**UCL Grand Challenges Pro-Vice-Provost (Climate Crisis): Opportunity to apply**

We invite members of the UCL community to apply for an academic leadership role in one of the first two Themes of the evolved UCL Grand Challenges programme: Pro-Vice-Provost (Climate Crisis).

The deadline for applications is **12 noon on 3 November 2023**. Interviews are scheduled to be held on 17 November, between 9am–2.30pm.

*This is a reopening of the initial call for applications which ended in August 2023, because the appointment panel felt that the pool of colleagues who applied did not fully reflect the diversity of the UCL academic community. Previously received applications will be considered alongside any additional applications we receive.*

The Pro-Vice-Provost (PVP) will provide strategic academic leadership of the Grand Challenges Climate Crisis Theme, as part of a flagship institution-wide programme aiming to apply the collective expertise of our community and its partners to five areas of pressing societal concern, as well as to influence the university's educational offering and institutional operations.

**Reporting to the Vice-Provost (Research, Innovation & Global Engagement) [RIGE] and working closely with the Director of Grand Challenges, the PVP role is available as an internal five-year 0.5FTE secondment, with funding for backfill of the appointee’s substantive post. We welcome joint applications from two candidates with complementary expertise and skills who wish to job-share.**

**Background**

The GC programme stimulates cross-disciplinary research and knowledge exchange on a range of globally significant issues. It facilitates interaction and novel collaboration between expert researchers in different disciplines, through mechanisms ranging from small grants addressing academics’ concerns and curiosities, to thematic larger grants, network building, events and commissions.

Over the course of its first 15 years the GC programme had major impact, including: £1.5m in grants awarded; 376 projects supported, involving more than 560 researchers and 160 centres, institutes and departments; and a further £33m external funding won as a result. It established impactful cross-disciplinary collaboration as a core feature of UCL’s culture and identity.

The UCL Strategic Plan 2022–2027 now commits us to an exciting evolution of the GC programme, with:

* a new set of GC Themes (Climate Crisis; Mental Health & Wellbeing; Data-Empowered Societies; Inequalities; and Intercultural Communication), to be launched sequentially and replace the current GC Themes
* an expanded remit, covering not only research and knowledge exchange but also influencing UCL’s educational offering and institutional operations
* new academic leadership and a revised programme of activities for each GC Theme
* significantly expanded programme funding over each GC Theme’s five-year lifespan.

These changes will mean a significant expansion in the amount and range of activities undertaken. That said, this in an evolution not an abandonment of what has worked in the past. Therefore we will: learn from past achievements while continuing to be experimental; continue to look for novel ways of stimulating collaboration between disciplines and sectors and between academic and professional staff; build on previous examples of influencing UCL’s education and operations; and retain the delivery of societal benefit as the ultimate aim of our activities.

We now seek to appoint a PVP (Climate Crisis) for one of the first two evolved GC Themes, which will launch in 2023-24.

**The role**

The PVP will provide strategic academic leadership for the GC Climate Crisis Theme, working closely with the Vice-Provost (RIGE), the Director of Grand Challenges, the designated Dean or Vice-Dean Co-Sponsors, members of the GC Theme’s Executive Group and the pan-GC Steering Group, and professional staff in the GC team and across RIGE. The PVP will work with many other UCL staff and students to increase and amplify the GC Theme’s impact.

The role requires charismatic and engaging leadership sufficiently comfortable in the language of several disciplines to be able to excite and engage people within and beyond UCL about the potential benefits of involvement. The PVP will respond to the external landscape and stakeholder needs, as well as internal capabilities and aspirations. The PVP will kick-start new research, innovation and education initiatives in partnership with internal and external collaborators. The PVP will channel investment into academic departments and faculties that network and empower colleagues, chairing the GC Climate Crisis Theme’s grant application review panel; and raise our institutional reputation in areas relating to the climate crisis. Reflecting the expanded scope of the programme, the postholder will ensure that our collective expertise – both disciplinary and professional – is consistently brought to bear on UCL’s decision-making on issues related to the GC Climate Crisis Theme.

As Chair of the GC Climate Crisis Theme’s Executive Group, the PVP will work with its membership, the GC Assistant Director and an external advisory group to develop and deliver a five-year plan for the generation of outputs and impacts. This will include: priorities and intended deliverables; steps to ensure inclusiveness and diversity; and processes to review the GC Climate Crisis Theme’s activities and evaluate its achievements. The plan will need to reflect both the external environment and UCL’s capacity and priorities (institutionally and at faculty level) relevant to the GC Climate Crisis Theme, to be sufficiently adaptable to changes in the external or internal landscape, and to be complementary to UCL’s pan-GC objectives.

The PVP will be a champion for the GC Climate Crisis Theme, and the GC programme and approach, both within the UCL community and with external bodies. Within UCL, the PVP will develop a GC Climate Crisis Theme that provides attractive opportunities for academics and researchers, professional staff and students. Effective engagement with Faculty Deans and the President & Provost’s, Vice-Provosts’ and Vice-Presidents’ teams will be crucial. Externally, the PVP will establish and/or build mutually beneficial partnerships and collaborations (e.g. with industry, funders, HEI partners, policymakers, government, the health sector, and alumni and supporters).

The role is highly collaborative. For example, the postholder will:

* inspire and mobilise individual academics and teams to be involved in the GC Climate Crisis Theme’s community and participate in its projects
* draw together and mobilise all the expertise at UCL relevant to the GC Climate Crisis Theme, both disciplinary and professional
* consult with Faculties and professional services divisions to ensure the GC Climate Crisis Theme draws on relevant expertise and incorporates diversity of thought
* ensure the GC Climate Crisis Theme’s collective contribution to UCL’s educational offering and institutional operations
* work in partnership with the GC Director and other GC Themes’ PVPs to: pilot new approaches and test new methods; ensure that the GCs as a whole are coherent, complementary and not disparate; and consider deployment of cross-cutting themes (e.g. cities)
* collaborate with members of the President & Provost’s senior leadership to maximise potential synergies with the upcoming UCL Bicentennial, a future fundraising campaign and the review of the UCL brand.

**Applications**

Applications should be in the form of a letter describing the candidate(s) suitability and initial plans for the role, and a short CV, to Prof Geraint Rees (g.rees@ucl.ac.uk), Vice-Provost (RIGE), **by 12 noon on 3 November 2023**. **The letter should indicate how the applicant(s) meet(s) the Person Specification (below).**

Interviews are scheduled to be held on **17 November, between 9am–2.30pm**. The decision on appointment to this role will be made by a panel including the Vice-Provost (RIGE) and the designated Dean or Vice-Dean Co-Sponsors of the GC Climate Crisis Theme.

**We welcome joint applications from two candidates with complementary expertise and skills who wish to job-share. We particularly welcome applications from women, and men or women from an ethnic minority, as they are under-represented within UCL at senior levels.**

If you wish to discuss the role before applying, you are welcome to contact Prof Rees or Nicholas Tyndale (n.tyndale@ucl.ac.uk), the Vice-Provost’s Joint Chief of Staff.

**Person Specification – Essential Criteria**

|  |
| --- |
| **Qualifications, experience and knowledge** |
| Academic standing commensurate with professorial status, including an excellent track record of postdoctoral academic achievements; experience of teaching, research, consultancy and/or knowledge exchange would be advantageous |
| Expertise relevant to the GC Climate Crisis Theme  |
| Demonstrable record of outstanding achievement in a senior academic leadership role (for example as a head of team or project lead), with the highest standards of intellectual capacity, integrity and professional accountability  |
| Experience of developing and implementing strategic plans in a complex academic environment  |
| A track record of collaboration, including building diverse communities to work across disciplines and sectors  |
| Demonstrable record of effective engagement with external partners in an area related to the GC Climate Crisis Theme  |
| Vision, energy and genuine passion for the UCL mission and values, including our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusivity  |
| **Skills and abilities** |
| Skilled creative and analytical thinker, able to present evidenced rationales to establish rapport and inspire change and progress  |
| Highly developed political acumen and learning agility  |
| A confident, credible and persuasive communicator, with outstanding emotional intelligence and relationship-building skills – suitable to deliver inclusive and transformative change in the context of a large and diverse organisation  |
| Enthusiastic about creativity, innovation, experimenting with new approaches and testing new methods, as well as adapting activities in light of lessons learned  |
| Highly organised, with strong strategic planning and programme management skills, and a track record of delivery |
| Politically and culturally astute, collegial, calm, resilient and tactful  |