

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS  
AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

Office of the Chancellor  
Swanlund Administration Building  
601 East John Street  
Champaign, IL 61820



October 30, 2017

**Data Science Strategy Task Force**

Robert Brunner, Chair	Roy Campbell	Douglas Simpson
Brian Aldridge	Peter Christensen	Jacob Sosnoff
Vikram Adve	Jana Diesner	Ramanath Subramanyam
Gabrielle Allen	William Gropp	Venugopal Veeravalli
Scott Althaus	Matthew Hudson	Pramod Viswanath
Matthew Ando	Heidi Imker	Ted Underwood
Katherine Baylis	William Sanders	

Dear Colleagues:

The University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign has seen tremendous change and progress over the past three years. The establishment of the Illinois Data Science Initiative (iDSI) as a campus-wide collective of people working to bring together data science resources has held various sessions across campus to discuss the emerging uses of big data and data analytics to advance research and teaching. To further build on this progress, to contribute to our next phase of strategic planning, and to create the best possible foundation for future success in this area, we are initiating the development of a comprehensive strategy for data science research, education and engagement.

Based on your involvement with iDSI, you have been identified to contribute to this process by serving on the Data Science Strategy Task Force. Robert Brunner has agreed to lead this Task Force. Recently, a Task Force on Data Science Education was launched by Deans Jeff Brown, Andreas Cangellaris, Fen Sheng Hu, and Allen Renear. Please connect with this group as you begin to think strategically about the following questions we would like for you to explicitly address in this report.

- In what areas does Illinois have the greatest opportunity to positively influence state, national and global data science through research, education and engagement?
- What opportunities and challenges do we face in data science-related research and education over the next five to ten years?

- What specific actions would be most effective in realizing our potential in data science education, research and engagement? How would we realize these actions given current resources? How do we coordinate the work across the various parts of the campus that engage in data science? Please distinguish short (24 months), medium (3-5 years), and long-term horizons (5-10 years) for the actions.
- Please reach out to the Task Force on Data Science Education as you consider how we can better leverage our research strengths to enhance the university's educational mission in data science-related fields.
- The area of data science presents many opportunities for community engagement. How best can we engage our local community through data science?

Your team might wish to consider additional questions to help guide the development of multiple strategies for data science at our institution. In producing the comprehensive strategy, we ask that you develop, at the outset of your efforts, a process for engaging key internal and external stakeholders and drawing on the diversity of disciplinary expertise on the campus.

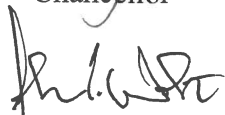
We would like to receive your final report no later than **January 5, 2018**; and we would like to **invite a representative of your group to a broader planning meeting on January 26, 2018 to present your findings**. Members of the Office of the Provost stand ready to assist you in this work. Please contact Associate Provost for Academic Effectiveness Staci Provezis ([sprovez2@illinois.edu](mailto:sprovez2@illinois.edu)) with questions or requests that emerge during your review.

We appreciate your willingness to serve on this task force.

Sincerely,



Robert J. Jones  
Chancellor



John P. Wilkin  
Interim Vice Chancellor  
for Academic Affairs and Provost

c: S. Martinis  
W. Bernhard  
S. Provezis