

Duke Human Vaccine Institute

Duke University School of Medicine

POSITION ANNOUNCEMENT: Executive Director, Duke Human Vaccine Institute

June 17, 2026

ABOUT THE DUKE HUMAN VACCINE INSTITUTE

The Duke Human Vaccine Institute (DHVI), established within the Duke University School of Medicine, is a world-renowned research institute dedicated to the discovery, development, and advancement of vaccines and immune-based therapies. With a foundational mission centered on HIV vaccine development, DHVI has grown into a premier translational research center at the intersection of immunology, virology, structural biology, and clinical investigation.

DHVI brings together a multidisciplinary team of scientists, clinicians, and engineers committed to addressing humanity's most pressing infectious disease challenges, including HIV, influenza, and coronaviruses. The institute is internationally recognized for its state-of-the-art GMP manufacturing capabilities, cutting-edge computational and AI/ML platforms, structural biology resources, and robust clinical trial infrastructure. DHVI fosters a culture of team science, collaboration, and translational excellence that spans from basic discovery to clinical application.

As the institute enters its next strategic chapter, DHVI is expanding its focus to encompass cancer immunotherapy, autoimmune diseases, and a broader portfolio of infectious diseases—while maintaining its core HIV vaccine mission. DHVI seeks an exceptional leader to guide this evolution and ensure its long-term scientific impact and institutional sustainability.

POSITION SUMMARY

The Executive Director of the Duke Human Vaccine Institute will serve as the institute's chief scientific and administrative leader, providing strategic vision, operational excellence, and external representation for one of the nation's preeminent vaccine research centers. Reporting to the Dean of the Duke University School of Medicine, the Executive Director will be responsible for advancing DHVI's scientific mission, building and sustaining a diverse portfolio of research programs, cultivating institutional partnerships, and stewarding the institute's human, financial, and physical resources.

This is a transformative leadership opportunity for a distinguished scientist-administrator who combines deep immunology or vaccinology expertise with a collaborative, inclusive approach to team science. The Executive Director will champion DHVI's expansion into new scientific frontiers

while preserving the hallmarks of excellence, innovation, and collaborative culture that define the institute.

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

Candidates should submit a letter of interest and a Curriculum Vitae to Lauren Binanay at lauren.binanay@duke.edu. Candidates who are selected to move forward should anticipate virtual interviews in September 2026 followed by in-person visits in Fall 2026. Review of applications will begin immediately and continue until the position is filled.

For full consideration, materials should be received by August 7, 2026.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

Strategic Leadership & Vision

- Develop and execute a comprehensive strategic vision for DHVI that advances its core HIV vaccine mission while expanding into cancer immunotherapy, autoimmune diseases, and additional infectious disease programs.
- Guide diversification efforts across scientific domains in a manner that strengthens, rather than supplants, existing programs and capabilities.
- Identify and pursue opportunities to leverage DHVI's unique capabilities—including GMP manufacturing, AI/ML platforms, and clinical trial infrastructure—across a broadened scientific portfolio.
- Anticipate emerging scientific trends and funding landscapes, positioning DHVI to respond with agility and purpose.

Scientific Leadership & Research Excellence

- Maintain active scientific engagement and credibility as a recognized leader in vaccine research, immunology, or a closely related field.
- Champion a culture of rigorous, hypothesis-driven research that integrates basic science discovery with translational and clinical application.
- Oversee the design and execution of DHVI's major research programs, ensuring scientific quality, regulatory compliance, and alignment with strategic priorities.
- Attract, recruit, and retain world-class scientific talent at all career stages, from postdoctoral fellows to senior faculty investigators.
- Foster interdisciplinary collaboration across internal teams and with external academic, government, and industry partners.

Institutional Integration & External Partnerships

- Strengthen DHVI's integration within the Duke University School of Medicine, the Duke Cancer Institute, and basic science departments to create new collaborative and funding opportunities.
- Cultivate strategic partnerships with federal agencies (NIH, BARDA, DARPA), international health organizations, industry sponsors, and philanthropic funders.
- Represent DHVI externally at national and international scientific forums, government bodies, and public health organizations.

- Develop and expand industry partnerships, sponsored research agreements, technology licensing, and startup formation activities.

Operations & Resource Management

- Provide oversight of DHVI's financial operations, including budgeting, forecasting, and the development of diverse revenue streams beyond federal grants.
- Ensure the continued excellence and compliance of DHVI's GMP manufacturing facility, biosafety operations, and clinical trial infrastructure.
- Lead the development of an expanded, distributed executive leadership structure that supports DHVI's broadened mission and operational complexity.
- Oversee human resources functions including faculty recruitment, performance management, workforce planning, and succession planning.
- Ensure compliance with all applicable federal, state, and institutional regulations governing research, clinical operations, and laboratory safety.

Leadership Development & Mentorship

- Invest systematically in the development of mid-career faculty and emerging scientific leaders through mentorship, leadership programming, and inclusion in administrative decision-making.
- Create clear, transparent pathways to independence for junior and mid-career investigators, and provide tangible support for ambitious, high-risk research projects.
- Promote DHVI's team science culture and ensure that collaborative, inclusive values are embedded throughout the organization.

QUALIFICATIONS

Required Qualifications

- Doctoral degree (MD, PhD, or MD/PhD) in immunology, virology, vaccinology, microbiology, or a closely related biomedical discipline.
 - Nationally or internationally recognized scientific record in vaccine research, infectious disease immunology, cancer immunotherapy, or a related field, as evidenced by peer-reviewed publications, invited lectures, and sustained extramural funding.
 - Demonstrated experience leading large-scale, multidisciplinary research programs, including major collaborative grants, consortia (e.g., NIH U19, P01, U01), or translational research initiatives.
 - Substantial sequential leadership experience in academic research, research institutes, government, or biopharmaceutical settings.
 - Proven ability to recruit, develop, and retain exceptional scientific talent.
 - Track record of securing and managing substantial extramural funding from federal agencies and/or industry partners.
 - Eligibility for appointment at the rank of full Professor within the Duke University School of Medicine.
- Outstanding written and verbal communication skills, including the ability to engage effectively with diverse scientific, institutional, regulatory, and public audiences.

Preferred Qualifications

- Experience spanning both infectious disease and cancer immunotherapy research domains.
- Direct experience with clinical trial design, execution, and regulatory strategy (IND submissions, FDA interactions).
- Experience translating immunotherapies or vaccine discoveries into PHASE I clinical trials via in-house GMP resources.
- Familiarity with technology transfer, intellectual property management, startup formation, and industry-sponsored research.
- Experience with institutional strategic planning and academic administration, including budget management at the institute or departmental level.
- Established relationships with federal funding agencies (NIH, BARDA, USAID), global health organizations (WHO, Wellcome Trust), and major industry partners in the vaccine and immunotherapy space.

LEADERSHIP COMPETENCIES

The ideal candidate will exemplify the following competencies, which are essential to DHVI's mission and culture:

Scientific Credibility & Vision

Recognized expertise that commands respect from leading scientists and the ability to articulate a compelling, forward-looking scientific direction.

Collaborative & Inclusive Leadership

Capacity to build trust and consensus across diverse scientific, clinical, and administrative communities; a demonstrated commitment to equity and inclusion.

Team Science Orientation

Deep appreciation for and personal experience with large-scale collaborative research; ability to foster productive cross-disciplinary partnerships.

Institutional Navigation

Skill in navigating complex academic and institutional environments; ability to build effective relationships with university leadership, faculty governance, and external stakeholders.

Resilience & Adaptability

Comfort with ambiguity and the ability to lead effectively during periods of institutional change and scientific evolution.

Mentorship & Development Commitment

Genuine investment in the growth of junior and mid-career scientists; experience building leadership pipelines and promoting cultures of mentorship.

ABOUT DUKE UNIVERSITY & DURHAM, NC

Located in Durham, North Carolina, Duke is home to a vibrant academic medical center and a dynamic research ecosystem spanning medicine, engineering, law, public policy, and the humanities. The Research Triangle region—encompassing Duke, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and North Carolina State University—is a global hub for biotechnology, pharmaceutical innovation, and biomedical research.

Durham offers an exceptional quality of life, with a growing community, outstanding schools, a nationally recognized culinary and arts scene, and affordable cost of living relative to other major research centers. The mild climate, proximity to Research Triangle Park (one of the largest research parks in the world), and easy access to the Research Triangle's research ecosystem make Durham an ideal location for world-class scientists and their families.

Duke University and Duke Health

Duke University is a member of the Association of American Universities, and one of the most prestigious higher education institutions in the country, with 10 nationally-prominent schools, including the Schools of Medicine and Nursing, and two affiliated international universities.

Duke Health conceptually integrates the Duke University School of Medicine, Duke University Health System, Duke University School of Nursing, and Duke-NUS Medical School, as well as the Duke Global Health Institute, and schools and centers across Duke University, including the Duke-Robert J. Margolis Center for Health Policy.

Duke University Health System advances the clinical mission by delivering care across four hospitals (Duke University Hospital, Duke Regional Hospital, Duke Raleigh Hospital, and Duke Health Lake Norman Hospital) and numerous outpatient services, including Duke Primary Care, Duke Home Care & Hospice, Duke Health and Wellness, and multiple affiliations. Duke Health Integrated Practice (DHIP) within Duke University Health System encompasses more than 3,100 clinicians and 2,200 nurses, clinical and administrative staff who care for patients in 2.7 million annual visits. Duke's Office of Graduate Medical Education program includes more than 218 residency and fellowship programs and more than 1,190 trainees.

Duke University School of Medicine is one of the nation's leading medical schools and one of the largest biomedical research enterprises in the country. Led by Dean Mary E. Klotman, MD, who also serves as Executive Vice President for Health Affairs for Duke University and Chief Academic Officer for Duke Health, the school comprises more than 2,600 faculty physicians and researchers, nearly 2,000 students, and more than 6,200 staff in 26 clinical and basic science departments. The school's strong emphasis on research to improve clinical outcomes encourages collaboration and has resulted in the development of numerous centers and institutes including the Duke Clinical Research Institute, the world's largest academic clinical research organization. The School of Medicine offers a wide range of medical and health professions programs, certificate and training programs, as well as biomedical sciences PhD programs which are administered in partnership with Duke's Graduate School.

Duke is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer committed to providing employment opportunity without regard to an individual's age, color, disability, gender, gender expression, gender identity, genetic information, national origin, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, or veteran status.

Duke aspires to create a community built on collaboration, innovation, creativity, and belonging. Our collective success depends on the robust exchange of ideas—an exchange that is best when all perspectives, backgrounds, and experiences are valued and the contributions of all individuals are respected. All members of our community have a responsibility to uphold these values.