



Charles River Laboratories Announces Planned Retirement of James C. Foster and CEO Succession Plan

January 8, 2026 at 8:00 AM EST

– Jim Foster, Chair, President & CEO, Announces Plans to Retire at the 2026 Annual Meeting of Shareholders in May 2026 After Distinguished 50-Year Career at Charles River –

– Birgit Girshick, Current Executive Vice President & COO, Unanimously Appointed Next Chief Executive Officer, Also Effective in May 2026 –

WILMINGTON, Mass.--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Jan. 8, 2026-- Charles River Laboratories International, Inc. (NYSE: CRL) announced today that James C. (Jim) Foster, Chair, President, and Chief Executive Officer (CEO), plans to retire, effective on May 5, 2026 at the conclusion of the 2026 Annual Meeting of Shareholders. The Company's Board of Directors (Board) has unanimously appointed Birgit Girshick, current Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer (COO), as the next CEO, concurrent with Mr. Foster's planned retirement in May. Ms. Girshick has also been nominated by the Board to be a Director effective at the 2026 Annual Meeting.

Mr. Foster will remain on Charles River's Board as a non-executive Director, and Martin Mackay, Ph.D., current Lead Independent Director, will become Chair of the Board at the conclusion of the 2026 Annual Meeting. These appointments are the result of a comprehensive, Board-led succession process designed to ensure long-term continuity, stability, and strategic alignment and reflect the Board's confidence in Ms. Girshick as the right leader to guide Charles River through its next phase of growth. This succession plan will also separate the Chair and CEO roles of the Company to align with best practices for corporate governance and oversight, including a non-executive, independent Chairperson.

Dr. Martin Mackay, Lead Independent Director of Charles River's Board of Directors, commented, "As the visionary leader of the Company for more than 30 years as CEO, Jim Foster has transformed Charles River from a niche research models business to the global leader in preclinical drug development and respected member of the S&P 500 with approximately \$4 billion in annual revenue. As Jim prepares for his planned retirement, the Board and I extend our deep appreciation and gratitude for Jim's extraordinary leadership and contributions, guiding the Company through decades of unprecedented growth, scientific excellence, and exceptional client service. We wish Jim all the best in his retirement and are grateful that we will be able to continue to benefit from his extensive expertise as an active member of the Board. We are equally excited about Charles River's future under Birgit's leadership."

Dr. Mackay continued, "Jim's retirement and the corresponding CEO succession is the result of a long-standing, comprehensive process focused on ensuring a seamless transition, which led the Board to unanimously name Birgit Girshick as the next CEO of Charles River. The Board is confident that she is the right leader to drive forward the Company's strategic direction, future growth, and operational excellence for many years to come. With more than 35 years of service, and nearly five years as COO, Birgit has played a central role in shaping the Company's strategy, and she is the best person to lead the Company going forward. I would like to thank Jim for his unparalleled service to Charles River, and congratulate and wish Birgit well as she assumes her new role."

James C. Foster, Chair, President and Chief Executive Officer, commented, "As I reflect on my 50-year journey at the Company, Charles River has been far more than a place to work – it has been a profound experience and one of the great privileges throughout my life. I am grateful for the opportunity to lead such an extraordinary team united by a shared purpose of creating healthier lives. Together, we built an industry leader with a culture shaped by the remarkable people, a strong and supportive workplace, and world-class science – enabling us to deliver meaningful outcomes for our clients and the patients who rely on us. It has been a true privilege to work alongside our talented employees, as well as our trusted clients and shareholders. I offer heartfelt thanks to all of them for the vital role that each has played throughout this remarkable journey."

Mr. Foster continued, "This CEO succession has been well planned for several years, as I did not take my decision to retire lightly, particularly at a time when our industry is evolving rapidly, the global regulatory environment is increasingly complex, and Charles River is at an inflection point. I have been working closely with Birgit Girshick for many years and entrusted her with roles of increasing responsibility. She has led our global businesses, guided our digital evolution, and most recently, driven our strategic vision as COO, and has risen to every challenge with clarity, integrity, and conviction. Based on these experiences, I have the utmost confidence that Birgit is the right leader, and embodies the values necessary to guide Charles River in its next chapter. I look forward to continuing to work closely with Birgit over the coming months to ensure a seamless and successful transition."

Birgit Girshick, Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer, commented, "I am deeply honored to become Charles River's next CEO. Having spent more than 35 years at the Company, this moment carries tremendous personal meaning for me that I do not take lightly. I want to thank our Board for the trust that they have placed in me, and Jim for his significant contributions and the legacy that he has built, but also for the tremendous mentorship and close partnership he has provided to prepare me throughout this thoughtfully planned transition."

Ms. Girshick continued, "As we continue to move Charles River forward with our seasoned, global team, I am committed to building upon the solid foundation that Jim has established by leveraging the unique opportunities present in the evolving biopharmaceutical landscape to further strengthen our ability to partner with clients. We will continue work tirelessly to lead the industry, to advance drug development by accelerating the progress we have made in scientific innovation and technology enablement, and by continuing to focus on driving greater operating efficiency for both our clients and throughout our own operations. I remain firmly committed to long-term shareholder value creation and driving our strategy to the next phase. This includes enhancing our market-leading portfolio to drive top-line growth, maximizing our financial performance, and maintaining a disciplined and thoughtful approach to capital deployment. I am deeply honored to help lead Charles River into its next chapter."

Jim Foster: A Career Dedicated to Growth and Business Transformation

Jim Foster has had a distinguished 50-year career at Charles River, including more than 30 years as CEO. He began his career at Charles River in

1976 as the General Counsel, and has held a variety of senior-level positions, culminating with being named President in 1991, CEO in 1992, and Chair of the Board in 2000. Jim has led many accomplishments during his career at Charles River, including:

- Jim Foster led a leveraged buyout by the Charles River management team from Bausch & Lomb in 1999. A year later in 2000, he took the Company public in an initial public offering on the NYSE.
- Jim Foster was named “Entrepreneur of the Year” by Forbes Magazine in 2002.
- Under Jim’s leadership, Charles River has completed more than 50 acquisitions and transformed from a niche, research models business to the leading, global preclinical contract research organization with over 80% of its revenue generated from services.
- Through this transformation, Jim has steered Charles River to play an increasingly important role in the drug development process, which is evident by the fact that the Company worked on an average of more than 80% of the drugs approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration since 2017.
- Since its IPO in 2000, Charles River’s stock price has appreciated at a compound annual growth rate of over 10% and its annual revenue has increased from \$307 million in 2000 to \$4.0 billion in 2024.
- Charles River became a respected member of the S&P 500 in 2021.

Birgit Girshick Biography

Birgit Girshick joined Charles River in 1989, and as Chief Operating Officer since 2021, she has been responsible for leading the Company’s global business units, which includes guiding their strategic direction, driving operational excellence and growth, maintaining client and partnership relationships, leading the organization’s digital transformation, and integrating acquisitions. In May 2026, Ms. Girshick will become the next CEO of Charles River.

Ms. Girshick has had a long career at Charles River with an extensive breadth of operational leadership experiences. She has held positions of increasing responsibility beginning in the Research Models & Services and Avian Vaccine Services businesses when she joined the Company more than 35 years ago. In 2004, Ms. Girshick was promoted to General Manager of the Avian Vaccine Services business. She was named Corporate Vice President, Global Biopharmaceutical Services (now Biologics Testing Solutions) in 2010, promoted to Corporate Senior Vice President, Research Models and Biologics Testing Solutions in 2023, assumed responsibility in 2016 for leading the integration of the WIL Research acquisition, and was later named head of the global Discovery Services business.

In 2018, Ms. Girshick was promoted to Corporate Executive Vice President overseeing the Discovery, Safety Assessment, Biologics Testing Solutions, and Avian Vaccine Services businesses. In 2021, she also assumed responsibility for the company’s Cell and Gene Therapy CDMO business. In October 2021, Ms. Girshick was promoted to Chief Operating Officer, and assumed the additional oversight of the Research Models and Services business, the business in which she began her Charles River career, as well as the Microbial Solutions business.

Ms. Girshick received a B.A. degree from Eastern Connecticut State University and an M.B.A. degree from the University of Rhode Island. She also received a certificate from the Advanced Management Program from Massachusetts Institute of Technology’s Sloan School of Management.

Caution Concerning Forward-Looking Statements

This press release includes forward-looking statements within the meaning of the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995. Forward-looking statements may be identified by the use of words such as “anticipate,” “believe,” “expect,” “intend,” “will,” “would,” “may,” “estimate,” “plan,” “outlook,” and “project,” and other similar expressions that predict or indicate future events or trends or that are not statements of historical matters. These statements also include statements regarding the Company’s expectations regarding the succession plan and transition of the Company’s Chief Executive Officer, as well as other senior management and Board roles; the Company’s plans or prospects, expectations and long-term goals associated with our business, including timing of such plans or prospects; and the projected future financial and operating performance of Charles River. Forward-looking statements are based on Charles River’s current expectations and beliefs, and involve a number of risks and uncertainties that are difficult to predict and that could cause actual results to differ materially from those stated or implied by the forward-looking statements. Those risks and uncertainties include, but are not limited to: the impact and timing of the events described herein, including the Company’s expectations regarding the succession plan and transition of the Company’s Chief Executive Officer; and the Company’s ability to achieve its long-term goals. A further description of these risks, uncertainties, and other matters can be found in the Risk Factors detailed in Charles River’s Annual Report on Form 10-K as filed on February 19, 2025, as well as other filings we make with the Securities and Exchange Commission. Because forward-looking statements involve risks and uncertainties, actual results and events may differ materially from results and events currently expected by Charles River, and Charles River assumes no obligation and expressly disclaims any duty to update information contained in this press release except as required by law.

About Charles River

Charles River provides essential products and services to help pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies, government agencies and leading academic institutions around the globe accelerate their research and drug development efforts. Our dedicated employees are focused on providing clients with exactly what they need to improve and expedite the discovery, early-stage development and safe manufacture of new therapies for the patients who need them. To learn more about our unique portfolio and breadth of services, visit www.criver.com.

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