

Academic Director, Lawson Climate Institute

University of Toronto

The University of Toronto invites applications and nominations for the position of Academic Director of the Lawson Climate Institute (LCI), a landmark interdisciplinary Institute established in 2025 through a transformational \$60 million philanthropic gift. Created at a pivotal moment in the global response to climate change, the Lawson Climate Institute represents one of the University's most ambitious and strategically significant initiatives, positioning Toronto as a global hub for climate research, innovation, and leadership.

The Lawson Climate Institute brings together leading scholars, researchers, and partners from across disciplines to accelerate the development and implementation of climate solutions. Building upon the University of Toronto's global reputation for research excellence and its long-standing leadership in sustainability, the Institute serves as a university-wide platform to advance interdisciplinary research, foster collaboration across sectors, and translate academic knowledge into real-world impact. Through its research platforms, partnerships, and public engagement activities, the Institute seeks to address the scientific, technological, economic, and societal dimensions of climate change while educating and supporting the next generation of climate leaders. Reflecting the Institute's broad interdisciplinary mandate, the Academic Director may come from any academic discipline relevant to advancing climate and sustainability solutions.

Reporting to both the Dean of the Faculty of Arts & Science and the Dean of the Faculty of Applied Science & Engineering, the Academic Director serves as the chief academic and administrative officer of the Institute and will provide visionary leadership at a formative stage in its development. The Academic Director will be responsible for shaping and implementing the Institute's strategic direction, establishing its governance and operating framework, and ensuring excellence and integration across its research and programmatic activities. Working closely with faculty, research leaders, university partners, and external stakeholders, the Academic Director will advance the Institute's mission and strengthen its role as a catalyst for interdisciplinary collaboration and innovation.

The Academic Director will also play a critical role in building and sustaining partnerships across the University of Toronto and beyond, engaging with academic institutions, industry, government, and global organizations to expand the Institute's reach and impact. As a visible and influential leader, the Academic Director will represent the Institute and the University on the global stage, convening thought leaders, advancing policy dialogue, and contributing to the development of solutions to one of the defining challenges of our time.

The successful candidate will be an internationally recognized academic leader with a distinguished record of scholarly achievement, a commitment to interdisciplinary collaboration, and the vision and leadership required to build and guide a globally significant research Institute. The Academic Director will play a central role in shaping the Institute's trajectory and advancing the University of Toronto's leadership in climate research and sustainability for decades to come.

An executive search is being undertaken by U of T's search partner Perrett Laver. Perrett Laver will support the Search Committee in identifying a diverse field of qualified candidates and in the assessment of candidates against the selection criteria. To apply, please submit a CV and covering letter, detailing how you fulfill the role description and selection criteria noted herein to <https://apptrkr.com/6987730> quoting reference 8145. The deadline for applications is April 19, 2026 noon Eastern time.

The selection committee will together review all candidates' applications and agree on a longlist for the role. Longlisted candidates will be invited to discuss the position with Perrett Laver in greater detail. The selection committee will subsequently meet to decide upon a final shortlist to be invited to the formal interview stage.

Equity, diversity and inclusion are essential to academic excellence as articulated in University of Toronto's Statement on Equity, Diversity and Excellence. We seek candidates who share these values and who demonstrate throughout the application materials their commitment and efforts to advance equity, diversity, inclusion, and the promotion of a respectful and collegial learning and working environment.

The University of Toronto has adopted the AAU Principles on Preventing Sexual Harassment in Academia, including the requirement that applicants release personnel information from prior employers regarding sexual misconduct. Full details and requirements can be found [here](#).

All qualified candidates are encouraged to apply; however, Canadians and permanent residents will be given priority.

Diversity Statement

The University of Toronto embraces Diversity and is building a culture of belonging that increases our capacity to effectively address and serve the interests of our global community. We strongly encourage applications from Indigenous Peoples, Black and racialized persons, women, persons with disabilities, and people of diverse sexual and gender identities. We value applicants who have demonstrated a commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion and recognize that diverse perspectives, experiences, and expertise are essential to strengthening our academic mission.

Accessibility Statement

The University strives to be an equitable and inclusive community, and proactively seeks to increase diversity among its community members. Our values regarding equity and diversity are linked with our unwavering commitment to excellence in the pursuit of our academic mission.

The University is committed to the principles of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA). As such, we strive to make our recruitment, assessment and selection processes as accessible as possible and provide accommodation as required for applicants with disabilities.

If you require any accommodations at any point during the application and hiring process, please contact Angela.Licata@perrettlaver.com

Protecting your personal data is of the utmost importance to Perrett Laver and we take this responsibility very seriously. Any information obtained by our trading divisions is held and processed in accordance with the relevant data protection legislation. The data you provide us with is securely stored on our computerised database and transferred to our clients for the purposes of presenting you as a candidate and/or considering your suitability for a role you have registered interest in.

Perrett Laver is a Data Controller and a Data Processor, and our legal basis for processing your personal data is 'Legitimate Interests'. You have the right to object to us processing your data in this way. For more information about this, your rights, and our approach to Data Protection and Privacy, please see our Privacy Statement.