Grace J. Wang, PhD

President
Worcester Polytechnic Institute (WPI)

Grace J. Wang, PhD, began as WPI's 17th president on April 3, 2023. She is also a professor in the Department of Mechanical and Materials Engineering at WPI. Elected by the WPI Board of Trustees after an extensive national search, Wang came to WPI from The Ohio State University (OSU), where she served as executive vice president for research, innovation, and knowledge, and as a professor in Materials Science and Engineering.

Prior to OSU, Wang served a series of increasingly complex leadership roles at the State University of New York (SUNY). Appointed by the SUNY Board of Trustees, Wang started as vice chancellor for research and economic development at SUNY System. She was subsequently promoted to senior vice chancellor for research and economic development of the SUNY System. During this time, Wang also simultaneously served as the interim provost for the SUNY System for one academic year. For about two and half years, Wang held dual roles as the interim president of SUNY Polytechnic Institute (SUNY Poly) and the senior vice chancellor for research and economic development of the SUNY System. She also served as a professor in Materials Design and Innovation at the flagship University at Buffalo (UB).

Before SUNY, Wang served as deputy assistant director for engineering

and later as acting assistant director for engineering at the National Science Foundation (NSF) where she oversaw a funding portfolio of more than $900 million—investing in frontier engineering research, supporting engineering education, and fostering innovation and technology commercialization. Previously at NSF, Wang was the director of Industrial Innovation and Partnerships division. She started at NSF as a program director, focusing on investing in small businesses in the areas of nanotechnology, advanced materials, and manufacturing.
Wang began her career at IBM/Hitachi Global Storage Technologies where she focused on research and development of thin-film magnetic recording media and carbon overcoat for data storage. She holds seven U.S. patents.

In 2022, Wang was appointed by the White House to serve on the National Quantum Initiative Advisory Committee. She is a council member of the Government-University-Industry Research Roundtable (GUIRR) at the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. She is a member of the Board of Governors for the New York Academy of Sciences. She also serves on the Board of Massachusetts High Technology Council (MHTC). Wang earned a PhD in Materials Science and Engineering at Northwestern University.