



Five Colleges of Ohio

Denison University
Kenyon College
Oberlin College
Ohio Wesleyan University
The College of Wooster

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

[The Five Colleges of Ohio](#), a consortium of The College of Wooster, Denison University, Kenyon College, Oberlin College, and Ohio Wesleyan University, invites nominations and applications for the position of Executive Director. The Executive Director will partner with the board to set strategic vision for the consortium and find opportunities to leverage the strengths and values of the organization and the member institutions.

ABOUT THE FIVE COLLEGES OF OHIO

The Five Colleges of Ohio, Inc. (also known as “the Ohio Five”) was established in 1996 as a focal point for ongoing collaboration between five institutions. Together these colleges work on issues and opportunities of mutual concern, creating joint programs and operations that enhance the member institutions.

This foundation of trust stimulates the organization to challenge the *status quo* and imagine how all might be better off both collectively and individually. The consortium is also a forum for the institution’s presidents, who form the Board of Directors, to initiate public dialogue about consortial innovations, current issues affecting higher education, and the value of a liberal arts education.

MEMBER INSTITUTIONS

[The College of Wooster](#)

Wooster is America's premier college for mentored undergraduate research. Wooster offers an excellent, comprehensive liberal arts education culminating in a rigorous senior project in which each student works one-on-one with a faculty mentor to conceive, organize, and complete a significant research project on a topic of the student's own choosing. Through this distinctive program, every Wooster student develops abilities valued by employers and graduate schools alike: independent judgment, analytical ability, creativity, project-management and time-management skills, and strong written and oral communication skills. Founded in 1866, the College enrolls approximately 2,000 students.

Every year since 2002, *U.S. News & World Report* has asked college presidents and deans to name schools with outstanding undergraduate research opportunities and senior capstone programs. Only two schools have made both lists every year: Wooster and Princeton.

[Denison University](#)

Denison University is a leading national college of liberal arts and sciences where students from around the world come to pursue academic inquiry and research, to analyze and solve problems, and to forge the skills needed to succeed.

On a beautiful, fully residential campus located minutes from the [Forbes-rated #1 Opportunity City](#) of Columbus, Ohio, students build enduring relationships and pathways to the professions supported by faculty mentorship in classrooms, laboratories, and studios; a wealth of career-launch programs and internships; and a thriving, far-reaching alumni network.

Denison's place at the forefront of higher education is recognized by *Colleges That Change Lives*, *U.S. News*, and *Forbes*, among others.

[Kenyon College](#)

Kenyon is one of the nation's finest liberal arts colleges, a small school where academic excellence goes hand in hand with a strong sense of community. The College brings together 1,600 students to study with nearly 200 professors on an exceptionally beautiful hilltop campus in central Ohio. Kenyon's curriculum is rooted in the traditional liberal arts and sciences and enriched by interdisciplinary programs.

Founded in 1824, Kenyon is the oldest private college in Ohio. The College's literary prominence dates to 1939, when poet and critic John Crowe Ransom founded the *Kenyon Review*. Since then, Kenyon has grown in size - welcoming women in 1969 - and has expanded intellectually, earning national recognition in many fields. Well-known alumni include not only a host of eminent writers but also actors, scientists, educators, artists, and leaders in business and the professions. Other notable strengths include many opportunities for research in the sciences and programs connecting students to the college's rural surroundings. The Kenyon experience fosters connections of all kinds — to classmates and teachers and friends, to the life of the mind, to global perspectives, to its unique traditions and history, and to a place of inspiration.

[Oberlin College](#)

Oberlin uniquely combines an outstanding professional school of music with a leading undergraduate college of arts and sciences. The Oberlin Conservatory of Music provides flexible programs to prepare students as professional musicians and teachers of music. Deeply committed to academic excellence, the College of Arts and Sciences offers a rich and balanced curriculum in the humanities, social sciences, mathematics, and natural sciences. Within that framework the College expects that students will work closely with the faculty to design an educational program appropriate to their own particular interests, needs, and long-term goals.

Oberlin seeks a disparate and promising student body. Recognizing that diversity broadens perspectives, Oberlin is dedicated to recruiting a culturally, economically, geographically, and racially diverse group of students. Interaction with others of widely different backgrounds and experiences fosters the effective, concerned participation in the larger society so characteristic of Oberlin graduates. Oberlin seeks

students who are talented, highly motivated, personally mature, and tolerant of divergent views. The Conservatory, in particular, seeks talented musicians with considerable potential for further growth and development. Performance is central to all of the curricula including music education, history, theory, composition, and technology.

[Ohio Wesleyan University](#)

At Ohio Wesleyan University, students hunger to solve problems, save lives, make peace, build businesses, create art, and change the world. Ohio Wesleyan provides an abundance of interconnected experiences through its unique OWU Connection program to integrate knowledge across disciplines, build a diverse and global perspective, and apply knowledge in real-world settings.

A private, undergraduate, liberal arts university, Ohio Wesleyan is located in Delaware, Ohio, with easy access to Columbus, Ohio's capital and the nation's 15th-largest city. Ohio Wesleyan offers nearly 90 majors and 60 minors. Students also compete in 23 NCAA Division III men's and women's varsity sports and are committed to serving the community, both at home and abroad.

Ohio Wesleyan is featured in the book *Colleges That Change Lives*, listed on the latest President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll with Distinction, and included in the *U.S. News & World Report* and *Princeton Review* "best colleges" lists.

LEADERSHIP

The Five Colleges of Ohio collaborates through its committees, which help inform priorities, initiate and conduct joint projects, and oversee consortial grants. The [Committee Guidelines and Charges](#) outlines the purpose of each committee and the general responsibilities with which they are charged.

The Executive Director is the administrative liaison to these committees, working closely with the chairs to develop regular meeting agendas and logistics and helping to identify and carry forward ideas for committee consideration. They also maintain corporate records and minutes of the meetings and provide inter-committee communication about common priorities.

The standing committees are:

- The Ohio Five Board of Trustees, consisting of the presidents of the colleges, with the chair of the operating committee and Executive Director serving as ex-officio members;
- The Academic Committee of provosts and deans, their associates, and chief diversity officers/deans;
- The Operating Committee of chief financial and business officers;
- The Library Committee of library directors; and
- The Chief Information Officer Committee.

In addition, the Executive Director coordinates meetings and activities for the committee of directors/deans of diversity, equity and inclusion, as well as other interested peer groups requesting consortial meeting support.

CURRENT STRATEGIES

The Executive Director leads annual assessment, definition and execution of strategic priorities developed by the Ohio Five standing committees, defined currently by three overarching goals:

- **Provide cost savings and cost avoidance at Ohio Five institutions**

The colleges collaborate on services and contracts to save money using a common e-procurement system that also allows them to track spending across the consortium. In its initial implementation in 2013, this system saved the institutions over \$500,000 and continues to yield savings benefits as more contracts are added. They also regularly join forces for major expenditures that eliminate the need for duplicate purchases on individual campuses such as staffing, purchasing, professional development, Title IX services, and other initiatives.

Current goals for the consortium include:

- improving the efficiency and cost of the five colleges financial operations through systems collaboration; and
- reducing vendor costs and improve services through collaborative purchasing and resource sharing.

- **Promote scholarship and academic innovation on campuses**

The Ohio Five provides opportunities for the colleges to collaborate on new academic projects or pilot new ventures for individual campus or consortial implementation. Beginning with their longstanding collaboration in library systems and programs, the colleges' joint programs have included a post-doctoral fellows program in languages, support for faculty members conducting digital scholarship projects, and a curricular coherence initiative to assist students in planning their academic programs.

Current goals include:

- strengthening and broadening the colleges' curricula and promoting the consortium's distinctiveness through distance learning collaborations that combine resources and control costs;
- integrating digital scholarship with the colleges' digital literacy initiatives to expand student and faculty mastery of best practices and approaches in research and learning made possible by digital scholarship; and,
- supporting access to and preservation of the libraries' digital resources for scholarship, teaching, and student success.

- **Improve the competitive advantage in admissions and faculty recruitment**

The Five Colleges of Ohio champions the excellence of Ohio's leading liberal arts colleges by promoting programs that enhance the distinctiveness and quality of the students' experience and support resources available to faculty members. They are currently developing ways to link the colleges to Columbus and Cleveland, the state's two largest cities near their campuses, through joint programs with their leading universities. The Ohio Five is also assisting faculty in convening discussions about further developing the colleges' teaching and advising practices to be fully inclusive and equitable for all students.

Current goals include:

- establishing Ohio Five Colleges as national leaders among undergraduate STEM summer research programs by creating a dedicated pathway for students to applied science and research opportunities within the Ohio corporate, government, and university communities; and
- Positioning colleges to attract an increasingly diverse student body and faculty to Ohio from a national and international arena and developing consortial initiatives to support their success and retention.

THE ROLE OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

In collaboration with the Board of Directors, the Executive Director will represent The Five Colleges of Ohio, which is seen as a national model in collaborative liberal arts leadership. They will also oversee the management of the active consortial programs of The Five Colleges of Ohio, a budget of \$1.4 million, and a team of five located across four campuses. They will work to ensure the strategic vision, financial and operational processes, and relationships in place address the complex challenges facing liberal arts education and ensure the collective and individual success of member institutions. This is a remarkable opportunity, and the Executive Director will have an entrepreneurial mindset, a broad view of the distinctive opportunities offered by the partner institutions, a strategic vision for how to leverage the partner institutions many assets, and a collaborative and adaptive approach.

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

The Executive Director supports and develops collaboration within the consortium through the work of the Ohio Five Board, its standing committees, and task forces focused on key issues and opportunities. They work closely with the college presidents, chief financial officers, chief academic officers, librarians, and outside grant-making institutions. Specific opportunities include:

Strategic Planning and Implementation

The Executive Director will work with staff and committees to formulate, plan, and execute short- and long-term collaborations and continue to refine the Ohio Five's overarching strategies. The Executive Director will be expected to be a facilitator for innovative thinking and drive collaborative discussion and decision-making. They will lead the implementation of strategic initiatives across The Five Colleges of Ohio in ways that strengthen cooperation, expand resources, and improve operational efficiencies. The Executive Director is expected to travel regularly between the member institutions and will have the flexibility to choose their home office location from among the five campuses.

Financial Acumen and Grants Administration

In 2021-22, Ohio Five began independent operation of its finances and investments, transitioning from 25 years of financial services provided by Kenyon College. The Executive Director oversees financial planning, budgeting, reporting, and auditing which is carried out by the Program and Budget Manager. The Executive Director develops the annual budget for college-supported consortial activities and manages expenditures, works with accounting staff on the annual audit, and assures State of Ohio and federal reports are filed and tax status is maintained. In addition, the Executive director will identify new opportunities and external partners, clearly assess the value of the opportunity to member colleges, create the business case, and negotiate on behalf of the colleges. Once a funding source is secured, the Executive Director will administer the grant and report to external funding agencies. They will also

oversee the Ohio Five Collaborative Grants Program, supporting joint academic and administrative projects proposed by Ohio Five peers with an annual grant pool of \$50,000 provided by the colleges.

Staff Oversight and Engagement

While overseeing the management of the active consortial programs of The Five Colleges of Ohio, the Executive Director functions as chief of staff for the Ohio Five's employees, working with them to plan and execute strategic priorities and ensure they have the resources and consortial support to carry out collaborative initiatives. The Executive Director organizes monthly online staff meetings and annual retreats and leads quarterly and annual evaluations. They should have the ability to sustain autonomous and self-directed work and support the same practice among Ohio Five employees, who are located at colleges throughout the consortium.

DESIRED QUALIFICATIONS AND CHARACTERISTICS

As a leader who engages across all five member institutions, the Executive Director must be innovative, versatile, and experienced in the operation of academic institutions. They must have a strong commitment to the member institutions, liberal arts education, and the collaborative mission of The Five Colleges of Ohio as well as the demonstrated ability to build relationships among individuals and groups.

The ideal candidate will bring many of the following complementary abilities and experiences to the work of the consortium:

- A commitment to the liberal arts and the broad and lively intellectual nature of the campuses of The Five Colleges of Ohio;
- An understanding of higher education governance and the demonstrated ability to understand the colleges' internal processes for decision-making and to articulate and manage Ohio Five governance actions in concert with these standards;
- The ability and desire to innovate and apply creative problem-solving to the complex challenges facing higher education, particularly for liberal arts colleges;
- The ability to identify unique and new partnerships for the consortium that enhance the academic and administrative reach of the colleges;
- A commitment to diversity and inclusion, and an understanding of the fundamental need for multiple perspectives and backgrounds in an educational context;
- Strong managerial skills and experience across many areas, such as budget and finance, human resources, risk management, environmental safety and health management, information technology, compliance and legal affairs, and academic program administration;
- The ability to plan and act strategically while maintaining transparency and building consensus;
- The ability to inspire trust and build relationships with integrity;
- Project development expertise to lead (or assist staff in leading) new initiatives, setting a standard of collaborative needs assessment, creating benchmarks for evaluation, setting and maintaining project timelines and budgets, and evaluating project success;
- The ability to identify administrative cost savings and operational efficiencies and communicate effectively, clearly, and diplomatically to a wide range of interest groups;
- Excellent writing and communication skills, including grant writing, to promote Ohio Five programs and ideas to internal and external audiences; and

- Outstanding diplomatic, negotiation, and communication skills, and the ability to represent complex and nuanced topics accurately in multiple contexts.

For best consideration, please send all nominations and applications to:



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The Five Colleges of Ohio is an Equal Opportunity Employer. It is the organization's policy to evaluate qualified applicants without regard to race, color, national origin, ancestry, sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, physical and/or mental disability, age, religion, medical condition, veteran status, marital status, or any other characteristic protected by institutional policy or state, local, or federal law.