

## Tsai Center for Innovative Thinking at Yale (Tsai CITY)

### Executive Director Position Description

#### The Position

Yale University is seeking an Executive Director to lead its university-wide center for innovative thinking, Tsai CITY. Launched in 2017, the Center's mission is "to inspire students from diverse backgrounds and disciplines to seek innovative ways to solve real-world problems." Tsai CITY, a unique innovation center built on inclusivity and nationally celebrated for the breadth of its programming, welcomes students from all backgrounds to engage in entrepreneurship and intrapreneurship focused on issues like climate change and civic leadership, creative projects from documentary films to digital platforms, and high-growth ventures and movements. Reporting to the Office of the Provost, the Executive Director will provide leadership for Tsai CITY, continuing to promote an innovative mindset across Yale. The Executive Director will engage the Tsai CITY staff, graduate and undergraduate students, faculty, and leaders across the university in scaling student initiatives, measuring impact, and expanding campus reach. Tsai CITY's campus location neighbors the Center for Engineering Innovation and Design within Yale's School of Engineering and Applied Sciences and is located within the burgeoning Lower Hillhouse Innovation Corridor

#### Core Duties

- Work with the Advisory Committee and the Faculty Director to advance Tsai CITY's vision and goals and shape strategies to achieve them.
- Further develop and oversee a robust slate of co-curricular programming and initiatives focused on innovative thinking. Encourage and cultivate a culture of innovation, collaboration, experimentation, and resilience.
- Engage students from a wide variety of backgrounds, interests, and experience from every school, department, and discipline at the university.
- Define and prioritize new and existing partnerships with schools, programs, centers, and organizations across the university, including those with existing innovation and entrepreneurship programming, to ensure collaboration and coordination.
- Strategically expand engagement with the broader Yale community and externally. Develop strategies for engagement with the New Haven community and beyond.
- Ensure operational excellence across finance, donor stewardship, communication, events, and programs.

- Provide visionary leadership in managing, developing, and evaluating Center staff, while continuously assessing and aligning the organizational structure, roles, and capacity to support the Center's goals and priorities.
- Create and implement systems to track student progress, enhancing Tsai CITY's abilities to assess program impact and student outcomes. Use qualitative and quantitative feedback to innovate and improve the Center.
- Effectively communicate metrics and qualitative success with key stakeholders including the Provost and President.
- Collaboratively create an implementation strategy for a newly developed strategic plan (2025).

### Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities

- A clear understanding of Yale's mission, and the ways in which Tsai CITY advances Yale's mission.
- Ability to engage students with a wide variety of interests from across the university and to create an inclusive community for students from all backgrounds.
- Ability to interact effectively with diverse constituencies, including students, faculty, staff, alumni, New Haven community members, and leaders of business, government, and non-profit institutions.
- The ideal candidate will be able to lead without requiring the spotlight and exert influence without formal authority.
- Ability to inspire and manage a team.
- Track record of productive collaboration with internal and external partners.
- Demonstrated planning and organizational skills. Ability to manage multiple projects and priorities, and to troubleshoot, solve problems, and resolve conflicts.
- Superior communication skills.
- Strong experience with budget development and management.
- Flexibility, curiosity, and a willingness to experiment, fail, revise, and try again.

### Education and Experience

- Bachelor's degree and a minimum of ten years of relevant experience required, including:
  - Experience managing and motivating teams.
  - Financial acumen and budgeting experience.

- Significant innovation or entrepreneurial experience. This could include substantial innovation activity within an existing entity in any sector or experience with a for-profit or non-profit startup venture.
- Experience working at a college or university strongly preferred.

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Yale University has retained Claremont Search Advisors to support this recruitment. To submit confidential comments, nominations, or expressions of interest, please send an email with any supporting materials to [YaleTsaiCity@claremontsearch.com](mailto:YaleTsaiCity@claremontsearch.com). The search process will unfold with the greatest possible attention to candidate confidentiality.