



CANCER PREVENTION AND RESEARCH INSTITUTE OF TEXAS

POSITION DESCRIPTION

Chief Scientific Officer

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In 2007, Texas voters approved a constitutional amendment which created the [Cancer Prevention & Research Institute of Texas](#) (CPRIT) and provided the initial \$3 billion to invest in the state's unprecedented fight against cancer. Following near unanimous endorsement by the Texas Legislature, Texans overwhelmingly approved continuing this immensely popular program and authorized an additional \$3 billion toward the effort in a November 2019 statewide vote. CPRIT is now a \$6 billion initiative funding the best cancer research and prevention proposals – the second largest public funder of cancer research and prevention programs in the United States.

CPRIT is governed by an Oversight Committee consisting of nine members who are appointed by the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, and Speaker of the House. Under the guidance of the Oversight Committee, CPRIT maintains the highest integrity and dedication to their mission of finding cures and treatments for cancer. CPRIT's investments position Texas as a world-class leader in cancer research and prevention and connect universities, researchers, physicians, companies, hospitals, and clinics across Texas to form a critical ecosystem of distinguished cancer-fighting talent.

As Texas' fight against cancer escalates exponentially, CPRIT's work remains true to its three-part mission established by the Texas Legislature:

- Invest in the research prowess of Texas universities and research organizations;
- Create and expand life science infrastructure across the state; and
- Expedite innovation in research and enhance the potential of breakthroughs in prevention and cures.

CPRIT advances its mission by awarding merit-based, peer reviewed grants to Texas-based entities and institutions for cancer-related research, product development, and the delivery of cancer prevention programs through three programs: [Academic Research](#), [Prevention](#), and [Product Development Research](#).

CPRIT's prestigious, merit based, NCI-recognized, peer-reviewed grant making process has positioned Texas as a global leader in the fight to prevent, treat, and cure cancer. Over the past decade and with the help of CPRIT, Texas has:

- Recruited 330 stellar cancer researchers (and their labs) to Texas research entities
- Elevated two institutions to National Cancer Institute Comprehensive status
- Attracted over \$11.68B in additional outside funding from \$3.41B in total CPRIT research contracts
- Identified 339 new clinical studies as well as the enrollment of 63,000 patients in clinical studies
- Identified more than 48,430 cancers and cancer precursors through cancer screening programs

Facts and figures and more information on CPRIT can be found [here](#)

Position Summary

With an opportunity to join CPRIT at a pivotal time in cancer research and biomedical discovery, the Chief Scientific Officer (CSO) will invest in and contribute to the research prowess of Texas universities and research organizations, create and expand life science infrastructure across the state, and expedite innovation in research and enhance the potential of breakthroughs in prevention and cures. The CSO will have an unmatched challenge to build upon CPRIT's accomplishments and shape their \$280 million per year research and prevention grant portfolio through the next decade. Additionally, the CSO will lead CPRIT's grant process and be responsible for coordinating grant funding opportunities, recruiting reviewers to and overseeing peer review panels, monitoring grant recipients' progress, and evaluating CPRIT's overarching progress towards preventing cancer and discovering the causes of and cures for cancer. They will be responsible for developing and implementing a vision for CPRIT's academic research portfolio in coordination with the product development research and prevention grant portfolios to ensure that the funded research enhances the potential for medical and scientific advances in cancer prevention, detection, and treatment.

Reporting to the Chief Executive Officer and working closely with the Executive Team as well as the Oversight Committee, the CSO will be a key player in catalyzing the discovery and progress in the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of cancer. Ultimately, they will be a nationally recognized scholar and leader in cancer research, one who is passionate about the mission, vision, and values of CPRIT, and is prepared to manage the scientific, cultural, strategic, and operational changes necessary to continue its success.

Key Responsibilities

Responsibilities, duties, and critical tasks of the CSO include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Provide broad, scientific oversight of CPRIT's three programs – Academic Research, Product Development Research, and Prevention.
- Oversee and lead the grant process with responsibility for coordinating grant funding opportunities, recruiting reviewers to and overseeing peer review panels, monitoring grant recipients' progress, and evaluating CPRIT's progress towards preventing cancer and discovering the causes of and cures for cancer.
- Foster an organizational culture that places a premium on impactful science.
- Develop and implement a vision for CPRIT's academic research portfolio in coordination with the product development research and prevention grant portfolios to ensure that the funded research enhances the potential for medical and scientific advances in cancer prevention, detection, and treatment.
- Map, develop, and execute research and prevention plans that will allow CPRIT to fund solutions to scientific questions critical to the field.
- Expand and strengthen collaborative opportunities and bridges across the organization as well as with local, regional, and national professionals in and across the cancer research space.
- Provide open communication within the organization as well as across the Executive Team and Oversight Committee so that transparency can yield improved opportunities for organizational success.

CANDIDATE SPECIFICATION: Experience and Qualifications

The successful candidate will be expected to lead in a manner that contributes to the success of the mission of CPRIT, and exemplifies qualities of excellence, integrity, compassion, belonging, and trust. Experience and professional qualifications required for the CSO include:

- Outstanding scientific accomplishments in cancer research and the experience and national reputation necessary to build the prominence of CPRIT's goals and mission.
- Thorough knowledge of basic, clinical, translational, and/or prevention research with a broad view of the overall problems and barriers to progress in cancer research.
- A background in translating basic or applied research into clinical applications and/or the development of successful diagnostics, therapies, or relevant technology.
- Scientific leadership qualities that will allow CPRIT to advance the field of cancer research and establish programmatic priorities in collaboration with the Oversight Committee.
- A track record of successfully achieving results through compelling leadership, strategic capability, vision, and effective culture building.
- The capacity to formulate and articulate a shared vision, to persuade a wide range of audiences of its value, and to engage others in its implementation.
- Excellent organizational skills and analytical ability.
- Strong ability to work collaboratively with leaders of various backgrounds and interests.
- Strong and well-established relationships within the scientific community. The CSO will work as effectively through influence and collaboration as through direct authority and will initiate and forge alliances that lead to synergistic collaborations.
- Demonstrated excellence in managing a science-based or research-based organization within academia or industry.
- Familiarity with product development in translating the outcomes of academic research to the marketplace with cancer therapies, diagnostics, drugs, and devices to treat cancer patients.
- Familiarity with cancer prevention practices including services and interventions available to decrease the burden of cancer on Texans.
- Public speaking experience in communicating complex subjects to both professional and nontechnical audiences, and comfortability managing diverse and conflicting opinions and input.
- Experience developing and managing academic research institution and industry collaborations.
- Interest and ability to champion and promote existing portfolio of agency awards.
- Knowledge and/or experience working with government-based and/or non-profit, high-profile organizations.
- The ability to identify early and important trends in the field and expedite innovative research.
- Exposure to or direct experience in a public environment with high standards of disclosure, accountability, and transparency.
- Strong executive presence and a leadership style that is humble, authentic, inspirational, and aspirational; politically astute with a high level of emotional intelligence.

- A highly effective communicator and listener at all levels of an organization as well as within the community.
- A leader capable of enterprise level thinking with a genuine appreciation for consultation and collaboration. Personal style that fosters and supports innovation.

Education and Credentials

The ideal candidate will have earned an MD, PhD, MD/PhD, or equivalent, have a minimum of fifteen (15) years of extensive experience in cancer research with a strong record of research accomplishments, productivity, peer-reviewed extramural funding, as well as demonstrated success in providing strategic leadership, vision, and insights in cancer research and discovery.

Compensation

CPRIT is committed to providing a competitive compensation package commensurate with the experience and accomplishments of the potential incumbent.

The package includes State of Texas salary commensurate with experience. State of Texas employee health insurance. Term life insurance. Participation in the State of Texas Employee Retirement Plan. Monthly vacation and sick leave accrual. Additional benefits available as a payroll deduction are dependent health insurance, dental insurance, term life in excess of \$5,000, long- and short-term disability insurance, flexible spending account for health care and participation in 401(k) and 457 deferred compensation plans.

Application Instructions

- If you meet the qualifications, complete and submit a State of Texas application to tara.vittese@kornferry.com.
- A blank State of Texas application may be obtained from CPRIT Employment Opportunities.
- All résumés must be accompanied by a fully completed State of Texas application. Incomplete applications may be disqualified.

Other

- The position is open until filled.
- Some travel required.
- Requires established residency in the State of Texas.
- All inquiries should be directed to Tara Vittese at Korn Ferry, tara.vittese@kornferry.com.
- Tobacco-free office and building.
- CPRIT headquarters is in the Capitol Complex of downtown Austin, Texas.
- Additional information regarding the Institute's history and operations can be found on the agency's web site at www.cprit.texas.gov.
- The Cancer Prevention and Research Institute of Texas is an equal opportunity employer.