

CORNELL UNIVERSITY
DIRECTOR OF THE DAVID R. ATKINSON CENTER FOR A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

Nominations and applications are invited for the position of **Center Director** of the **David R. Atkinson Center for a Sustainable Future (ACSF)** at Cornell University, Ithaca, New York.

Cornell University, an internationally recognized research and land-grant institution, seeks a distinguished, dynamic and innovative leader to be the next Director for the Atkinson Center. Established in 2008 through a generous endowment, the Center advances multidisciplinary research in [Energy](#), the [Environment](#), and [Economic Development](#) and cultivates innovative collaborations within and beyond Cornell to foster a sustainable future for all (www.sustainablefuture.cornell.edu). The Center operates consistent with Cornell's deeply held commitments to sustainability research, outreach, education and public engagement. The next director has a unique opportunity to implement a vision that grows the Center to have a global impact at the intersection of research and application.

Faced with unprecedented, urgent issues that cannot be addressed in isolation, the Atkinson Center strives to be a leading catalyst in mobilizing the University to be a global leader in the development of systematic responses to climate change, biodiversity loss and environmental degradation in the context of rising to the challenges of ensuring clean water, safe and secure food supplies, abundant clean energy, and sustainable economic growth. The Center serves as an incubator for new research collaborations – both among faculty and with external partners – that will achieve meaningful, sustainable and scalable solutions to real world problems through research, communication and concrete actions.

Building upon Cornell's long-held tradition of collaboration across traditional academic boundaries, the Atkinson Center is a highly interdisciplinary university organization. Bringing together distinguished faculty in the physical, computer and life sciences, engineering, the humanities, and the social sciences, it has pioneered cross-cutting relationships among Cornell academics and influential global partners in government, civil society, and the private sector. Over 360 faculty members have been engaged with the Center, with appointments in 75 academic units covering all of these areas of expertise. The Center's strong connections across Cornell provide the resources to address challenges with a comprehensive, integrated approach; its endowment provides a long view and a continuing, dependable foundation for having big impact.

Position Summary

The Atkinson Center Director is a fully endowed position. The successful candidate will be appointed for five years, with the potential for renewal, and will be appointed to the professorial faculty, either tenure-track or non-tenure-track as appropriate to the individual's background, in one or more departments on the Ithaca campus. She or he will have the opportunity to pursue research and teaching interests. The director reports to the Senior Vice Provost for Research. The next director is expected to continue moving the Center into a global leadership position in sustainability. In consultation with the academic deans and leaders of Cornell's numerous centers, programs, and institutes, the director is

responsible for developing and nurturing partnerships inside and outside the university that utilize cross-disciplinary research aimed at solving urgent sustainability problems. The director serves as a public representative and spokesperson to advance the interests of the Center to other institutions and groups, the media, community, government, and the public at-large. In addition to having a record of scholarly achievement and relevant management experience, the successful candidate must be intellectually curious, and an enterprising, inspiring and collaborative leader. The director has fundraising and media outreach obligations, and provides direct leadership for senior Center staff.

Major Director Responsibilities

Specific core objectives for the next director include:

1. Guiding and coordinating efforts to impact a sustainable future;
2. Raising the profile of the Center in the global context;
3. Fostering the Center's highly collegial and cooperative culture and developing intellectual community;
4. Serving as a public representative and spokesperson to advance the interests of Cornell to other institutions and groups, the media, community, government and the public at large;
5. Partnering with academic and industry leaders to build synergies;
6. Attracting robust financial support through external partnerships and related activities;
7. Supporting programmatic initiatives;
8. Working with the Center's staff to manage the administrative operations of the Center effectively and promote campus-wide activities.

Ideal Experience of the next Director

The ideal candidate will be committed to sustainability in a broad, multidisciplinary sense. Strong candidates may come from a variety of backgrounds and may demonstrate success in combining academic and administrative leadership experience; in teaching and research. Candidates with comparable skills who have followed non-traditional academic paths may also be considered. Regardless of specific background, candidates should have a record that ideally demonstrates or includes:

1. Passion about the mission of sustainability and for making a difference in the world;
2. Capacity to lead, inspire, and build partnerships;
3. Strong research foundation in any academic discipline;
4. Dedication to inclusiveness across disciplines;
5. Practical experience in or with industry or government agencies;
6. Understanding of higher education at a major research university;
7. Capacity to cultivate relationships and seek external support for initiatives and organizations;
8. Intellectual curiosity.

Interested applicants may submit a brief statement of interest and CV to acsfsearch@cornell.edu.