Job Description

Job Title:	Associate Director, Strategy and Special Projects
Department:	WatSPEED
Reports To:	Executive Director, WatSPEED
Jobs Reporting:	Program Activator, Proposal Writers (2), Project Manager (USG 10/11), Market Analyst
Salary Grade:	USG 14
Effective Date:	December 2022

Primary Purpose

The Associate Director, Strategy and Special Projects (AD, SSP) is a strategic thinker who understands trends and emerging strategies for professional education and effectively maps those to the capabilities and culture of the University and WatSPEED to both drive and lead business improvements and change initiatives that help fulfill WatSPEED's mission to be a global leader in professional, corporate and executive education.

As a member of the WatSPEED senior leadership team, this role collaborates with academic, government and business leaders both internally and externally to develop strategies and implement tactical approaches that help keep the University of Waterloo continually evolving and adapting as a lifelong learning institution.

From time to time, responsibilities may include the oversight of strategic projects that fall outside the immediate mandate of WatSPEED but have an attachment to University of Waterloo's broader strategy for Lifelong Learning.

Key Accountabilities

Leadership of Strategy and Strategic Partnerships for WatSPEED

- Consults with the executive director to help guide the future direction of the department and lifelong learning initiatives for the university. Sets medium and long-term goals and tactics for the department that help position WatSPEED and the University for long-term success.
- Creates and directs activities that foster innovation in a variety of areas including program strategy, pricing strategy, assessment, partner engagement, client service, etc. based on 'emerging' trends and best practices
- Proactively seeks out emerging markets, future workforce development needs, new or novel delivery methods and pedagogical approaches, technology trends, new partners and partnership models, and effectively communicates these with sound value propositions that advise WatSPEED's senior leadership on strategic direction.
- Builds frameworks (e.g. micro-credentialing, funding and partnership frameworks) that help guide decision-making across the senior leadership team
- Regularly performs competitive analysis and market scans to assess strenghths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) and advises on these to the senior leadership team via quarterly updates, workshops, and/or presentations.Engages in broad-based discussions with a variety of external stakeholders from industry, community organizations, professional associations, academia and government. This could include the development / early curation of strategic advisories.

- Identifies and initiates internal strategic partnerships to advance WatSPEED's mission and advocate for the value of lifelong learning across the University. Works closely with members of the senior leadership team to cultivate these internal partnerships and secure mutually beneficial collaboration.
- Identifies opportunities for improvement across WatSPEED's departments including process and platform or systems enhancements and works with the senior leadership team to prioritize and operationalize these based on investigative work and best practices.
- Proactively seeks out sources of funding in support of WatSPEED's strategic direction Develops an agile capacity model to support the writing of time-sensitive proposals. From time to time, this includes assembling a team of existing and contracted resourcesto respond to provincial and federal government RFIs/RFPs.

Leadership of Special Projects to Advance Lifelong Learning at the University

- Recruits and builds high performing, agile teams of staff, faculty, partners, and vendors to execute the functions of special projects initiated from within SSP and/or other WatSPEED units as well as for Lifelong Learning initiatives coming from the President's Office
- Oversees the management of special projects, which are frequently "first time" pilots with no playbook, from initial assignment to development, rollout, and evaluation
- Sources funding for special projects, leading the development of proposals, budgets, roadmaps, and detailed project and financial plans to support identified opportunities
- Occasionally develops the vision and leads the initiation of pilot programs designed to test new innovations for WatSPEED. Leads evaluation of the pilot and determination of next steps. For successful pilots, guides the development of a blueprint for handoff to ongoing operations across the broader WatSPEED department.
- Manages team performance, providing coaching and development of staff
- Supports team building within the SSP unit and within WatSPEED overall
- Creates opportunities for high levels of communication and collaboration across the WatSPEED portfolio and the University overall

**All employees of the University are expected to follow University and departmental health and safety policy, procedures and work practices at all times. Employees are also responsible for the completion of all health and safety training, as assigned. Employees with staff supervision and/or management responsibilities will ensure that assigned staff abide by the above, and actively identify, assess and correct health and safety hazards, as required.*

Required Qualifications

Education

- Bachelor's degree in business, economics, education, or related field required; MBA or equivalent on-the-job experience at an associate or director level with 5-10 years of managerial experience

Experience

- 5-10 years leading revenue generating learning initiatives with a high success rate of customer adoption and satisfaction
- Successfully cultivating relationships with academic, government, public sector, and private-sector organizations and individuals
- Demonstrated ability to grow and lead sustainable project teams from start up to scale-up or completion

Knowledge/Skills/Abilities

- In-depth understanding of professional development, corporate training, and adult lifelong learning
- Ability to track and forecast private and public sector workforce needs and market trends in education

- Ability to analyze and interpret data with strong needs and problem analysis skills
- Critical thinking and abductive reasoning skills
- Creative thinking and problem-solving skills
- Strong networking skills internally and externally; ability to build trusted relationships and partnerships
- Strong public speaking, presentation, and advocacy skills
- High degree of political acuity, diplomacy and tact
- Ability to relate and build credibility with a wide variety of audiences including industry and public sector executives, professors and academic leaders, government stakeholders, community organizations, and clients/students and the WatSPEED team.
- Self-motivated; possessing a goal-oriented, entrepreneurial nature that drives innovation
- Improvisation skills, resiliency and able to pivot; comfortable with uncertainty and experienced with risk management
- Proposal development, contract negotiation, facilitation, and other specialized communication skills
- Financial and budgeting skills
- High level program design skills
- Organizational and project management skills including agile project management
- Resource planning & optimization skills
- Team building, motivating teams, and leading others to move in new directions
- Knowledge of university policies, procedures and guidelines

Nature and Scope

- **Contacts:** Builds effective communication and trust relationships globally with external employers, organizations, academic institutions, and partners; provincial and federal government policy holders and funders; and internal University academic and support units including faculty department chairs, directors and deans or delegates, Alumni Relations, Advancement, Career Services, etc.
- **Level of Responsibility:** Overall responsibility for the Strategy and Special Projects unit. Sources funding and oversees budgets for special projects and other programs that provide revenue to the department. Provides leadership, performance management, and coaching of unit staff. Sources and manages vendors as needed. Provides Executive Director a strategic plan for the unit as well as recommendations for the department and University as it relates to the strategy of lifelong learning.
- **Decision-Making Authority:** Key decision-maker for the SSP unit including allocation and management of budget and staffing for the planning and execution of special projects and government funded programs
- **Physical and Sensory Demands**: Frequent distractions and competing priorities. Ability to work effectively in high stakes, time-sensitive situations.
- **Working Environment:** Occasional tight deadlines typical of a corporate working environment with some evening/weekend work required. Flexible, work from home schedule with occasional office meetings, regional meetings, and travel required.