Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory
Director

Introduction

The President and the Regents of the University of California invite nominations and applications for the position of Director of the Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory ("LBNL," "Berkeley Lab," or "the Laboratory"). Berkeley Lab is a multidisciplinary national laboratory managed by the University of California (UC or the University) for the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) Office of Science. It operates large-scale scientific facilities and builds tools and interdisciplinary teams to foster groundbreaking fundamental science. Through this distinctive approach to team science, the Lab is committed to groundbreaking research focused on discovery science and solutions for abundant and reliable energy supplies. The lab's expertise spans materials, chemistry, physics, biology, earth and environmental science, mathematics, and computing. The appointment will be effective upon selection or at such later time as is mutually agreeable to the appointee and the University.

Berkeley Lab Profile

Berkeley Lab, established in 1931, is located on a 200-acre site in the hills above the UC Berkeley campus and has an annual budget of about $1.3 billion. The Lab's 21 divisions are organized into six scientific areas whose members perform unclassified basic and applied research across a broad spectrum of disciplines; a robust operations infrastructure supports this work. The Laboratory hosts five DOE national user facilities and leads or participates in numerous national and regional collaborations. Sixteen individual scientists and one research team associated with Berkeley Lab have won the Nobel Prize, and 18 Berkeley Lab scientists have won the National Medal of Science. As of 2025, 78 are active members of the National Academy of Sciences; 33 of the National Academy of Engineering. Approximately 225 Berkeley Lab researchers hold joint faculty appointments with the University of California's campuses, predominantly at Berkeley, San Francisco, and Davis, and there are over 430 postdoctoral fellows and more than 260 graduate students employed by Berkeley Lab.

Major Lab initiatives include the Advanced Light Source upgrade, which will make the facility the world-leader in soft x-rays; NERSC-10, the next flagship supercomputer at the National Energy Research Scientific Computing Center (NERSC), which will be named for Jennifer Doudna, a Berkeley Lab-based biochemist and Nobel Prize winner; and focus on the DOE Genesis Mission.

Berkeley Lab Director

The Director of Berkeley Laboratory provides strategic, scientific, and operational leadership of the nation's premier multipurpose national laboratory. This role carries a mandate of public trust from

DOE to steward a leading global scientific institution. Reporting to the President of the University of California system, the Director is responsible for the overall operation and strategic direction of the Laboratory, which conducts a world-class multidisciplinary program of research and development. The Director serves as the highest level management liaison with UC, DOE, other National Labs, and other public and private agencies.

To maximize the impact of the Lab's research on society, the Director works with the Lab's scientific leadership to provide a compelling scientific vision for the enterprise; to manage the effective performance of its research; to promote a culture of stewardship, in which everyone takes responsibility for the people, research and resources that make it possible to carry out the Lab's mission; and to maintain excellent relations with all external stakeholders. Specifically, the Director leads the development and integration of the Laboratory's scientific vision, goals, and objectives. Within University policy, the Director exercises broad delegated powers in the overall leadership and administration of the Laboratory's programs and operations, including the definition of their technical goals, the negotiation of their size and content, and the execution of these programs with the highest quality. The Director provides overall leadership for recruiting and supporting an inclusive and highly talented workforce, which presently includes over 4,000 staff members, to execute the Laboratory's mission.

The Director must lead and maintain a robust science and operations infrastructure and champion a strong safety culture with an associated integrated safety management program. The Director is also responsible for ensuring that the DOE national user facilities hosted by Berkeley Lab are scientifically productive and remain positioned to meet the future needs of the DOE's scientific and energy missions. These user facilities must be managed efficiently and provide the level of service and utility required by the world's leading researchers — more than 14,000 of whom use Berkeley Lab's user facilities each year. The Director will also be responsible for securing philanthropic support and will seek new ways for basic and applied research to be quickly and effectively transferred to industry, assuring that Berkeley Lab continues to contribute to the economic competitiveness of the nation.

Responsibilities, Priorities, and Opportunities

The next Director will maintain public trust in stewarding LBNL through a period of rapid technological change, evolving national priorities, disruptions to established funding cycles and research and development paradigms, and increasingly complex operational and security environments, with emphasis on:

Advancing the Lab's Mission, Distinction, and Impact

- Sustain and enhance the Lab's excellence and its reputation for leading-edge PI-driven and team-based discovery science across current and potential new fields
- Advance world-class scientific excellence across LBNL's broad research portfolio including its unique national user facilities
- Enable scientific discovery while supporting a strong, safe, cyber-secure operational environment

- Position Berkeley Lab as a leading source of science, technology, and operations talent in partnership with the University of California

Championing the Missions of DOE and the Nation

- Strengthen partnerships with DOE to demonstrate continued excellence in stewardship and to inform direction of future DOE priorities and investments
- Successfully address national priorities, e.g., DOE's Genesis Mission
- Continue to support and strengthen the DOE National Laboratory ecosystem

Management

- Focus on defining optimal future states for the Lab in the medium and long terms, socializing the vision and strategy with internal and external stakeholders
- Understand and effectively manage the Lab's complex business model
- Model and direct responsible deployment of Lab resources in an evolving and increasingly complex financial environment
- Provide steady, pragmatic leadership amid shifting policy and funding landscapes
- Expand the Lab's funding base by diversifying sources of support

Enabling a World-Class Research Environment through People Stewardship

- Foster a mission-driven, collaborative workforce in service to the public good
- Attract and retain top talent by fostering a dynamic employee environment that advances both team science and investigator-inspired science to ensure the Lab's excellence and competitiveness in global scientific research
- Further strengthen the Lab's ability to compete for top talent by enhancing professional-development pathways and total reward programs to ensure workforce resilience through evolving funding and political environments

Vision, Strategy, and Priorities

- Advocate for the Lab's open-science environment while balancing research security requirements
- Identify the areas for future investment to maintain the Lab's leading edge
- Assess risk and return over multiple timeframes to guide priorities and inform decisions about initiating, continuing, and terminating programs
- Develop new paradigms for team-based discovery science, considering impacts of AI, more varied funding sources, and more rapid timeframes
- Manage major infrastructure facility upgrades
- Deepen appropriate relationships with partners to include industry, philanthropy, and international science and technology labs

Understanding and Navigating Multiple Contexts

- Draw on political acumen and judgment to ensure the Lab's values, priorities, and needs are understood and supported by elected and appointed officials and their staffs and by partners in the DOE national-lab system and the University of California

- In consultation with the UC Office for National Laboratories, Lab leadership, advisory committees, and fellow DOE Lab leaders, adroitly position the Lab for success in short/medium and long terms

Managing Stakeholder Relations

- Maintain broad-based trust and effectively articulate LBNL's mission to stakeholders
- Broaden and deepen relationships with the UC System
- Build awareness of the Lab among federal and state leaders, agencies, regional organizations, and neighbors
- Deepening interactions with other national lab directors, finding areas for increased collaboration including in the context of national initiatives such as the Genesis Mission

Qualifications and Competencies

The ideal candidate should have demonstrated successful leadership and management experience in a complex, mission-oriented, research and development institution and a distinguished record of scientific and technical accomplishments. Strong leadership skills are needed, including the ability to gain the confidence of key leaders, scientists and operations staff, and the ability to develop strategic relationships and partnerships with key constituents.

Significant management experience will enable the successful candidate to ensure that all operations are conducted efficiently and in compliance with all applicable federal, state, and UC policies. The ideal candidate should also have a strong track record of working with senior management to accomplish key objectives, and of nurturing leadership development throughout the organization.

Above all, the Director must be an excellent manager of relationships, demonstrating collaboration, accountability, respect, and trust to all.

Required Qualifications

- A nationally recognized thought leader with the scientific credentials that merit credibility inside and outside the Lab
- Deep personal integrity, intellectual independence, and principled leadership; communicates these values both internally and externally
- Demonstrated commitment to academic freedom and scientific integrity
- A record of supporting and advancing individual PI science, large team science, and user facilities
- A record of research excellence and achievement and broad awareness of science and technology fields relevant to the Lab
- Earned doctorate in a field relevant to the Lab or equivalent education and experience
- Passionate and credible champion of the Berkeley Lab mission, multidisciplinary science portfolio, and scientific user facilities
- Deep understanding of and commitment to the mission of the DOE Office of Science

- Experience leading and managing a complex, multidisciplinary R&D organization, with a demonstrated understanding of and commitment to the Lab's missions
- The ability to champion science across the broad range of fields represented at the Lab
- The ability to articulate short- and long-term goals while accounting for constrained resources and aging infrastructure
- Experience managing complex budgets involving multiple revenue sources in support of a large-scale R&D enterprise
- Record of accountability to federal sponsors
- Record of visionary leadership, strategic thinking and planning, and management experience and accomplishments in a complex research setting with multiple stakeholders and significant operational and financial complexity
- Ability to create a compelling vision for the Lab that is embraced by the broad Lab community and to drive this strategic direction, make investments, set priorities, and manage risks in order to assure the Lab's vitality into the future
- Commitment to an inclusive culture and collaborative decision-making environment
- Strong communication skills that instill stewardship and cultivate a productive Lab culture where employees are committed and connected to the mission of the Lab as a national resource
- Commitment to fostering a culture in which all managers and employees are expected to work together and in the interests of the entire organization
- A demonstrated track record of attracting, motivating, and retaining world-class scientific and operational talent and developing future scientific, technical, and operational leaders
- Ability to attract, build, and lead a top-quality senior management team that acts collaboratively and supports institutional decision-making
- Record of creating programs to develop next-generation scientists and/or engineers
- Recognizes and nurtures both team science and PI-inspired science
- Ability to articulate a coherent and compelling short- and long-term vision for the Lab with buy-in from internal and external stakeholders
- Ability to make sound risk-based decisions in a timely manner in the face of competing priorities and with incomplete information, with an openness to advice and respect for dissent
- Readiness to champion both basic and applied R&D and team science that span disciplines with proven ability to build world-class programs to solve significant national and global problems
- Commitment to growing the Lab portfolio beyond DOE and developing strong relationships with other federal agencies, the State, other national labs, academic institutions, industry partners, and philanthropic organizations
- Ability to integrate excellence in research and excellence in operations
- Ability to use political savvy and good judgment to set priorities and navigate complex issues to advance the Lab's missions
- Communication skills and political acumen necessary to communicate directly and effectively with multiple constituencies, including the Department of Energy, other

appropriate federal and state agencies, business and industry, university and research groups, the media, and elected officials and their staffs
- Ability to build positive, productive relationships / partnerships with various constituencies based on trust and cooperation
- A record of engagement and experience with the Department of Energy and other government sponsors
- The vision, relationship, and negotiation skills to advance the Lab's collaborations with the University of California in research, workforce development, and other areas
- Skills to cultivate vibrant and productive collaborations with the Lab's multiple national and international partners in science and technology
- Eligibility for a DOE Q clearance

Preferred Qualifications

In addition to the required qualifications, the ideal candidate will preferably bring a range of professional and personal attributes that will enhance success in the role:

- National Academy-level recognition for accomplishments in science and/or technology
- Experience working with DOE, e.g., in a DOE national laboratory or on a DOE advisory committee
- Broad familiarity with Federally Funded Research and Development Centers (FFRDCs) and/or highly regulated environments including familiarity with contracting and funding mechanisms
- Record of delivering large-scale R&D programs
- Knowledge of federal regulations governing research security, data, and personnel
- Experience in or working with a world-class university
- Track record of building strong external partnerships with industry and/or philanthropic organizations, and/or with international science and technology labs

About the University of California System

In the over 150 years since its founding, the University of California has evolved into the world's preeminent public university system, with an annual operating budget of more than $47.1 billion. The UC comprises 10 campuses: Berkeley, Davis, Irvine, Los Angeles, Merced, Riverside, San Diego, San Francisco, Santa Cruz, and Santa Barbara, which collectively enroll more than 290,000 students. In addition to the three national laboratories, the UC operates six academic health systems. Together, the UC System's institutions employ more than 240,000 faculty and staff and are supported by more than two million living alumni working around the world. Over half a million people annually benefit from UC continuing education courses, as well as from the services and discoveries of UC-affiliated research centers and educational programs operating throughout the state. UC generates about $82.1 billion in economic activity in California and contributes nearly $56 billion to the gross State product.

The University of California is governed by the 26-member Board of Regents, which exercises approval over University policies, financial affairs, tuition, and fees with the authority to delegate powers as it determines to be in the best interest of the University. Regents, appointed by the Governor, serve 12-year terms. The Board appoints the University President and its Principal Officers. The Board also appoints one student member for a one-year term. The Board includes seven ex-officio members, including the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Speaker of the Assembly, Superintendent of Public Instruction, President and Vice President of the Alumni Associations of UC, and the President of the University. In addition, two faculty members – the chair and vice chair of the systemwide Academic Senate – sit on the Board as non-voting members. It is the responsibility of the Board to set policy and the responsibility of the University administration to implement and carry out policy, which includes responsibility for the day-to-day operations of the University.

President James B. Milliken and UC Office of the President

The University of California Office of the President (UCOP) is the systemwide headquarters of the University of California, managing its fiscal, business, and legislative operations and supporting the academic and research missions across its campuses, labs, and medical centers.

The President is the executive head of the University and has full authority and responsibility over the administration of all affairs and operations of the University, except those activities within the responsibility of the principal officers. The President supports the academic and research missions across 10 campuses, six academic health centers, three affiliated national laboratories, over 290,000 students, and 230,000 faculty and staff. The President sets the University's direction, goals, and strategy. The President implements the policies and objectives of the Board of Regents and keeps the Board informed of all significant developments affecting the University.

In August 2025, James B. Milliken became University of California's 22nd president. President Milliken has more than 30 years of experience serving in leadership roles at large institutions. Most recently, he served as chancellor of the University of Texas System (UT) from 2018-2025, where he also held the Lee Hage and Joseph D. Jamail Regents Chair in Higher Education Leadership. Before joining the UT System, Milliken served as chancellor of the City University of New York (CUNY), the largest urban university system in the country, where he was a tenured Distinguished Professor of Law, Public Policy, and Education. Prior to CUNY, he served as president of the University of Nebraska, where he was a tenured professor in the schools of law and of public policy. He also served as senior vice president of the 16-campus University of North Carolina. He practiced law before beginning his higher education career.

Conditions of Employment

- Successful completion of a background check is required for this critical position. (Please see Background check process at UCOP).
- Financial disclosure requirements of the California Reform Act of 1974.
- Annual disclosure of outside professional activities.

- Adhere to a Smoke Free Work Environment: The University of California, Office of the President, is smoke & tobacco-free as of January 1, 2014. (Please see UC Smoke & Tobacco Free Policy).
- University employees will be required to comply with all applicable University policies, as may be amended from time to time. Federal, state, or local public health directives may impose additional requirements.

Compensation

The budgeted range for annual base salary that the University reasonably expects to pay for this position is $550,000-$750,000. Salary offers are determined based on final candidate qualifications and experience. The University of California provides a competitive array of benefits.

Applications, Inquiries, and Nominations

The University of California, Office of the President, has selected Opus Partners to lead the search for the next Director of Berkeley Lab. Craig V. Smith, Senior Partner, Ann K. Adams, Associate Partner, and Marisea Rivera, Senior Associate, are supporting the search. Please contact Opus via LBNL@opuspartners.net to learn more about the opportunity or to provide a nomination.

In order to be considered for the position, applicants must provide to Opus a CV/resume and are highly encouraged to include a cover letter/statement of interest. The position will remain open until filled, but applicants are encouraged to submit materials to the above email address before January 30, 2026, to be given full consideration.

Equal Opportunity Statement

The University of California is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer. All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, disability, age, protected veteran status, or other protected categories covered by the UC Anti-Discrimination Policy.

LBNL is a U.S. Department of Energy National Laboratory
Operated by the University of California