institutions that capture the college/school composition, regional mission, and student population in terms of number and demographics is difficult. Over the past 108 years, it has never been ETSU’s mission to be a research intensive (i.e., R1) institution. The recommendations of the RIWG do not position ETSU to be so. Importantly, however, the uniqueness of ETSU is a significant asset, and the institution is well positioned to advance research and innovation not only regionally, but nationally and internationally. To do this, our existing and potential strengths should be identified explicitly and provided with necessary and dedicated leadership and resources for growth. To this extent, the creation of Vice President for Research and Innovation (VPRI) position would foster warranted attention to and change in the research and innovation cultures at ETSU. The RIWG recognizes, however, that hiring of a VPRI alone is not sufficient to elicit large scale change. Additional infrastructure, including personnel resources, will be needed to position

the university for research and innovation growth. Per the charge to the RIWG, the report presented hereafter focuses on creation of the VPRI position and the associated Office of the VPRI (OVPRI) including suggestions as to how the OVPRI could operate based on a review of benchmark institutions.

Position Description – Vice President for Research and Innovation

East Tennessee State University announces the search for its Vice President for Research and Innovation. As Chief Research Officer of the university, the VPRI will work closely with the President, college deans, department chairs, and faculty to establish ETSU's national prominence for research and knowledge. The VPRI will be responsible for championing and enhancing the research and innovation ecosystems of the institution.

The VPRI will be responsible for leading the transformation of ETSU's research and innovation profile, including enhancing research expenditures, extramural funding, and regional, national, and international public-private partnerships and technology transfers. As a member of the President's Executive Leadership Team, the VPRI will champion research and innovation activities emerging from regional health system partnerships, including creation and operation of a collaborative research institute. The VPRI will serve as the Chair of the Board of Directors of the ETSU Research Foundation and will advocate operational excellence in research and innovation on the University Council. The VPRI will be responsible for strategically optimizing research investments and expenditures (e.g., foundation funds, indirect cost allocation) to position the university for continued research growth. The VPRI will promote a research and innovation environment that values success, and attracts, rewards, and retains research and innovation excellence. The VPRI will provide oversight to ETSU's research and innovation physical and computational infrastructure, facilities, centers, and institutes, and foster development and growth of technology-based companies and economic development of the region. The VPRI will support cross-college research and innovation collaborations, coordinate institutional research and innovation endeavors and products from idea generation to market delivery, and ensure compliance with research and innovation policies and procedures.

Minimum Qualifications:

- Doctoral degree, including M.D., M.D./Ph.D., or Ph.D. and eligibility for the rank of Professor in a discipline at the institution
- Minimum of 10 years administrative experience, including research administration, in a complex academic institution, or relevant government agency
- Demonstrated success in obtaining competitive extramural research funding
- Record of fostering an environment that promotes the growth of faculty scholarship, creative activity, innovation, and funded research
- Demonstrated success in building interdisciplinary teams and faculty research productivity across disciplines
- Demonstrated experience in developing research strategies, promoting entrepreneurship, and building corporate partnerships
- Experience in identification, protection, marketing, and licensing of intellectual property
- Experience interacting at the institutional level with major federal funding agencies and private funding sources
- Excellent verbal and written communication skills

Preferred Qualifications:

Demonstrated experience and success:

- developing research collaborations between academic institutions and health care systems
- taking thoughtful risks that rely on data and input from others to foresee possible threats or unintended consequences from decisions
- promoting innovation, establishment of start-up companies and managing technology transfer
- working with local, regional and state economic development agencies
- facilitating the recruitment of outstanding research faculty and/or research groups
- broadening participation in research, scholarship and creative activity
- implementing research compliance policies
- promoting the integration of the research and educational missions of the university
- engaging in professional societies, including one or more leadership roles

East Tennessee State University is a regional state-supported institution serving approximately 14,500 undergraduate, graduate, and professional students yearly across 11 schools and colleges. In addition, ETSU's Academic Health Science Center (ETSU Health), which is comprised of five colleges and multiple centers is the only Association of Academic Health Centers member institution located in Appalachia that serves a primarily rural area. Established in 1911, ETSU has a strong history of regional stewardship and a vision to improve the quality of life in the region by becoming a deeply engaged research institution. Strengths in Appalachian Studies, Creative Arts, Education, Health Sciences, Public Health, and Science contribute to research and educational environments well positioned for growth. ETSU is located in the beautiful, prosperous, Southern Appalachian Mountain community of Johnson City. The northeast corner of Tennessee, which surrounds Johnson City, is metropolitan in population (approximately one million people within a seventy-five mile radius) but provides a friendly, small town atmosphere. The area abounds in scenic beauty and in places of historical interest.

Organizational Design Elements – Office of the Vice President for Research and Innovation

As requested in the charge to the Working Group, Meltsner and Bellavita's (1983) Organizational Design Elements were used to conceptualize the Office of the Vice President for Research and Innovation and components thereof. Element-specific questions proposed to the RIWG are provided below and responded to accordingly.

Goals

What are the operational goals of the unit?

The mission of the OVPRI is to 1) advance ETSU's research and innovation culture, capacity, and enterprise through strategic planning, initiatives, and partnerships; 2) advocate for support and recognition of ETSU research and innovation activities; and 3) champion research and innovation dissemination.

With leadership from the VPRI, the OVPRI is expected to spend its time:

- Championing the research and innovation ecosystems of the institution (VPRI)
- Identifying and enabling innovative opportunities for sponsored research growth (VPRI)
- Optimizing research investments and expenditures (e.g., foundation funds, indirect cost allocation) to position the university for continued research growth
- Collaboratively fostering operational excellence across all offices and divisions engaged in research and innovation activities, including but not limited to the Offices of Research and Sponsored Programs, Finance and Accounting, Human Resources, and University Counsel
- Providing oversight to ETSU's research and innovation physical and computational infrastructure, facilities, centers, and institutes (VPRI)
- Creating a research and innovation environment that values success, and attracts, rewards, and retains research and innovation excellence (VPRI)
- Increasing the visibility of research and innovation (OVPRI)
- Providing oversight and visioning to the ETSU Research Foundation (VPRI)
- Strategically increasing the scale and impact of research and innovation at ETSU (OVPRI)
- Enabling success of faculty-driven research and innovation (OVPRI)
- Strategically expanding ETSU's research and innovation partnerships regionally, nationally, and internationally (OVPRI)
- Supporting cross-college research and innovation collaborations (OVPRI)
- Coordinating institutional research and innovation endeavors from idea generation to market delivery (e.g., patents, scholarly publications) (OVPRI)
- Leading and assuring institutional research compliance

In so doing, the OVPRI, under the leadership of the VPRI, is expected to advance ETSU's research and innovation outcomes. OVPRI metrics include:

- Number of extramural grant proposals submitted
- Number of PIs submitting extramural grant proposals
- Number of PIs receiving extramural funding
- Extramural funding secured across all funding types
- Intramural funding awarded annually and ROI for funded projects
- Startup funds for new hires
- Bridge funds for faculty
- Total research expenditures
- Number of centers/institutes at ETSU
- Number of IP disclosures annually
- Number of provisional patents filed annually
- Number of patents filed annually
- Funding for student, staff, and faculty innovation
- Number of colleges who have a college-level research officer (e.g., Associate Dean for Research)
- Alignment of research/innovation facilities space to coincide with funding metrics
- Identification and promotion of university research/innovation strengths
- SciVal[®] analytics
- ETSU research and innovation web and social media metrics
- ETSU core facility use
- Philanthropic support for research/innovation
- Faculty, staff, student satisfaction with OVPRI
- Research and innovation policies and procedures
- College-level research strategic plans
- Small business/start-up launches
- Partnerships with regional, national, and international businesses/organizations
- ETSU Research Foundation metrics
- Interdisciplinary and cross-disciplinary grant submissions

How do the goals of the unit address the 2016-2026 Strategic Plan of East Tennessee State University?

The 2016-2026 Strategic Plan includes as one of its six key areas *expanding the foundation for scholarly (research and creative activity) excellence and innovation in all disciplines*. The goals of the unit align directly with this strategic initiative, with an emphasis on research.

Which goals directly address the Strategic Initiatives of the Strategic Plan?

The RIWG considers the presence of a champion for research at the executive level as a key first step to address each of the six elements of the strategic framework for the aforementioned key area. The six Strategic Initiatives include:

- *Provide support and resources to colleges for stimulating and facilitating collaborative and interdisciplinary research among the colleges and encourage hiring college-level research officers who will act as a college-level resource for sponsored programs administration*
- *Target deficiencies in baseline space needs identified in the ETSU Facilities Master Plan (2014) to ensure the strength, quality, and growth of scholarly activities*
- *Review the availability of research instrumentation and determine whether new core facilities should be established to reduce ongoing expenditures and ensure availability to all faculty*
- *Increase the numbers of tenured/tenure-track faculty with terminal degrees and active research programs*
- *Expand research support (start-up funds) for incoming faculty and “bridge support” for faculty who lose funding but have high probability for new funding*
- *Develop interdisciplinary centers of research to promote sharing resources and increase depth of funding proposals*

Additionally, the OVPRI would facilitate meeting the following strategic initiatives under other key areas:

- *Supporting a strategic growth agenda that maximizes the student experience both inside and outside the classroom (1.c.i; 1.c.iii)*
- *Empowering employees to make ETSU a great place to learn, work, and grow (3.b.i; 3.c.i; 3.d.i)*
- *Supporting Excellence in Teaching (4.b; 4.d)*
- *Leading the region forward through community engagement and service (6.d; 6.e; 6.g)*

Considering Strategic Goals stated in the Strategic Plan, operationalizing the OVPRI would directly support:

- *Receiving \$60 million for research and extramurally sponsored activities (assumed by the RIWG to be on an annual basis)*

How does the Vision for 125 inform the goals of the unit?

The ETSU 125 Visioning Report calls for “quantifiable outcomes and measurable performance” across six major themes.

1. *Academically ETSU will be nationally recognized for its outstanding undergraduate and graduate education so that the entire region achieves higher educational attainment, knowledge and skills vital to their lives, careers and a thriving economy*
2. *The Health Sciences Center will be the premier national model for community-based health care, one that improves the health and well-being of the region and those who benefit from its far-reaching innovations*
3. *With a powerful university brand, ETSU will be recognized nationally as a student-centered university fostering a transformative educational experience that affirms the value and richness of diversity.*
4. *ETSU will be a model “Education Corridor” renowned for its constituent-based relationship, in which each individual has access to the knowledge they need, and for the “learning exchange” it has*

developed with governments, businesses, other schools and colleges for shared resources and collaboration

5. *Bringing the campus to the community and the community to campus, ETSU will be an even more significant partner in the region's thriving business and intellectual center, which serves as the foundation for a stronger economy and vitality in all areas of life in East Tennessee and neighboring states*
6. *Adopting a front-porch philosophy, ETSU Athletics will significantly engage the campus and the region so that a "culture of success" permeates its character and provides an inclusive community building experience through recreation and competitive sports*

Whereas operationalizing and investing in the OVPRI will arguably positively impact each theme, the RIWG anticipates significant return on investment in operationalizing the vision for theme 2 (e.g., "distinguished as a visible leader in rapidly translating discoveries") and theme 5 (e.g., "established national prominence for research and knowledge"). Without targeted investments in, and clearly articulated support for research and innovation by the President, VPRI, and academic deans, the RIWG perceives ETSU's ability to realize themes 2 and 5 of the Vision for 125 to be limited.

The aspirational Vision for ETSU in 2036 highlights both directly and indirectly the extent to which the university's mission has increasingly embraced research and innovation. Notably, the Vision for 2036 states that ETSU "has evolved into a deeply engaged research institution." Likewise, the Vision for 2036 states, "ETSU's impact on the economic health of the region has positioned the university at the intersection of significant economic development solutions and innovative industries or partnerships fostering a thriving regional business center. ETSU Health Sciences is the premier national model for community-based health care – from education to research to practice." Finally, the Vision for 2036 states, "Through comprehensive marketing and financial planning, ETSU has achieved a solid and continuous resource base that allows it to define opportunities, prioritize initiatives and pursue a strategic growth agenda. Critical to these financial resources are integrated institutional marketing activities, a robust Foundation that generates private support, [and] a Research Foundation that facilitates economic development and technology transfer."

Of the six Committee for 125 Task Forces, the Academics: Health Sciences and Extramural Resources statements point to the need for increased investment in research and innovation. The Academics: Health Sciences task force mentions, "strengthening education and practice would expand research in areas of existing strength." The Task Force envisions an ETSU in 2036 that: 1) develops a research infrastructure with identified centers that allow faculty and students to excel in interprofessional and translational research; and 2) creates identifiable space for interprofessional practice and research to fulfill ETSU's mission. The Extramural Resources task force highlights the need for "community, regional and other public and private partnerships; the fostering of partnerships with private developers to construct new facilities; the ETSU Research Foundation; the Innovation Laboratory, Valley Brook Campus and other potential revenue sites; sponsored programs and more." The Task Force continues, "It is imperative that linkages be developed with regional business, government and non-governmental organizations and that these linkages

influence the university's strategic plan in the coming years. ETSU must become an even greater factor in the regional economy, not only as a provider of higher education but as a major partner in its economic and entrepreneurship development. At the same time, in the short term, we aspire to increase targeted student enrollment, improve and influence pricing models, control academic program costs, grow academic program revenues, foster a culture of philanthropy and a culture of research and enhance research and service revenue. To become a nationally preeminent center of research and scholarship that contributes to the intellectual, social, cultural and economic benefit of our region will require sustained academic program cost controls, targeted program revenue growth and an improved research infrastructure." The Task Force envisions an ETSU in 2036 that: 1) becomes a significant player in the regional economy, not only as a provider of higher education, but as a major partner in its economic development; and 2) becomes a nationally preeminent center of research and scholarship that will contribute to the intellectual, social, cultural and economic benefit of the region.

Overall, the OVPRI, with leadership from the VPRI, will position ETSU to realize its vision as it relates to research and innovation. Just as Committee for 125 Task Forces were tasked with developing a vision in terms of core focus, differentiation, efficiency, and new revenues, the RIWG recognizes that OVPRI unit visioning and planning, absent resource investment, is simply a hallucination.

Members

Who are the people (or types of job/positions) that will accomplish the work of the unit? Do other units at the University have individuals tasked to perform similar work?

Per the charge, the RIWG is to assume the Vice President for Research and Innovation position will be created and funded. The VPRI is ultimately responsible for accomplishing the aforementioned outcomes of the OVPRI. Per conversations with the VP for Academics, the RIWG assumes the current Office of the Vice Provost for Research and Sponsored Programs will report to the OVPRI as is operationalized in the proposed organizational chart (Appendix 1). The RIWG recognizes the potential redundancy in some of the current work of the Vice Provost for Research and Sponsored Programs and the proposed work of the VPRI. The RIWG also recognizes what could be perceived as senior research administrator redundancy in the VPRI and the current Vice Provost for Research and Sponsored Programs. However, the RIWG perceives there to be significant benefit to having both individuals involved in advancing the research and innovation agenda in the short term. While no specific implementation timeline was mentioned in the 2016-2026 Strategic Plan, nor in the Vision for 125, the RIWG purports that we are behind. Transitioning the Vice Provost for Research and Sponsored Programs to an Associate Vice President for Research (AVPR) with clearly assigned work for both the VPRI and AVPR, will facilitate meeting strategic plan and visioning goals. Whereas the expertise of the VPRI will determine, in part, the specific work of the AVPR, the RIWG suggests the work of the AVPR include overseeing all aspects of research integrity and sponsored programs.

Additional positions across the institution, some current and some proposed, will accomplish the work of the OVPRI. As described in the 2019 Research Strategic Plan, research and innovation operational excellence is necessary to position the university to meet its research mission and strategic planning goals. This operational excellence encompasses work from idea development to dissemination of results and everything along that continuum. To this end, personnel in multiple offices/divisions will be integral to the success of the OVPRI, including:

- Office of the VP for Business and Finance (post-award grant accounting)
- Office of Planning and Decision Support (data analysis)
- Office of the VP for University Advancement (philanthropy, development)
- ETSU Division of University Relations (marketing, dissemination)

While having a research and innovation advocate represented on the President's Executive Leadership Team is a necessary first step in changing the culture of research and innovation at ETSU, the RIWG strongly notes that additional investments will be necessary; most in the near term. Some of these investments will be and should be informed by the VPRI; however, the RIWG perceives some of the positions to be needed now. These positions are mentioned here and described in more detail in the 2019 Research Strategic Plan. When considering timing of additional investments, the VPRI hire date is considered Day 1.

In place before or on Day 1

- OVPRI Office Manager - The OVPRI Office Manager will ensure that the OVPRI operates effectively, efficiently, and professionally. An acting temporary Office Manager should fill this role until the VPRI selects and hires an Office Manager.
- Assistant Director, Compliance and Training - The Assistant Director for Compliance will provide operational oversight for and coordination of institutional research compliance programs that promote the highest standards of ethics, integrity and responsibility in the conduct of research. S/he will work with stakeholders to develop, implement, and monitor compliance programs to ensure that individuals and the institution carry out research in accordance with applicable federal and state laws and regulations, sponsor guidelines and policies, required protocols and federally mandated agency program requirements. S/he will develop and deliver a multifaceted educational and training program, and will author and disseminate content on relevant compliance issues to the campus community. This position should be filled prior to the arrival of the VPRI.
- Research Integrity Officer (20% effort of current ETSU faculty member) - The RIO facilitates policy development and investigations related to research and scholarly misconduct. This position should be filled prior to the arrival of the VPRI.

Years 1-2

- Subcontract Officer - The Subcontract Officer will assist in establishing, promoting and implementing best practices for sponsored programs subcontracting at ETSU. S/he will assist in developing subcontract templates, tools and resources to facilitate subcontract set-up and management from pre-award to closeout including preparing and negotiating

outgoing subcontracts. S/he will vet potential subrecipients by gathering, reviewing and analyzing subrecipient audit reports and financial documents, and recommending whether to take action in the form of management decisions, special contractual terms, or other subrecipient monitoring measures. S/he will prepare subrecipient monitoring plans; conduct subcontract monitoring in collaboration with project and finance staff, and document monitoring results including performance, compliance with terms and conditions, and budget management.

- Research/Grants Development Specialist – The Research/Grants Development Specialist will assist faculty in identifying, pursuing and securing external funding for sponsored projects from public and private sources. S/he will assist teams in writing, developing and submitting proposals, letters of inquiry and other correspondence to government agencies, foundations, corporations and other sponsors, and facilitate teams along the entire grants development process. S/he will research potential new grant opportunities, compile and analyze data for funding trends, assist in the preparation and delivery of grantsmanship training, and be responsible for the dissemination of funding opportunity information through various media including the web and email.

Years 3 through 5 (informed by VPRI):

- Assistant/Associate Vice Presidents
- Institute/Center Directors
- Research and innovation development specialists
- Core research/innovation personnel

As described in the Implementation Process and Timeline section of the report, the RIWG is hesitant to propose specific administrative personnel-heavy infrastructure absent input from the VPRI. With operational excellence as the target and desiring to be exceptional stewards of institutional resources, the RIWG encourages decision makers to consider developing positions that garner buy-in – both in percent effort and salary support – across colleges who will benefit from the positions.

Facilities/Environment

Where should this unit be located in relation to the work that it needs to accomplish (this includes both physical location and place on an organization chart)? Consider how the unit is connected to other units within the university and factors that will contribute to effective working relationships with those units. What are the physical characteristics of the space that is needed for the unit to achieve its goals?

Like other ETSU vice presidents, the VPRI's office should be located in close proximity to the university president, preferably in Burgin Dossett. Other OVPRI key personnel work spaces could be located in other buildings on campus, preferably together as a unit or in subunits in a space that is conducive to serving the faculty and current and potential research and innovation partners. Potential physical space options include but are not limited to space on main campus (e.g., current ORSPA location in Ross Hall), space on the VA campus, or space in the Innovation

Lab. All options have positive and negative characteristics. The RIWG perceives the current ORSPA Ross Hall space to be “hidden” more so than would be desired when fostering partnerships. However, main campus space would likely facilitate faculty access, other than faculty on the VA campus. In the short term, office space for the VPRI is necessary. Per the organizational chart, additional space beyond that currently used by ORSPA staff would be necessary. Given the distinct roles of research and innovation personnel, separate offices may be warranted: the AVP for Research on campus and the future innovation lead in the Innovation Lab, for example. The RIWG suggests the VPRI inform physical placement of OVPRI personnel.

What is the availability of resources – human and physical to support the work of the unit?

Per the organizational chart, some human resources are currently available to support the work of the unit, and some human resources are needed. Essential to the success of the OVPRI, in our opinion, is the extent to which operational excellence is achieved as outlined in the 2019 Research Strategic Plan.

Structure

How should the unit be organized in order to achieve its goals? Consider the formal aspects of how the work is to be done as well as the informal aspects.

See organizational chart for formal structure (Appendix 1)

VPRI Direct Reports

- Office Manager – OVPRI (current)
- Associate Vice President for Research (current)
- Director, ETSU Innovation Laboratory (current)
- Executive Director, ETSU Research Foundation (current)
- Executive Director, ETSU Collaborative Research Institute (future)

When considering the 3- to 5-year visioning of the OVPRI, the RIWG is reluctant to propose a personnel-heavy structure, especially pertaining to innovation. Per the organizational chart (Appendix 1), the RIWG proposes an emphasis on research in early years and increased emphasis on innovation infrastructure in years 3, 4 and 5. With leadership from the VPRI, an OVPRI strategic plan, as well as a Collaborative Research Institute strategic plan, would guide investments in personnel (e.g., directors, AVPs, support staff).

Resources

What funding is available to support the work of the unit (consider current budgetary assignments, any reallocation of funds, any new funding that will be needed and possible sources of such funding)? Describe how this unit fits within the existing budget. When and if appropriate, identify formal processes that must be completed to assure budgetary alignment and integration.

Per the RIWG’s conversations with the VP for Academics, there are no resources allocated to support the work of the unit other than the funds that are currently being invested in ORSPA.

Per conversations with the VP for University Advancement, the ETSU Foundation (Office of University Advancement) does not engage in fundraising efforts for research and innovation. The ETSU Research Foundation does not have advancement personnel tasked with seeking funding to support research and innovation. No endowments exist that support research and innovation directly. Presently, hard dollar investments in research and innovation, other than faculty salary commitment (as percent research effort), is the funding of the RDC (~\$275,000 annually) and salaries for select ORSPA staff. Presently, approximately \$815,000 in state funds is allocated to research infrastructure (i.e., hard dollar investments), and \$545,000 in research infrastructure is funded through indirect cost recovery and the VA (i.e., soft dollar investments). Succinctly, hard dollar investment in research and innovation at ETSU is limited and will need to be increased to support the work of the OVPRI.

To “evolve into a deeply engaged research institution” will require significant investment on the part of the institution, including an investment of hard dollars. It is important to note that, as stated in the 19th report of the Blue Ridge Academic Health Group (2015), “research is not a self-supporting activity for any AHC [or institution]. It can be sustained only by a substantial institutional commitment and funds from other sources.” Presently, ETSU has limited institutional commitment and access to funds from other sources. While funds from other sources (e.g., Ballad) could theoretically become available, it is noteworthy that the Blue Ridge Group’s report used the conjunction “and” and not “or” when specifying how research must be sustained. Whereas there are potential mechanisms to increase the university’s stature from a research perspective, such as cluster research faculty hires, doing so requires “substantial investment” and arguably has limited impact on large-scale, university-wide, research and innovation culture change. Succinctly, “evolving into a deeply engaged research institution” will require substantial long-term investment of hard dollars. Therefore, given limited hard dollars with which to work, reallocation of resources will be necessary.

Tasks

What kind of “work” will be done by this unit? What kind of expertise is needed to accomplish the tasks? Are there position descriptions available? Is any special technology required? Are there university, state or federal regulations that will impact the work of this unit? Are there existing resources in the university that provide services or technology that will support the work of this unit?

See Goals, Members and Structure sections.

Decision-Making

After determining the work and tasks of the unit, identify the standard operating procedures, or the processes and rules by which decisions will be made.

The VPRI will report directly to the President and will have responsibility for institutional level decision making related to research and innovation. As Chair of the ETSU Research Foundation Board of Directors, the VPRI would have input in to ETSURF decisions, but ultimate authority rests with the Board. The VPRI would collaborate with college research officials (e.g., Associate

Deans for Research) via the University Research Advisory Council (URAC) to align college level research decisions with institutional research goals. While college and department level research space allocation decision making would rest with the colleges once assigned, the VPRI would be responsible for decisions about space allocated to specific colleges. The VPRI would also have decision-making authority through membership on boards for centers and institutes (e.g., future ETSU Collaborative Research Institute).

Where does the unit fit within the governance structure of the University?

See organizational chart (Appendix 1).

What are the lines of authority?

See organizational chart (Appendix 1).

What decisions have final authority within the unit?

Institutional research investments, including personnel and infrastructure

Institutional research space allocation

Institutional core research facility decision making

Current ORSPA decision making authority

Communications

How will this unit communicate with other units within the University?

Up - Routine meetings with President

Lateral - President's Executive Leadership Team through scheduled meetings; University Council membership, engagement, and reporting

Down - Routine meetings with AVPR (and future OVPRI AVPs); research officers within colleges via the URAC; institute/center directors; core facility directors; email/website communication with faculty/staff/students

Will this unit have any designated reporting functions with the university's governance system?

The VPRI will serve on the University Council as an ex officio, voting member. With input from the URAC, the VPRI will routinely report to the University Council the work of the OVPRI and bring research and innovation-related proposals to the University Council that are under the purview of the Council (e.g., "proposals to pursue new strategic agendas that include creating new entities, pursuing new initiatives, approving new commitments to programs that require significant investments of university funds.").

What opportunities will there be for formal and informal sharing of information, planning strategic initiatives, or common problem solving with other university units?

One of the main reasons for placing the institutional research officer at the vice president level is to foster formal and informal sharing of information across offices. As stated in the 2019 Research Strategic Plan, interoffice communication is a requirement for research operations excellence. The VPRI will also inform strategic planning at the institutional and college levels and engage regularly with multiple governance organizations, including: Academic Council, Faculty

Senate, Graduate Council, High Performance Computer Cluster Advisory Committee, IRBs, Intellectual Property Advisory Committee, Research Development Committee, Student Government Association, and University Council.

How will this unit communicate with units outside of the University? Can these outside units be identified now? What mechanisms will there be for formal and informal communication with outside organizations and affiliates?

A key role of the VPRI is engaging units external to ETSU to champion research and innovation partnerships. Therefore, the VPRI will be responsible for establishing or bolstering communication mechanisms outside of ETSU. Of utmost importance is establishing communication mechanisms with Ballad Health. While ETSU/Ballad Health partnership proposals have been developed, a plan has yet to be operationalized. From a research and innovation perspective, the VPRI should inform these partnerships through communication with the ETSU President and Ballad Health. Ideally, a research and innovation champion would be identified within Ballad Health. Such a champion would work closely and collaboratively and communicate frequently with the ETSU VPRI.

An additional role of the VPRI is communicating and promoting ETSU's research and innovation efforts to constituents. The RIWG perceives this will be accomplished via face-to-face meetings, engagement of the VPRI in regional, state-level, and national research and innovation initiatives, programs, and conferences, and through ETSU's web and social media presence.

Implementation Process and Timeline

Considering the charge to “position the University for excellence for the next decade,” the RIWG developed the proposed structure of the OVPRI in a manner that adds and transitions entities over a 5+ year timeframe. While the latter year additions and transitions offer a vision of what the OVPRI may be at that time, the RIWG strongly supports providing the VPRI with the resources and autonomy to develop the research and innovation ecosystems, including the personnel needed to do so, with input from the President, University Council, ETSU Research Foundation, and other external constituents as is applicable.

Once approved by the President’s Executive Leadership Team and other constituents as deemed appropriate, the RIWG proposes posting the VPRI position description via routine posting mechanisms. Ideally, the position would be posted Fall 2019 to recruit for a start date of Summer 2020 at the latest. An acting temporary OVPRI Office Manager should be in place on Day 1 and assist the VPRI until (s)he hires an Office Manager. Additionally, the RIWG strongly encourages investment in additional research personnel, described herein. Based on the RIWG’s analysis of peer and benchmark institutions, and as described in the 2019 Research Strategic Plan, the research personnel are warranted regardless of the hiring of the VPRI. The RIWG proposes hiring a Research Integrity Officer and Assistant Director of Compliance and Training prior to arrival of the VPRI. Additional positions are proposed during the 1-2 year timeframe with preference for earlier hiring. Early investments in research infrastructure would signify to VPRI applicants, as well as faculty researchers, that the university is serious about its desire to “establish national prominence for research and knowledge” (Vision for 2036).

The OVPRI implementation process and timeline should be informed by the VPRI and should be considered with regard to retirements, vacancies, and structural changes, as well as efficiencies and relationships developed across university offices to support research and innovation growth. The RIWG foresees addition of assistant/associate vice presidents, director-level positions, additional research and innovation development specialists, and other core personnel as growth occurs. Per the 2019 Research Strategic Plan, the RIWG encourages efficient, evidence (i.e., metric)-based investment of resources in infrastructure.

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Appendix 1: Proposed Organizational Chart

Key:
 White = Existing Offices/Positions
 Blue = Proposed Offices/Positions – Day 1
 Gold = Reassigned Offices/Positions – Day 1
 Green = Proposed Offices/Positions – Years 1-2
 Pink = Proposed Offices/Positions – Years 3-4
 Orange = Reassigned Offices/Positions – Years 3-4
 Red = Proposed Offices/Positions – Years 5+

