PRESIDENTIAL SEARCH

DONALD DANFORTH
PLANT SCIENCE CENTER

Table Of Contents

We are a team of teams in a highly collaborative environment focused on scientific excellence.

Take a virtual tour:

The Danforth Center includes expansive plant growth and phenotyping facilities, and the BRDG Park innovation ecosystem.

DONALD DANFORTH
PLANT SCIENCE CENTER

DANFORTH CENTER PRESIDENTIAL SEARCH

Executive Summary

The Donald Danforth Plant Science Center seeks a visionary, people-centered, and mission-driven scientific leader to serve as its next president.

The Donald Danforth Plant Science Center is a not-for-profit research institute, with a mission to improve the human condition through plant science. More than 400 scientists and community members from over 30 countries work in teams focused on research, education, and outreach aimed to have an impact at the nexus of food security and the environment and to position the St. Louis region as a world center for plant science. The Center's work is funded through competitive grants from many sources, including the National Science Foundation, National Institutes of Health, US Department of Energy, US Agency for International Development, and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, and through the generosity of individual, corporate, and foundation donors.

The Donald Danforth Plant Science Center was founded in 1998 to apply the highest caliber of plant science to solving the critical challenges confronting humanity. Dr. William H. Danforth was the founding chairman, and the Center was named after Dr. Danforth's late father, Donald Danforth, former chief executive of Ralston Purina. The main building opened in 2001, and the William H. Danforth Wing was dedicated in 2016. Today, the Danforth Center is the largest independent nonprofit institute dedicated to plant science in the world.

Reporting to the Board of Directors, the president is the management executive and scientific leader of the Danforth Center. The president is responsible for the scientific vision, competitive positioning, productivity, innovation, and overall excellence of the Center's programs including the formulation and implementation of strategic plans, budgets, and priorities. The president also serves as the fundraiser in chief for the Center, working with an experienced team of development professionals.

The next president will build on the transformative achievements of James C. Carrington, PhD who will step down from his role as president and CEO on July 1, 2025, after 14 years of service. Through his exceptional leadership, the Danforth Center

is an organization of remarkable strength as evidenced by its mission-driven, cutting edge science with real impact on improving lives; values-based, people-centered community with a culture that is palpable; exceptional scientific and administrative talent; highly collaborative environment; supportive and engaged Board of Directors and Science Advisory Board; world-class facilities; and tremendous financial strength.

The next president will take the Danforth Center from strength to strength. They will play a pivotal role in shaping the Danforth Center's future by articulating an expansive, clear, and compelling vision for its next chapter and developing a strategic plan that translates this vision into a roadmap for action. At the center of this vision and plan—and the president's essential responsibility—must be continuously elevating scientific excellence and innovation to remain at the forefront of plant science. The president will enhance the Danforth Center's global visibility, reach, and reputation to compete effectively for top talent, engage new partners, and attract increased support. The new president will lead, empower, and support a talented, dedicated, and collaborative group of senior leaders, providing steady leadership through a period of transition. The president must also place a high priority on recruiting, retaining, and developing top scientific and administrative talent at all levels. Fundamental to the Center's continued success, the president will prioritize preserving and advancing the Center's people-centered and values-based culture.

The next president of the Danforth Center will be a scientist of prominence and vision. In a rare and extraordinary circumstance, an exception will be considered for a highly accomplished leader who would garner great respect from the scientific community. The ideal candidate will have a record of successful leadership of a sophisticated and complex scientific organization and possess the financial and operational acumen necessary to lead and operate an effective enterprise. Likewise, they will have exceptional interpersonal and communications skills and the ability and enthusiasm to make a compelling and persuasive case for the Center across the world, with donors, corporate and community leaders, funding agencies and university partners. A personal commitment in word and deed to equity, inclusion, and diversity in all its forms is essential as is an openness to and appreciation for diverse points of view.

For information about how to apply, submit nominations, or inquire about the role, please see the Procedure for Candidacy section at the end of this document.

A LEGACY OF EXCELLENCE

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"If you want to say what we're trying to do in a few words:

We're trying to save the world.

And we'd better get working on it."

Dr. William H. Danforth
Founding Chair, Danforth Plant Science Center

Danforth Center at a Glance

461
Danforth Center community members

37
principal investigators

33
countries represented

40
graduate students

2
National Academy of Sciences Members

322K
square feet

ABL DS PH PGF PT PMS

6
core facilites

140-acre
Field Reseach Site

within a
500
mile radius of more than 50% of all US ag

$23M
in competitive grant funding in 2023

29 licensed technologies
3 options for licensing
56
active patent families
(pending and issued)

1876
scientific publications since inception

$46M
annual operating budget

$482M
economic impact by Danforth Center, BRDG Park, and Helix Center

10
startup companies co-founded by Danforth Center scientists

Celebrating our fourth consecutive year as a Top Workplace. The contest by the St. Louis Post-Dispatch recognizes employers that score highly in the eyes of their employees.

Center Culture & Community

The Danforth Center is a diverse and welcoming community of scientists, leaders, and team members who are dedicated to delivering on our mission. We are committed to living our core values and providing a safe, encouraging, and supportive workplace where community members can thrive and grow.

◆ MISSION

improve the human condition through plant science

◆ VISION

We seek to feed the hungry and improve human health, while preserving and renewing our environment. Through our endeavors, we will enhance the St. Louis region as a world center for plant science.

◆ VALUES

Collaboration – The Center community is a team of teams. We foster an environment characterized by excellence, trust, and interdependence. Every person's contributions and achievements are recognized, appreciated, and valued.

Diversity and Inclusion – Diversity and inclusion strengthen our community. We actively welcome diverse people, cultures, and perspectives. We strive to provide an environment in which everybody feels comfortable and excels.

Innovation – We act with curiosity and openness to new ideas. We apply creative approaches to discovery and problem solving. We foster free thinking and embrace constructive feedback.

Integrity and Respect – We are honest and promote ethical practices. We act with humility, empathy, and concern for others.

Environmental Sustainability – We manage and use environmental resources in an ethically responsible and mindful way. We seek to minimize our environmental footprint while we contribute to environmental sustainability through our research.

Stewardship – We understand that we are entrusted with public, private, and donor resources to deliver on our mission. We are accountable for intentional, efficient, and effective use of these resources.

◆ CULTURE

Research shows that a diverse, inclusive, and equitable workforce leads to more creativity and better outcomes. Nature operates on the principle of strength through diversity, and so do we.

DISCOVERY/COMMUNITY/IMPACT

Research Overview

The Danforth Center is a unique organization that does fundamental research about how plants work. But we do not stop there: we find ways to translate that knowledge into crops and products that solve real problems. To do this, we partner with universities, organizations, and companies around the world that can deliver solutions quickly.

In addition to the varied work of our principal investigators, we are home to four organized research units:

◆ INSTITUTE FOR INTERNATIONAL CROP IMPROVEMENT

Crops like cowpeas, sorghum, millet, groundnuts, and cassava have not historically received the same R&D investment as the major commodity crops The IICI is dedicated to improving the disease and pest resistance, nutritional content, and harvest of staple crops that are critical to the health and livelihood of smallholder farmers and the millions of people that depend on them for food and nutrition. In addition to stabilizing communities by empowering farmers, these efforts promote agriculture-led growth by increasing sustainable farming productivity and strengthening productive, profitable, and inclusive agricultural systems.

◆ SUBTERRANEAN INFLUENCES ON NITROGEN AND CARBON CENTER

Synthetic nitrogen fertilizer is a major contributor to climate change and environmental pollution. The SINC Center is dedicated to developing technology that reduces the need for nitrogen fertilizer in agriculture without sacrificing crop yield. To achieve this goal, the SINC team seeks to optimize plant genetics; identify novel microbes that supply nitrogen to their plant hosts and/or increase nitrogen uptake efficiency; and to develop new and improved varieties of cover crops.

(continued)

Research

◆ ENTERPRISE RENT-A-CAR INSTITUTE FOR RENEWABLE FUELS

Fossil fuels are finite and their emissions are a major cause of climate change. We need to innovate green solutions for powering our world. At the ERAC Institute, we study **grasses** to improve the quality and biomass yield of potential green energy feedstocks. We seek to understand metabolic networks in order to enhance **seed oil** composition that can be readily processed into biodiesel or used for the generation of polymers, plastics, surfactants, detergents, and adhesives. We are unlocking the secrets of growth, reproduction, and development of **algae** to improve the efficiency of biomass accumulation and tolerance to heat, drought, or nutrient stresses.

◆ NEW ROOTS FOR RESTORATION BIOLOGY INTEGRATION INSTITUTE

Today, land-use conversion has impacted 75% of lands globally, contributing to the loss of nearly 50% of the world's topsoil in the last 150 years. The New Roots Institute wants to find ways to restore agricultural and natural ecosystems by discovering and integrating knowledge about roots, soil, and microbiome communities. To do this, the New Roots Institute looks to the North American prairie for answers. We focus on how parts of the plant roots and shoots relate to one another and how they vary, and how those relationships influence and are influenced by plant communities and the soil ecosphere, including both the soil and its microbial community.

Principal Investigators

MEMBERS

Doug Allen, PhD, *Member; USDA Research Scientist*
Rebecca Bart, PhD, *Member and Interim VP for Research*
Ivan Baxter, PhD, *Member*
Armando Bravo, PhD, *Assistant Member*
Tessa Burch-Smith, PhD, *Associate Member*
James Carrington, PhD, *President & CEO*
Kevin Cox, PhD, *Assistant Member; Assistant Professor of Biology, Washington University in St. Louis*
Andrea Eveland, PhD, *Associate Member*
Malia Gehan, PhD, *Associate Member*
Elizabeth Kellogg, PhD, *Member; Robert E. King Distinguished Investigator*
Allison Miller, PhD, *Member; Professor of Plant Biology, SLU*
Dmitri A. Nusinow, PhD, *Associate Member*
Sona Pandey, PhD, *Member*
Dilip Shah, PhD, *Associate Research Member*
Nadia Shakoor, PhD, *Assistant Member*
R. Keith Slotkin, PhD, *Member; Professor of Biological Sciences, Mizzou*
Nigel Taylor, PhD, *Member; Dorothy J. King Distinguished Investigator*
Christopher Topp, PhD, *Member*
James Umen, PhD, *Member; Joseph Varner Distinguished Investigator*
Xuemin (Sam) Wang, PhD, *Member; E. Desmond Lee Professor, UMSL*
Bing Yang, PhD, *Member; Professor of Plant Science, Mizzou*
Ru Zhang, PhD, *Associate Member*

DIRECTORS

Kristine Callis-Duehl, PhD, *Sally and Derick Driemeyer Exec. Director of Education*
Kirk Czymmek, PhD, *Director, Advanced Bioimaging Laboratory*
Noah Fahlgren, PhD, *Director, Data Science*
Donald MacKenzie, PhD, *Exec. Director, Institute for International Crop Improvement*
Katie Murphy, PhD, *Director, Phenotyping Facility*
Veena Veena, PhD, *Director, Plant Transformation Facility*

SENIOR RESEARCH SCIENTISTS

Sandra Arango-Caro, PhD
Getu Duguma, PhD
Molly Hanlon, PhD
Ruth J. Kaggwa Asiimwe, PhD
Mao Li, PhD
Peng Liu, PhD
Narayanan Narayanan, PhD
Bala Venkata, PhD

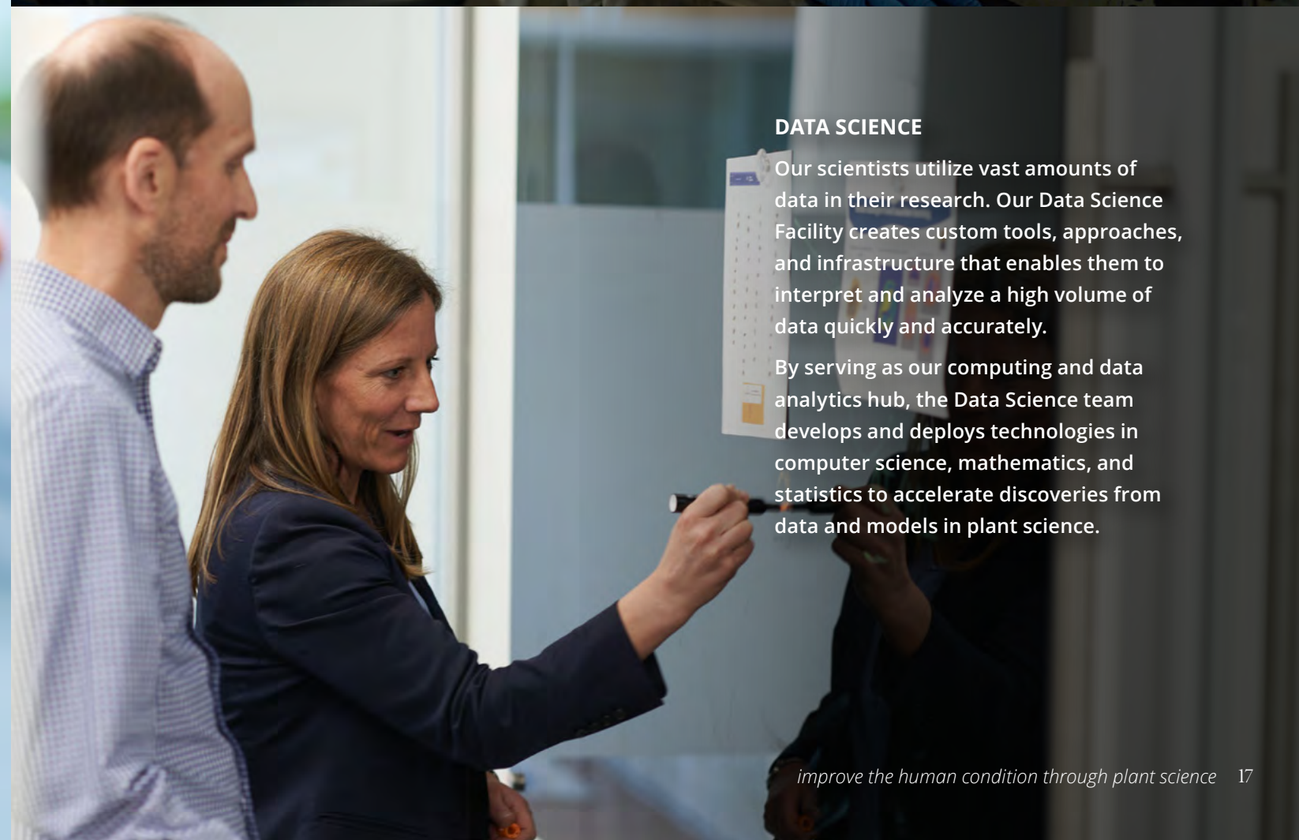
Learn more about each scientist's research area:

Core Facilities

Innovative plant science requires cutting-edge technologies. Our core facilities equip our scientists with state-of-the-art instrumentation and expertise to do ground-breaking research. They act as hubs of collaboration and problem-solving that accelerate discovery and innovation in all of our labs. And training opportunities within each facility enable our researchers to become cross-disciplinary plant scientists.

ADVANCED BIOIMAGING LABORATORY

The Advanced Bioimaging Laboratory (ABL) uses state-of the-art imaging technology to document plants, microbes, and their interactions, from whole plants down to the cellular level. By conducting experiments and using these powerful microscopes to view living organisms, the ABL offers a portal into a world invisible to the naked eye and provides an up-close look at the inner workings of cells and their interactions with their environment. By discovering how plants live and grow through first-hand observation, the work of the ABL furthers our knowledge of our world and helps us understand how plant science can be used to create a more sustainable future.



DATA SCIENCE

Our scientists utilize vast amounts of data in their research. Our Data Science Facility creates custom tools, approaches, and infrastructure that enables them to interpret and analyze a high volume of data quickly and accurately.

By serving as our computing and data analytics hub, the Data Science team develops and deploys technologies in computer science, mathematics, and statistics to accelerate discoveries from data and models in plant science.

PHENOTYPING

An essential part of plant science is understanding how plants respond to their environment. One way our scientists can measure this is by monitoring a plant's phenotype, such as leaf size and shape, root structure, growth rate in particular conditions, and more. In our Phenotyping Facility, the first of its kind at an academic research institute in the US, our scientists are able to gather an unprecedented amount of data about the plants they are studying. This data is used to develop improved and sustainable crops that are better able to withstand conditions like drought and extreme temperatures.

PLANT GROWTH FACILITY

The Plant Growth Facility (PGF) is a state-of-the-art complex designed to provide scientists with best-in-class resources for research, collaboration, and learning. The PGF houses 50 greenhouses and 100 growth chambers of various sizes and contains a multitude of plant species. Greenhouses closely replicate plants' natural growing environments by manipulating parameters such as temperature, humidity, and day length. In addition, cutting-edge growth chambers allow for even more environmental control by providing carbon dioxide addition and scrubbing capabilities and the creation of custom light spectra. The PGF's expert staff provides plant care year-round.

PLANT TRANSFORMATION FACILITY

The Plant Transformation Facility produces plants that increase our understanding of plant biology and make vital improvements in agriculture. Through this facility, our scientists can improve key characteristics, like innate drought tolerance, disease resistance, nutritional content, and yield, in economically important crops at an accelerated rate. Our plant transformation lab is setup to perform biolistic and Agrobacterium-mediated transformation. We provide full service and support for generation and maintenance of transgenic plants. We also operate as a self-service facility, providing high-quality workspace to meet project-specific demands.

PROTEOMICS & MASS SPECTROMETRY

The Proteomics and Mas Spectrometry Facility (PMSF) provides critical analytical service and technologies to detect and measure proteins, lipids, and metabolites. The PMSF team serve as collaborators on funded projects, and service providers to both internal and external users. The team has also worked with Center scientists to develop new, high-throughput metabolomics capabilities.

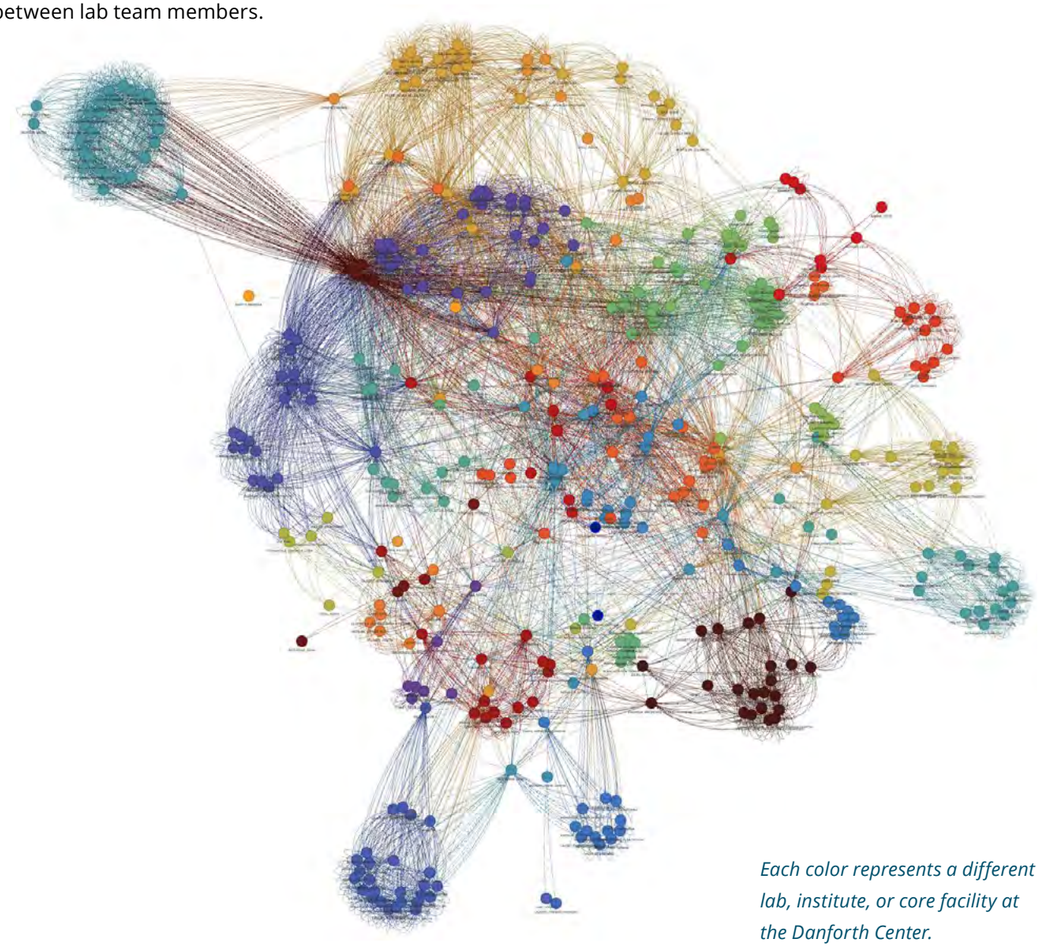
FIELD RESEARCH SITE

The Danforth Center Field Research Site in St. Charles, Missouri is a critical resource for our scientists and the local agtech community. Covering 140 acres, this research-grade facility enables our researchers and partners to make new plant science discoveries and conduct long-term, field-based projects. The cutting-edge space boasts a dedicated staff and a growing list of services and features (with more on the way), including:

- Drying ovens
- Cold storage
- Root washing station
- Mechanical plot planting
- Minirhizotron root imaging
- UAV phenotyping with the Taylor Geospatial Institute

A Culture of Collaboration

Collaboration isn't just a buzzword at the Danforth Center. It's a value we live every day in our race to make discoveries and provide solutions. Scientists here are encouraged—and rewarded—for collaborations with colleagues. This annual collaboration network diagram shows the extent of funded interactions between lab team members.



Each color represents a different lab, institute, or core facility at the Danforth Center.

Local & Global Impact

The Danforth Center has brought together the best and brightest plant scientists from around the world to answer humanity's most profound challenges. Today the Danforth Center is the largest organization of its kind, an independent 501(c)(3) nonprofit dedicated to plant science—with an impact both local and global. Through our programs for orphan crops, pest- and virus-resistant crops, and climate-resilient crops, we are reaching underdeveloped parts of the world. And through our education-outreach and innovation ecosystem, we are empowering local students, scientists, and entrepreneurs.

The Gateway Arch in downtown St. Louis. The Danforth Center's vision includes enhancing our region as a world center for plant science research.

GROWING SCIENTISTS & ENTREPRENEURS

Education Overview

Our Education Research and Outreach Lab is committed to inspiring the next generation of plant scientists. By creating meaningful research opportunities for students at every stage of their education, we can keep students engaged in science and help them build the foundational skills that are critical to careers in STEM fields. Our programs provide educational opportunities for teachers and students, and we use research assessment within the programs to understand how a diverse range of students learn about STEM concepts. Through our education research, we are improving the impact of not only our own education programs, but of education generally. We offer:

◆ K-12 STEAM+AG®

Our grades K-12 STEAM+Ag® programs create opportunities for students to explore science, technology, engineering, and mathematics concepts (STEM) plus agriculture. By equipping teachers and students with the tools to engage with science, we foster the future generation of plant scientists and create a more diverse and inclusive science community.

◆ JACKIE JOYNER-KERSEE CENTER PARTNERSHIP

The Jackie Joyner-Kersee Food, Agriculture, and Nutrition Innovation Center is a partnership of the Jackie Joyner-Kersee Foundation, the Danforth Center, and the University of Illinois to empower youth and their communities through urban agriculture and innovation.

◆ AUTHENTIC RESEARCH EXPERIENCES AND CURES

Authentic Research Experiences (AREs) and Course-Based Undergraduate Research Experiences (CUREs) engage student scientists in foundational research happening at the Danforth Center and can be scaled for grade levels from middle school through college.

◆ EDUCATION TECHNOLOGY PROGRAM

The Education Technology Program uses cutting-edge technology to engage and inspire students to pursue STEM careers. Immersive experiences are offered through augmented and virtual reality, 3D modeling, and computer gaming, making science accessible to all.

(continued)

Local & Global Impact

◆ DEAF AND HARD-OF-HEARING PRE-COLLEGE OUTREACH PROGRAM

We are strongly committed to the education of all students, including those who are deaf or hard-of-hearing (D/HH). We provide support to D/HH young adults through internships with laboratory experience and mentoring by professionals experienced in Deaf culture.

◆ UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH EXPERIENCES

The Danforth Centers hosts the largest NSF-funded REU Summer Intern program in the US. This program provides an immersion into lab life, placing 20 students per summer in labs of Danforth Center principal investigators.

◆ GRADUATE EDUCATION

Danforth Center faculty have affiliations with many different institutions and accept graduate students through their respective universities. At the Danforth Center, students can see how their research will be applied to real-world solutions across the globe.

This is the ASL sign for Danforth Center, created by Dr. Amie Sankoh.

Students at the Jackie Joyner-Kersee Food, Agriculture, Nutrition Innovation Center participating in authentic research.

The annual PlantTech Jam where young scientists learn about plants, science, robotics, and more.

Innovation Overview

At the Danforth Center, we believe in science coupled with real-life impact, where innovation brings discovery to market. This work is critical to meeting our third vision point, making St. Louis the world center for plant science. We are within a 500-mile radius of more than half of all US agriculture production, including 80% of the nation's corn and soybeans. Located in the 39 North AgTech Innovation District in St. Louis, we are a driver in building a stronger innovation community, helping to grow a 21st-century economy to meet the challenges ahead.

◆ START-UP INITIATIVE

The Danforth Center offers an intentional path to commercialization for technologies developed in our labs. Scientists have access to competitive proof-of-concept funds, intellectual property and legal support, executive coaching and business mentoring, and potentially investment by the Danforth Technology Company (DTC).

◆ BRDG PARK

The Bio Research & Development Growth (BRDG) Park on the Danforth Center campus is a vital resource to early mid-stage companies, and for international companies that have established their North American headquarters in our thriving ecosystem. The St. Louis Community College on-site training program provides skilled technicians to support R&D and an equipment loan program.

◆ IGNITE

Inspiring innovative impact, IGNITE is an dynamic event series at the Danforth Center. IGNITE serves as a platform where inventors, investors, influencers, and ecosystem-builders convene to share insights and diverse perspectives, explore opportunities for collaboration, and inspire tech innovation for global impact.

◆ 39 NORTH

39 North is the 600-hundred-acre agtech innovation district anchored by the Danforth Center, Bayer Crop Science, Benson Hill, City of Creve Coeur, CoverCress Inc., Greater St. Louis Inc., and St. Louis Economic Development Partnership. The 10,000 square foot 39 North Headquarters and Collaboration Hub in BRDG Park serves as a focal point for events and co-working in the district.

◆ HELIX CENTER INCUBATOR

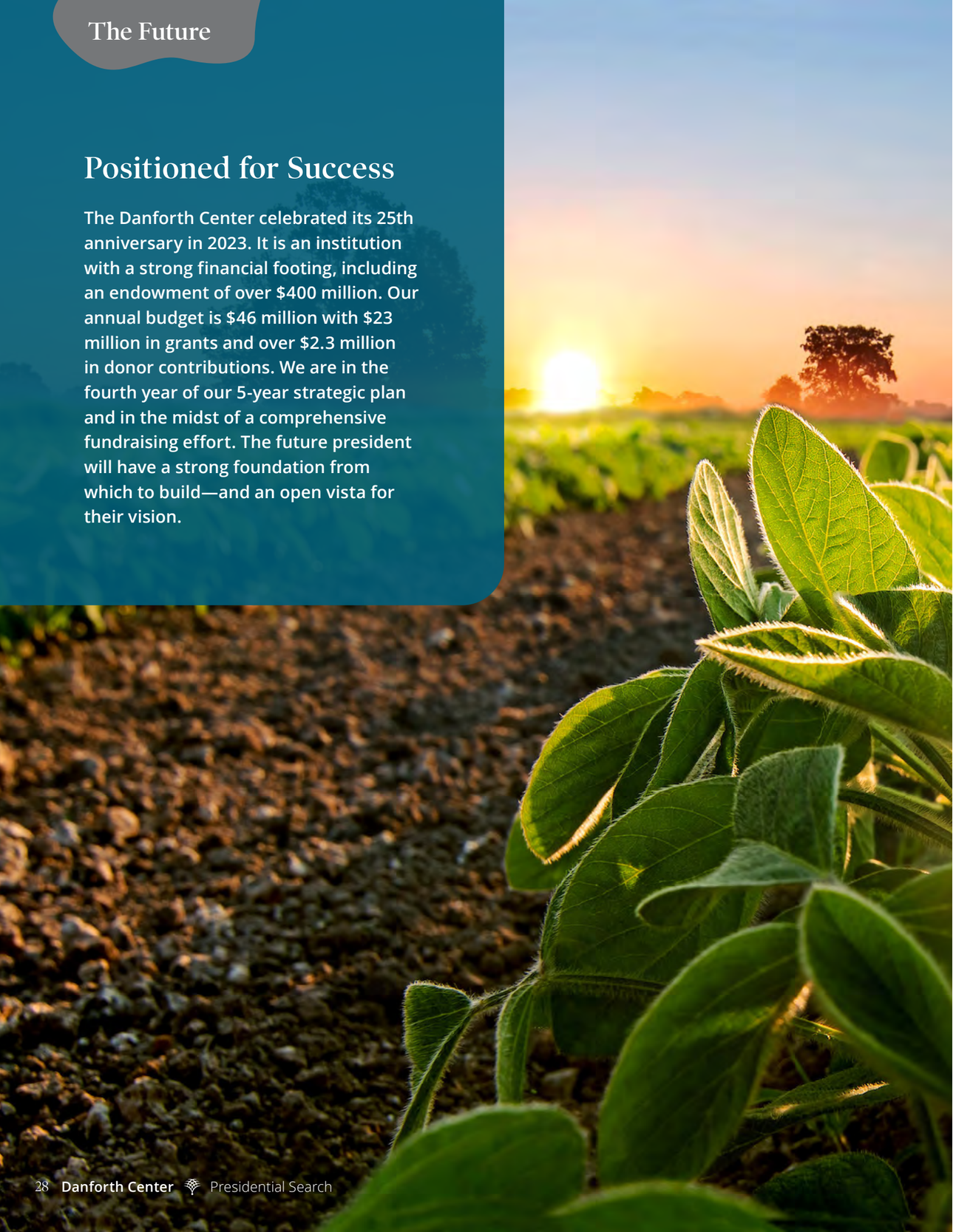
The Helix Center, located adjacent to the Danforth Center, provides affordable but well-resourced lab, office, and working spaces for young companies. Helix Center has been a first home to several Danforth Center start-ups.

Panelists at an IGNITE event dedicated to the intersection of agtech and geospatial, two St. Louis strengths for the 21st century.

The Danforth Center's Start-Up Initiative empowers scientists with market-worthy tech to become entrepreneurs, providing legal and IP guidance, mentoring, and investment.

Positioned for Success

The Danforth Center celebrated its 25th anniversary in 2023. It is an institution with a strong financial footing, including an endowment of over $400 million. Our annual budget is $46 million with $23 million in grants and over $2.3 million in donor contributions. We are in the fourth year of our 5-year strategic plan and in the midst of a comprehensive fundraising effort. The future president will have a strong foundation from which to build—and an open vista for their vision.



Selected Financial Data

Fiscal Year Ended December 31, 2023
(Unaudited)

			2023 ($000's)	
UNRESTRICTED OPERATING SUPPORT AND REVENUE[1]			**Amount**	**Source %**
Research Grants and Contracts			$22,707	44.3%
Donor Support			$23,862	46.5%
Unrestricted Donor Gifts	$2,328	4.5%		
Gifts Released from Restriction	$1,438	2.8%		
Endowment Draw	$20,096	39.2%		
Core Facility Fees			$2,346	4.6%
Other Income			$2,317	4.6%
Total Operating Revenues			$51,232	100%

OPERATING EXPENSES[2]	**Amount**	**Expense %**
Total Research/Science/Innovation	$37,873	82.6%
Administration	$5,278	11.5%
Development and Public Relations	$2,701	5.9%
Total Expenses from Continuing Operations	$45,852	100.0%

CAPITAL EXPENDITURES	
Lab and Core Facility Equipment	$1,266
All Other	$326
Total Capital Expenditures	$1,592
REPLACEMENT AND RENEWAL EXPENDITURES	$1,217
NON-OPERATING EXPENDITURES	
Debt Principal Payments	$737
DEPRECIATION EXPENSE	
Depreciation of Fixed Asset	$7,895

The Danforth Center is located 500 miles from more than 50% of all US agriculture, including 80% of corn and soy.

Consolidated Balance Sheet

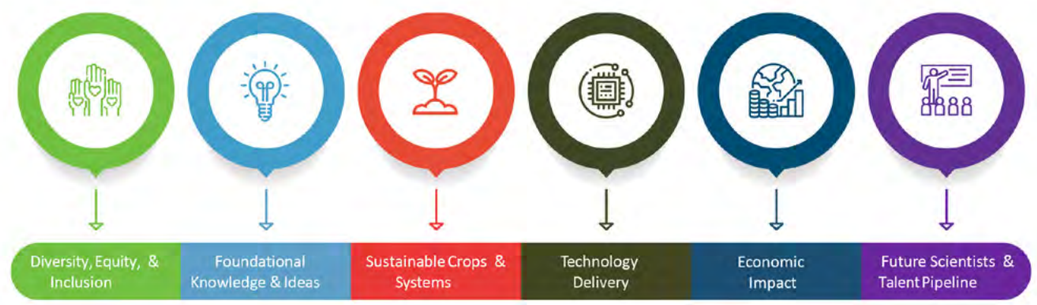
As of December 31, 2023

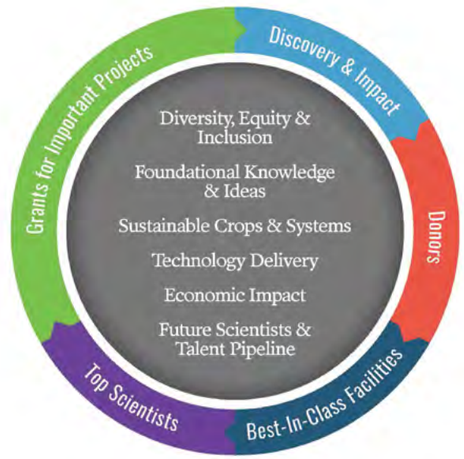
ASSETS	**Amount ($000's)**	**% of Total**
Current Assets		
Cash and Cash Equivalents	$10,914	1.8%
Investments - All Other	$54,592	9.0%
Investments - Endowments	$420,938	69.3%
Contributions and Grants Receivable	$18,948	3.1%
Other Current Assets	$3,629	0.6%
Total Current Assets	$509,021	
Non Current Assets		
Fixed Assets Net of Accumulated Depreciation	$98,165	16.2%
Other Non Current Assets	$303	0.0%
Total Non Current Assets	$98,468	
Total Assets	$607,489	100%

LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	**Amount**	**% of Total**
Current Liabilities		
Accounts Payable and Accrued Liabilities	$5,559	0.9%
Other Current Liabilities	$575	0.1%
Total Current Liabilities	$6,134	1.0%
Non Current Liabilities		
Deferred Revenue and Advance Contributions	$4,181	0.7%
Remainder Trust Liability and Gift Annuities	$379	0.1%
Loan/Bonds Payable	$6,409	1.1%
Total Non Current Liabilities	$10,969	1.8%
Total Liabilities	$17,103	2.8%
Total Net Assets	$590,386	97.2%
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	$607,489	100%

Five-Year Strategic Plan Goals

(2020–2025)





Making a Vision a Reality

Our leadership unites some of the brightest minds in science, business, education, and civil service to execute the Danforth mission and steward its legacy.

LEADERSHIP TEAM

Jim Carrington, PhD, *President and CEO*

Hal Davies, MBA, CPA, *COO and VP for Finance*

Tom Bander, MBA, *VP of Development*

Rebecca Bart, PhD, *Member and Interim VP for Research*

Kristine Callis-Duehl, PhD, *Sally & Derick Driemeyer Executive Director of Education*

Anna Dibble, MBA, *VP of People and Culture*

Todd Hornburg, *VP of Facilities and Support Services*

Donald MacKenzie, PhD, *Executive Director of Institute for International Crop Improvement*

Stephanie Regagnon, *Executive Director of Innovation Partnerships*

Karla Roeber, *VP of Public and Government Affairs*

SCIENTIFIC ADVISORY BOARD

Eric Ward, PhD, *Chair; President, AgBiome, Inc.*

David Braun, PhD, *Director, Interdisciplinary Plant Group (IPG), Professor in the Division of Plant Science and Technology, and the Division of Biological Sciences, University of Missouri–Columbia*

Natalia de Leon, PhD, *Professor, Department of Agronomy, University of Wisconsin-Madison*

Jen Heemstra, PhD, *Charles Allen Thomas Professor and Chair, Department of Chemistry, Washington University in St. Louis*

Carolyn Lawrence-Dill, PhD, *Dean of the College of Agricultural Sciences, Colorado State University*

Jan Leach, PhD, *Associate Dean for Research, College of Agricultural Sciences, University Distinguished Professor, Colorado State University*

Jennifer Nemhauser, PhD, *Professorship for Excellence in Biology, Department of Biology, University of Washington*

BOARD DIRECTORS

Penny Pennington, *Chair; Managing Partner, Edward Jones*

Lisa Ainsworth, PhD *Professor of Plant Biology, USDA-ARS, Photosynthesis Research Unit, University of Illinois — Urbana-Champaign*

Teddy Bekele *SVP and Chief Technology Officer, Land O' Lakes, Inc.*

Senator Roy Blunt *Chairman, HBS Leadership Strategies Advisory Services*

Sara Yang Bosco *Retired SVP, Secretary and General Counsel, Emerson*

Blackford F. Brauer *President, Hunter Engineering Company*

Lee Broughton *Broughton Brand Company*

Patrick O. Brown, MD, PhD *Chief Visionary Officer and Founder, Impossible Foods*

Johannes Burlin *Co-CEO and Co-Founder, Tilia Holdings, LLC*

Mun Y. Choi, PhD *President, University of Missouri System; Chancellor, University of Missouri-Columbia*

Desiree S. Coleman-Fry *Senior Vice President and Chief Strategy Officer, U.S. Bancorp Impact Financial*

Christopher B. Danforth *Owner, President, and Chairman, Kennelwood Pet Resort*

Steven M. Fox *Chairman, SV Capital Management*

James L. Johnson III *Partner, Johnson Bender Asset Management*

Robert J. Jones, PhD *Chancellor, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign; Vice President, University of Illinois*

Wesley Jones *Co-Founder and Principal, Sage Capital, LLC*

Jackie Joyner-Kersee *Olympian, Founder and CEO of Jackie Joyner-Kersee Foundation*

Ruth E. Kim, JD *Retired General Counsel, Senior Vice President and Senior Partner, FleishmanHillard*

Sanjeev Krishnan *Chief Investment Officer, Seed 2 Growth (S2G) Ventures*

Ann C. Marr *Retired EVP, Global Human Resources, World Wide Technology, LLC; President, WWT Foundation*

Andrew D. Martin, PhD *Chancellor, Washington University in St. Louis*

Anna E. McKelvey, LLM *Community Volunteer*

Thomas C. Melzer *Managing Director, RiverVest Venture Partners*

William L. Polk, Jr. *Managing Partner, Egis Capital Partners*

Robert Reiter, PhD *Head of R&D, Executive Vice President, Bayer Crop Science*

Michael W. Riney *Founder and Managing Director, QRM Capital*

Todd R. Schnuck, *Immediate Past Chair; Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, Schnuck Markets, Inc.*

Peter S. Wyse Jackson, PhD *President, Missouri Botanical Garden*

John F. McDonnell, *Emeritus Director; Retired Chairman of the Board, McDonnell Douglas Corporation*

Opportunities and Expectations for Leadership

◆ ARTICULATE AN EXPANSIVE VISION AND DEVELOP THE STRATEGIC PLAN FOR THE DANFORTH CENTER'S FUTURE

The next president will play a pivotal role in shaping the Danforth Center's future by articulating an expansive, clear, and compelling vision for its next chapter. This vision, to be developed in collaboration with the Danforth Center's board and community, will serve as a guiding star, aligning the efforts of scientists, community members, and stakeholders toward common goals. The president must ensure that the Center's vision reflects and advances the Center's mission and core values, addresses and defines emerging scientific challenges and opportunities ripe for breakthrough in plant science, responds to emerging national funding priorities, leverages opportunities for innovation to translate the Center's research to improve the human condition – finding the right balance of fundamental and applied research – and strengthens the St. Louis Agtech ecosystem. By effectively communicating this vision, the president will inspire confidence, and galvanize the Danforth community around a collective and collaborative purpose enabling the Center to remain globally competitive and on the leading edge.

In addition to articulating the vision for the future of the Center, the president will develop and execute the next strategic plan that translates this vision into a roadmap for action. The Danforth Center's current five-year plan will come to a close at the end of 2025, creating an opportune time for the next president to co-create a new plan and align resources to achieve the plan. The president must also engage its external partners – philanthropists, industry leaders, academic partners, government agencies, and others – to secure support and funding for the Center's initiatives. By continuously monitoring progress and adapting the strategic plan as needed, the president will ensure that the Center remains agile and responsive to the evolving landscape of scientific research and opportunities to advance innovation and impact.

◆ SET THE TABLE TO ELEVATE SCIENTIFIC EXCELLENCE AND INNOVATION

The new president will further elevate the Danforth Center's scientific excellence and innovation. The Danforth Center is recognized globally for its excellence and ambition. The new president must bring drive and vision to recruit and retain exceptional talent, inspire and motivate the community to think in new and bold ways, engaging with one another to generate new insights and leverage their full range of diverse interests and expertise to not only advance but also to define the future of plant science.

The Center's new president will continue to foster a true culture of collaboration, encouraging interdisciplinary research within the Center and partnerships with its partner academic and other research institutions, and with industry. The president will provide

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researchers with opportunities to share their findings, gain new insights, and stay updated with the latest trends in plant science, both formal and informal. Additionally, the president will invest in state-of-the-art laboratory facilities and cutting-edge technologies to enable the Center's scientists to conduct world-class research, leading to groundbreaking discoveries.

The president will provide a robust support system for fundamental research, encouraging a risk-taking mindset to foster an environment where creativity thrives. Additionally, the president will support the translation of research into practical applications by promoting open science, collaborations with global and industry partners, and facilitating the commercialization of new technologies to address real-world challenges in agriculture and sustainability. This is in keeping with the Center's commitment to innovation and advancing the Agtech ecosystem in St. Louis, embodied in the development of the 39 North innovation district and the Danforth Technology Company, a subsidiary of the Danforth Center that facilitates the early-stage development of startup companies based on technologies developed by Danforth Center scientists. The president will play a visible and active leadership role in the St. Louis community supporting the Center's mission to enhance the St. Louis region as a world center for plant science.

◆ ENHANCE GLOBAL VISIBILITY AND SUPPORT FOR THE DANFORTH CENTER

The president will enhance the Danforth Center's global visibility to strengthen its reach and reputation and garner increased support and partnership. This involves actively promoting the Center's achievements and ongoing projects through international conferences, publications, and media engagements. By building a strong public presence, the president can attract attention from potential donors, industry and academic collaborators, and policymakers. Additionally, the president will leverage communication strategy to reach a broader audience, highlighting the Center's impact on global scientific advancements and societal well-being. The president will also represent the Center across the Agtech ecosystem in St. Louis and the broader region, serving as a powerful partner in attracting new companies to the region and facilitating early-stage development of startup companies based on Danforth Center technologies.

To secure philanthropic and other forms of support, the president plays an active role in cultivating relationships with key stakeholders, including individual donors, foundations, corporations, and government officials at local, state, and federal levels. This requires a strategic approach to fundraising and relationship building, highlighting the Center's unique strengths and the potential benefits of partnering with the Center and supporting its mission. Supported by a board-level council, the Danforth Center is engaged in a comprehensive fundraising effort, which will have approximately 18 months remaining when the new president begins their tenure. The Center's traditional donor base has been cultivated through relationships with its founder, Bill Danforth, and while this base has grown and expanded over time, the president will continue to work with the advancement team to further expand the donor base, including supporting new efforts to cultivate potential donors well beyond the St. Louis region. The president will energize and engage the donor community locally and across the country and make a persuasive case for investing in the Center by translating its work into impact. Furthermore, by fostering a culture of transparency and accountability, the president will build trust and confidence among supporters, ensuring sustained investment in the Center's world-class science.

◆ LEAD AND EMPOWER THE SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAM AND CREATE AN ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE TO BEST SUPPORT THE CENTER FOR THE FUTURE

The new president will come into a talented, dedicated, and collaborative team of senior leaders who bring a range of expertise and perspectives to the table. The president must provide steady leadership through a period of transition. The new president will follow a longstanding and highly regarded president, which will require a mindful and sensitive approach as they engage with the community. The long-time vice president of finance and chief operating officer is retiring. A well planned and deliberate succession plan is in place and a new, internally promoted vice president of finance will take the reins in July 2025 and will be responsible for interim COO duties. Finally, there is an interim vice president for research in place after the retirement of a longstanding vice president for research. By fostering a culture of trust, collaboration, and accountability, the president will empower each member of the leadership team to contribute their best – individually and collectively – to enable the Center to achieve a new level of excellence. The president's ability to inspire and guide the senior leadership team directly impacts the Center's overall effectiveness and success.

The new president will assess and create an organizational structure that supports the Center's long-term goals and enables the president to lead effectively through others,

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while also spending time outside the Center actively promoting the Center, its mission, and partnerships. This includes designing a framework that promotes innovation, flexibility, accessibility, and efficiency. The president will align the organizational structure with the Center's strategic plan, facilitating seamless coordination across various departments and across the science enterprise. By implementing clear roles, responsibilities, and reporting lines, the president will help empower and streamline decision-making processes and enhance operational effectiveness. Furthermore, the president must remain adaptable, continuously assessing and refining the organizational structure to respond to evolving strategy and opportunities, ensuring the Center remains resilient, nimble, and forward-looking.

◆ PRESERVE AND ADVANCE THE DANFORTH CENTER'S PEOPLE-CENTERED AND VALUES-BASED CULTURE

The Danforth Center has a distinctive people-centered and values-based culture that has been developed and shaped over time with great intention. The Center's culture and commitment to mission is palpable. The president will prioritize preserving and advancing the Center's culture, which emphasizes respect, inclusivity, and collaboration. This is fundamental to attracting and retaining top talent, fostering innovation, and maintaining a positive work environment. By upholding these values, the president will create an even stronger sense of belonging and purpose among scientists and all community members, encouraging them to contribute their best work. This, in turn, enhances the Center's impact and reputation.

Advancing a values-based culture also involves continuously reinforcing the Center's commitment to world-class science, social impact, and community engagement. The president must lead by example, demonstrating integrity and transparency in decision-making and interactions. By promoting initiatives that support diversity, equity, and inclusion, the president will ensure that the Center remains a welcoming and supportive environment for all. Additionally, the president will encourage open dialogue and feedback, allowing the Center to adapt and evolve its cultural practices in response to the needs and aspirations of its community. This proactive approach will help the Center stay true to its mission and core values while remaining agile and responsive to the changing landscape of scientific research and needs of its community members.

The president is expected to provide visible, accessible, and engaged leadership by, for example, enjoying lunch and teatime with colleagues at the café, attending Center social events, hosting town halls, participating in new community member onboarding, and taking an active interest in work and activities of Danforth Center community members.

◆ RECRUIT, RETAIN, AND DEVELOP TOP TALENT AT ALL LEVELS

The president will place a high priority on recruiting, retaining, and developing top scientific and administrative talent at all levels. The Danforth Center benefits from a strong employer brand and highly attractive work environment. The president will actively promote the Center's mission, values, and achievements to potential candidates through various channels, including academic conferences, industry events, and online platforms. By engaging with universities, corporations, and research organizations, the president can identify and engage with promising early-career scientists and professionals, fostering a pipeline of talent that aligns with the Center's strategic goals.

Retaining and developing top talent requires the president to create a supportive and stimulating environment that encourages professional growth. This includes continuing to invest in robust mentorship programs for early-career, mid-career, and senior scientists and ongoing professional development for all community members as well as recognizing and rewarding outstanding individual and team contributions. The new president will continue to grow and develop senior-level principal investigators as their continued mentorship and leadership are of paramount importance in their long-term growth and retention and in further strengthening the Danforth Center's preeminence.

The president should also foster a culture of collaboration and innovation, where community members can provide input and feel valued and empowered to pursue excellence. The Center has been intentional in offering competitive compensation packages, flexible work arrangements, and ample social activities to build community. As such, the Danforth Center continues to be recognized as a Top Place to work in St. Louis. Likewise, the Center's leadership is responsive to the needs of community members providing formal avenues for their input and engagement and the resources needed to support high quality work. The president must continue these efforts to enhance retention and ensure that the Center remains a desirable place to work for top-tier talent at all levels.

Professional Qualifications and Personal Qualities

The Danforth Center is seeking a visionary, innovative, and accomplished scientist as its next leader. The next president should have many, if not all, of the following qualifications and qualities:

◆ VISION AND LEADERSHIP

A strategic, innovative, and expansive vision for the Center's future, including ways to further distinguish and position the Center competitively on a global scale.

A record of substantive and progressively responsible leadership in a complex scientific organization.

An authentic, accessible, and energetic leadership style that builds collaborative, empowered and accountable teams, actively engages the community, inspires scientific excellence and innovation, and sustains organizational adaptability and resiliency. A commitment to servant leadership.

◆ MANAGEMENT ACUMEN

Sophisticated financial and operational acumen, skill in change management, and decisiveness.

A record of recruiting, retaining, and developing top scientific and administrative talent and creating people-centered environments where individuals can thrive.

◆ EXTERNAL RELATIONS AND COLLABORATION

The vision, capacity, and enthusiasm to make a persuasive and compelling case for the Center and to build long-term relationships to grow funding and support through private philanthropy, federal and state grants, and corporate and foundation partnerships.

A passion for external engagement and serving as a global spokesperson for the Center. A desire to engage deeply with the St. Louis community.

An appreciation for and ability to build upon the ecosystem of internal collaborators and external partners within the plant science ecosystem, regionally, nationally, globally and to distinguish the Center as a global leader in this context.

◆ PEOPLE AND COMMUNITY-BUILDING SKILLS AND PERSONAL QUALITIES

Exceptional interpersonal and communication skills with a commitment to transparency, the ability to seek consensus by actively engaging and listening to others, and the ability to collaborate and to consider the views of a wide range of constituencies.

Demonstrated experience fostering a diverse and inclusive community and championing diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging.

The highest level of ethics and integrity; the courage to stand up to scrutiny; self-awareness and emotional intelligence.

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◆ COMMITMENT TO MISSION AND SCIENTIFIC CREDENTIALS

A deep passion for improving the human condition through plant science.

Broad interests and curiosity and a champion of cross disciplinary work.

A deep appreciation for both fundamental and applied science, the ability to guide fundamental discoveries into applied outcomes, and the skill to define the right balance of these activities for the Center

An earned doctorate in plant science or closely adjacent area and a record of scientific accomplishment. *(In a rare and extraordinary circumstance, an exception may be considered.)*

Procedure for Candidacy

The Danforth Plant Science Center invites applications, nominations, and inquiries. Applications should include, as separate documents, a CV or resume and a letter of interest addressing the themes in this profile.

WittKieffer is assisting the Danforth Center in this search. For full consideration, candidate materials should be received by November 4, 2024.

Applications, nominations, and inquiries can be directed to Suzanne Teer, Jessica Herrington, and Sarah Seavey at DanforthPresident@wittkieffer.com.

The Donald Danforth Plant Science Center is proudly an equal employment opportunity employer. Employment decisions at the Danforth Center are based on merit, qualifications, and abilities. It is our policy that the Danforth Center does not discriminate in employment opportunities on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, or national origin and status as protected veterans or individuals with disabilities. If you need a reasonable accommodation to access the information provided on this web site, please contact People and Culture at 314.587.1033 for further assistance.

As part of the Danforth Center's equal employment opportunity policy, we will take affirmative action as called for by applicable laws and Executive Orders—click here to view the Danforth Center's policy on affirmative action. A copy of the Danforth Center's Affirmative Action Plan for Protected Veterans and Individuals with Disabilities is available for review in the People and Culture Department during regular business hours.

danforthcenter.org