

# POSITION PROFILE

## Vice President and Chief Diversity Officer January 2024

*In partnership with Summit Search Solutions, Inc.*



Roger Williams  
University



# ABOUT ROGER WILLIAMS UNIVERSITY

Roger Williams University (RWU) dedicates our mission to strengthening society through engaged teaching, learning and research.



Roger Williams University prepares students to be successful leaders and innovators in today's rapidly changing world. The distinctive focus on original research, engaged learning, and hands-on apprenticeships, practicums and clinical learning opportunities provides students with real-world experiences, on and off campus, that empower them to be career- and job-ready, to succeed immediately and continue to advance throughout their careers. The commitment to academic excellence, engaged learning and student success is the foundation of the university's mission, RWU delivers a world-class education and inclusive student experience.



RWU offers 50 majors and robust offerings of graduate and professional programs across eight schools of study including Rhode Island's only law school, with campuses on the coast of Bristol and in the heart of Providence, RI.

A proud distinction of the university is the small class sizes, a 14-to-1 faculty-to-student ratio. This enables personal attention in the classroom, a focus on undergraduate and graduate research, and community engagement. A Roger Williams education blends the strength of liberal arts and professional studies, providing all students with the depth and breadth of interdisciplinary thinking and well-rounded knowledge

necessary to succeed in this interconnected, global world. RWU is strengthening society through engaged teaching, learning and research so that students graduate with the ability to think critically and apply the practical skills that today's employers demand.

Roger Williams University seeks to recruit and support a broadly diverse community of faculty and staff. RWU values diversity, equity and inclusion and respect for all races, genders, identities, and abilities and is committed to creating a thriving community that encourages lifelong learning, professional development, and academic innovation. To learn more about Roger Williams University's commitment and support of diversity and inclusion, please visit <https://www.rwu.edu/who-we-are/diversity-equity-inclusion>.

## UNIVERSITY POINTS OF PRIDE

- RWU is the only university in the state of Rhode Island to have an ABA accredited School of Law.
- RWU offers a state-of-the-art Marine and Natural Sciences building which is home to an aquatic animal diagnostic lab and the state's only shellfish hatchery. The proximity to the ocean supports the popular Marine Biology program which allows students to explore the aquatic world through lectures, labs, fieldwork, and independent research.
- RWU boasts innovative international partnerships in the Dominican Republic that span multiple disciplines. Our partnership with Grupo Puntacana, a global leader in sustainable development and eco-tourism, provides student summer paid internships in business, hospitality, engineering, marine biology and architecture, and is a growing partnership that will continue to support more students across a range of disciplines. RWU is also partnering with BARN Management School on a student-exchange initiative to have RWU students study at BARN and to bring business students from the Dominican Republic to study at the Gabelli School of Business.
- Every student is provided the opportunity to participate in a real-world learning experience that helps a community partner locally or globally, through courses and research opportunities. At the School of Law, students provide our local communities with pro bono legal services, gaining real-world experience while serving real needs within our communities – and many complete more than 100 hours of service before graduation.
- Our Sailing program is home of the No. 2 collegiate champs in the nation. For two years in a row, RWU Sailing has captured second place in the Inter-Collegiate Sailing Association National Championship team race event.

### Leadership



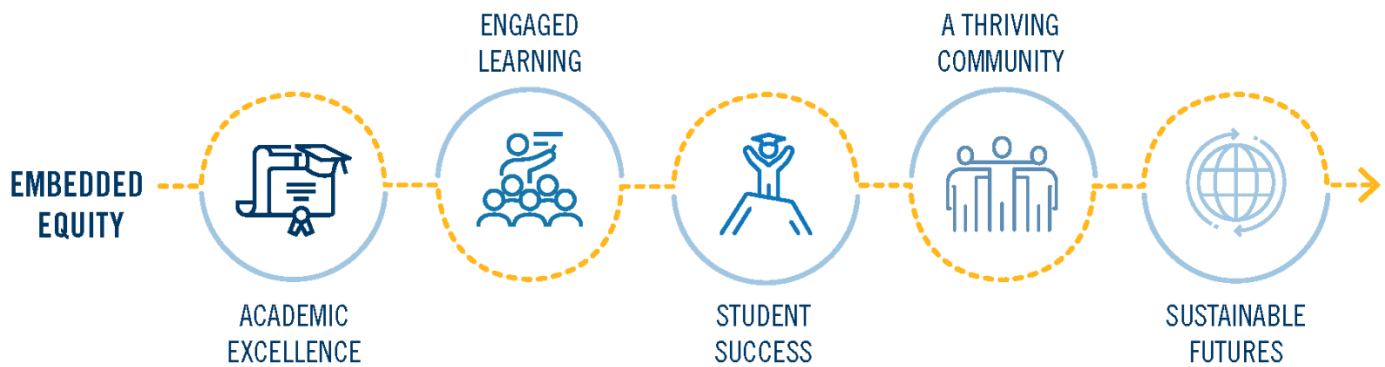
In 2019 [Ioannis Miaoulis](#) (pronounced YAH-nis Me-OW-lis) was appointed the 11th President of Roger Williams University. Prior to his appointment at RWU, President Miaoulis served as the President and Director of the Museum of Science in Boston and as the Assistant Provost and Dean of the School of Engineering at Tufts University. He has led large-scale efforts to spark passion for innovation and Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) education among young learners around the world.

In his first three years at the university, President Miaoulis has helped lead transformations in leadership, philanthropy and planning. While navigating the impact of the pandemic, RWU was able to launch its Excellence by Design strategic plan framework (below) and transform the culture of philanthropy for the university. RWU has increased annual giving by 60% since President Miaoulis joined the university. Recently, RWU

secured its largest ever gift to the university: a \$20 million investment in our School of Architecture and emerging real estate programming, resulting in the naming/dedication of the Cummings School of Architecture and launch of the Cummings Institute for Real Estate.







## Strategic Action Plan

With a unique mix of liberal arts and professional programs, top-notch faculty, the state’s only law school, and hubs of innovation in Providence and Bristol, Rhode Island, RWU is poised to align its efforts and provide what the world needs from a modern, comprehensive university. As a result, the university continually seeks new partners, adapts strategies and focuses on making a difference with the communities and organizations served by the institution.

Five strategic priorities emerged from the Strategic Action Plan. These provide a guiding framework for the years ahead for collective, divisional, and individual initiatives across the university. They include seeking ongoing opportunities to engage with the RWU community, the greater community and industry partners; refining efforts toward that goal continually; seeking new solutions; and using integration of institutional efforts and academic planning as an ongoing and iterative culture of planning. [Click here](#) to learn more about RWU’s action plan and a vision for embedded equity.

## Accreditations

Roger Williams University is accredited with several different accreditation bodies including the New England Commission of Higher Education (NECHE; formerly NEASC), the Association to Advance Collegiate Business Schools (AACSB), the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (ABET), and the American Bar Association (ABA); among others. [Click here](#) to view all RWU’s accreditations.

## About the Division of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

As a strategic leader and collaborator, the Vice President and Chief Diversity Officer demonstrates a broad commitment to embedding equity into all planning efforts and operations. The Vice President ensures that the student and employee relationship and the learning environment of the university provide a foundation of effective practices, programs and policies that align with the institution’s core values and supports the belonging and engagement of all members of the community. The Vice President is the strategic leader who ensures we realize our commitment to becoming an anti-racist, diverse and inclusive campus community.

### President’s Council on Inclusive Excellence

The President’s Council on Inclusive Excellence includes a Diversity Leadership Council (DLC) which has been organized to maintain the momentum gained in the past few years regarding equity work at Roger Williams University. The Diversity Council functions in advisory and operational capacities through the Vice President and Chief Diversity Officer.

The Council consists of an overarching leadership structure with a series of working groups that report up to the leadership structure. Each working group optimally will have deep representation from across campus.

The working groups include leadership, academics, student life, external outreach, and community relations. In addition to the working groups, there are three operational groups that support the work of the other committees. Areas of responsibility include data analysis, practices and procedures, and communications.

# THE OPPORTUNITY

## Vice President and Chief Diversity Officer



The Vice President and Chief Diversity Officer reports directly to the President of the university and is a member of the President's Cabinet. The Vice President collaborates and partners with senior management of the university and the faculty, and will be the chair of the President's Council on Inclusive Excellence, in order to promote an institutional culture and welcoming environment that supports diversity in all aspects of university life. A principal responsibility will be to play a leadership role in developing, implementing and monitoring a comprehensive strategic plan that advances a common campus vision with respect to diversity and inclusion. This Vice President and Chief Diversity Officer will oversee a team that includes a director, two associate directors and an administrative assistant.

### Essential Functions/Characteristics

#### Execution Through Key Collaborative Partnerships

- Motivate and guide the university in cultivating a climate of diversity, first by accurately assessing current efforts to achieve greater diversity and inclusion, second by conceptualizing how to improve on current efforts, and third by shaping policies and procedures designed to achieve necessary and appropriate improvements.
- Ensure that initiatives based on recommendations of the Council on Inclusive Excellence as approved are prioritized and operationalized.
- Keep abreast of best practices and current trends in diversity, equity, and inclusion and bring that knowledge to inform program and policy development work.

#### Monitor, Assess and Report

- Monitor and evaluate programmatic and operational effectiveness and develop and implement management metrics to assess achievements by means of an Institutional Scorecard on diversity that contains customized benchmarks and metrics by Division and Sub-Division. Recommend policy or organizational strategy and change when necessary and appropriate.
- Prepare periodic and special reports for presentation to senior leadership and the Board of Trustees as appropriate.



## Outreach and Communication

- Collaboratively develop and implement basic and advanced training programs for faculty, students and staff to build greater awareness of the role diversity plays in the university.
- Support initiatives in the process of recruitment and retention of students, hiring, retention and training of faculty and staff, development and review of curriculum and academic programs that foster inclusion, equity, and diversity across the university.
- Review publications and media presentations to ensure appropriateness with diversity and inclusion goals.
- Evaluate physical infrastructure and facilities and examine policies and procedures in contracting and purchasing for compliance with applicable regulations, policies and procedures.
- Review outreach relationships with community partners that support the university's diversity and inclusion initiatives. Represent the university at various community, professional meetings and conferences as requested.
- Use exceptional professional judgment in disseminating information as part of the specific enumerated responsibilities of the job.



## Opportunities and Challenges

The Vice President and Chief Diversity Officer must be a seasoned and enthusiastic champion of DEI work in the context of higher education. The Vice President must have the capacity to manage complex issues, be committed to anti-racism at the highest level, and be equipped to contribute at both a strategic and operational level.

The following are areas in which the Vice President and Chief Diversity Officer will need to lead once they have established relationships within this new environment. These include:

- The new Vice President is joining a strong and collegial cabinet, each of whom are respected and experienced leaders. The President and all cabinet colleagues seek a thought partner to engage with them on moving Roger Williams University towards becoming an actively anti-racist and equitable community.
- There are high expectations that the new Vice President will exemplify a culture of collaboration and partnering, as a clear and transparent communicator and uniter, across all schools of study on both campuses. This individual must act as a 'chief connector' by quickly reaching out to all constituencies across the various campus locations to build solid and mutually beneficial relationships that support positive momentum on the Equity Action Plan and support the President and his leadership agenda.
- The Vice President will be expected to form a cohesive divisional team that has a shared understanding of RWU's DEI priorities, their individual contributions, and responsibilities of each of the functional areas within the division. The Vice President will have a dedicated team that is ready to support their leadership and is responsive to professional development and coaching.
- The Vice President will find a campus that is genuinely proud of and invested in the existing Equity Action Plan. The Vice President will join a campus ready for an action phase and will be expected to act with urgency and ensure that the University stays focused on implementing its stated goals and priorities.
- The Vice President will partner with enrollment management, academic affairs, and student affairs colleagues to refine and deepen institutional planning for DEI work to further RWU's recent successes in the recruitment, admission, retention, and graduation of a diverse student population.
- RWU staff and Human Resources team members are enthusiastic partners and will work collaboratively with the new Vice President on expanding the current professional development opportunities for staff as well as strengthening the university's existing Affirmative Action plan. There are five existing staff and faculty unions at Roger Williams, and the Vice President must invest in becoming familiar with each of the collective bargaining units as part of their onboarding.
- The Vice President will be expected to establish formal communications and a collaborative relationship with RWU's Title IX coordinator.
- The Vice President must actively engage with students and alumni in an authentic manner, be highly visible throughout the campus, and be regarded as a role model, exemplifying what it means to be a fully engaged member of the campus community. Retention and graduation of students is a top priority. Close attention must be paid to the experience of students during the enrollment cycle and as they enroll, transition, and progress to graduating and becoming engaged alumni.





## Required Qualifications

- Master's degree from an accredited institution in an appropriate area of specialization.
- Five years of successful work experience in dealing with diversity, equity, and inclusion programs, with a working knowledge of applicable laws, rules and regulations concerning such programs.
- Excellent communication skills, with positive management, leadership and demonstrated collaboration abilities as well as the ability to clearly communicate concepts, ideas, and information and influence a broad range of audiences internally and externally.
- Demonstrated and proven ability to initiate and lead large-scale programs and projects.
- Ability to gather and analyze data and to draw sound conclusions from the data.
- Ability to manage competing priorities in a fast-paced environment.
- Ability to maintain a high level of confidentiality.
- Demonstrate a fundamental understanding of the culture of shared governance, tenure and promotion, decentralized campus politics and the needs of students, faculty, staff and administration with respect to diversity.

## Preferred Qualifications

- Doctorate from an accredited institution in an appropriate area of specialization.
- Five years of successful experience specifically in the area of diversity, equity, and inclusion at a regionally accredited higher education institution.
- Comprehensive knowledge of laws, rules and regulations and best practices, including those concerning race, color, national or ethnic origin, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, disability, age, veteran status, personal experience, and social, economic, spiritual and cultural distinctions and concerns and how these intersect with policies.
- Possess an existing network of professionals engaged in the field of diversity and equity in higher education.





## PROCEDURE FOR CANDIDACY

Roger Williams University, in consultation with Summit Search Solutions, Inc., will begin a confidential review of application materials immediately and continue until the position is filled; parties who apply by **February 23, 2024** will be given first consideration. Please include a resume and cover letter.

In your cover letter/letter of interest, in addition to listing how your qualifications meet the requirements of the position, please include information about how you would be able to contribute to RWU's diversity, inclusivity, and equity goals.

All applications and nominations will be held in confidence.

To apply online, go to: <https://theapplicantmanager.com/jobs?pos=su393>

### For more information or to offer recommendations/nominations:

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Roger Williams University is an equal opportunity employer and is committed to a diverse workforce. Applicants that require accommodation in the job application process may contact 1-401-254-3028 for assistance.



[Summit Search Solutions, Inc.](#) is a boutique executive search firm dedicated to serving the education and nonprofit sectors nationwide. Summit has a team of experienced recruiting consultants in strategic locations across the country including California, Kansas, Maryland, New York, and North Carolina.







## BRISTOL & PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND

While RWU enjoys a rich campus setting filled with arts, culture, and natural beauty, RWU also acknowledges and engages with a complicated legacy with the university's namesake and the history of the geographic location. Roger Williams, a 17th century founding father of the State of Rhode Island, was known for his writings on freedom of thought and freedom of religion (particularly his belief in separation of church and state) and embracing of the local Indigenous peoples, their culture and languages – all of which were considered “dangerous opinions” in his time. However, historical evidence shows that at one time Roger Williams also had an unfree Indigenous child living in his household.

The main campus, located in Bristol, RI, is situated in America's history of racism. Bristol's links to Indigenous peoples are marked by the 17th century and the local Wampanoag tribe and the site of the King Phillip's war, which decimated the tribal community and led to their enslavement and appropriation of their land. The town of Bristol also served as the leading port of the Transatlantic Slave Trade into the early 19th century. This backdrop is a catalyst for the institutional commitment to student and faculty research and learning, community engagement and civic scholarship acknowledging this complex relationship between the university's namesake and the Indigenous peoples and of the history of the land on which the campus resides.

In addition to the Bristol location, there is also a campus in Providence, RI, home of University College, which offers flexible programs in the trades as well as professional studies. The Providence campus also hosts the MBA program, several graduate program classes and the law school clinics.

**Bristol** is ranked among:

- [Best Small Towns in America](#)
- [Safest Cities in America](#)
- [Most Interesting U.S. Destinations](#)

**Providence** is dubbed the Creative Capital, and the city is home to amazing restaurants, concerts, festivals and the internationally-acclaimed WaterFire. It's consistently rated as one of America's favorite food cities by *Travel + Leisure* magazine and is filled with great shops and a thriving music scene.



**Click here to learn more:**

Town of Bristol, RI: <https://www.bristolri.gov/quality-of-life/>

City of Providence: <https://www.providenceri.gov/>

