



TEXAS TECH™

MEMORANDUM

DATE: June 10, 2025

TO: Faculty & Staff

FROM: President Lawrence Schovanec

RE: Vice President for Research & Innovation Search

I write today to share that Texas Tech University will soon begin a national search for our next Vice President for Research & Innovation.

As we prepare for this critical search, I want to take a moment to express my deep appreciation for Dr. Joe Heppert, who has served in this role since 2017.

Under Dr. Heppert's leadership, Texas Tech has grown its scholarly and research enterprise and seen record growth in externally funded research. During his tenure, federal research expenditures increased by 50% and total research expenditures achieved a record of \$257M in fiscal year 2024. He has overseen the expansion of commercialization and innovation and research infrastructure. This includes the opening of the Experimental Sciences Building II, supporting the establishment of the NSF Center for Advancing Sustainable & Distributed Fertilizer Production, and other federally funded initiatives across energy, health and national security. His efforts to strengthen research compliance and safety, support faculty development and grow interdisciplinary collaboration have positioned Texas Tech to compete at the highest levels of research excellence.

I am grateful to Dr. Heppert for agreeing to continue in his position through the duration of the search process, which we anticipate will conclude in spring 2026. His leadership ensures continuity at a critical time and allows us to conduct a thoughtful and thorough search for his successor.

The next Vice President for Research & Innovation will be instrumental in sustaining this momentum and advancing Texas Tech's long-term goal of attaining the characteristics of the nation's top research universities that comprise the Association of American Universities.

We will share additional information in the coming weeks, including the selection of a search firm and the composition of the search committee.

Again, I join with you in thanking Dr. Heppert for his service to Texas Tech. I look forward to working with our campus community to identify the next leader who will guide the continued growth of Texas Tech's research enterprise.



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2625 Memorial Circle Lubbock, TX, 79409