Job Description

Job Title:	Director, Technology and Project Services
Department:	Office of the Vice President Research and International
Reports To:	Associate Vice-President, Research and International Management Services
Jobs Reporting:	Manager, Research Information Systems, Senior Manager, Research Data Analytics, Senior Manager, Project Management Office
Salary Grade:	USG 15
Effective Date:	December 2023

Primary Purpose

The Director, Technology and Project Services is the senior information technology and project management specialist in the Office of the Vice President Research and International (OVPRI) and is accountable to the Associate Vice-President, Research and International Management Services for strategic leadership in the provision of quality IT systems, services, and security as well as project management, data analytics and reporting for the Vice President Research and International (VPRI) portfolio business units and the broader research enterprise.

The Director, Technology and Project Services leads the Research Information Systems team, the Research Data Analytics team, and the Project Management team. The incumbent has director level oversight of technical services and support, and of key information systems within the VPRI business units such as the research awards management system, research ethics systems and electronic cover sheet system and is responsible for ensuring that these information systems are developed, implemented, and managed. The incumbent also leads the Data Analytics team which supports the provision of data, analytics services, and metrics tracking frameworks to the VPRI leadership team and the broader research community to ensure strategic issues and priorities are critically examined and that planning activities are grounded in sound and reliable evidence. In addition, the incumbent leads the Project Management Office, which delivers project, portfolio and program management services including governance, templates, training, and resourcing.

Key Accountabilities

Strategy and Business Planning

- Guides the formulation of comprehensive five-year strategic roadmaps and three-year operational plans for the Systems, Analytics, and Project Management teams, integrating feedback and requirements from OVPRI business units, campus partners, and vendors.
- Oversees functional needs analysis across information systems and provides strategic advice and support to the VPRI Senior Leadership Team on research information system replacements, implementations, upgrades, and enhancements.
- Leads engagement with external organizations including peer institutions, professional organizations, rankings agencies, and government units with respect to technology, analytics, and project management to enhance expertise and gain knowledge informing strategic roadmaps.
- Represents the OVPRI portfolio business units on campus-wide IT committees as appropriate.
- Provides leadership and oversight of the planning process for research information systems replacements including enterprise software selection or local software development decisions, mitigation of key risks, an appropriate strategy, and resourcing for systems development and

implementation using a Software Development Life Cycle framework.
- Key responsibility for anticipating possible risks relating to research systems and developing and implementing risk-mitigation strategies as required. This would include, but not be limited to, vendor and contract management and trends in the software industry (e.g., Cloud, API First Architecture, low/no code development, etc.).
- Provides strategic-level input into the formulation of departmental plans including the budget and risk management plans.
- Leads the organizational change to move towards a "shared services model" encompassing VPRI Portfolio units and core research facilities.

Leadership of Research, International and Commercialization Information Systems

- Provides direction and oversight to the Manager, Research Systems.
- Director level responsibility for the efficient and effective operations of the research information systems (i.e., research awards management, ethics, commercialization) specifically within the Research, International and Commercialization offices and more broadly across the VPRI portfolio units.
- Directs the Research Information Systems team to ensure successful on-schedule and on-budget delivery of technical services, systems implementations, upgrades, and enhancements in support of VPRI initiatives.
- Oversight for on-going monitoring and review of research business systems ensuring continual improvement to functionality and performance.
- Oversight of training and communications initiatives related to research information systems both during implementation of new systems and enhancements to existing systems.
- Oversight of OVPRI business unit and Faculty user groups in relation to research information systems to identify, prioritize and plan system enhancements and efficiencies.
- Works in partnership with IST Directors and staff to ensure alignment between OVPRI business unit systems initiatives and broader campus initiatives.

Oversight of IT support for VPRI portfolio business units

- Provides direction and oversight to the Manager, Research Systems.
- Ensures adequate and appropriate IT support is provided to all staff within the VPRI business units and Core Research Facilities (Central Animal Facility, Quantum-Nano Fabrication and Characterization Facility (QNFCF), and the Graham Data Centre.
- Oversees planning to determine IT requirements including hardware, software, and systems access. Furthermore, ensures awareness of upcoming IT changes and oversees appropriate change management for such changes (e.g., On-premises/legacy computing to cloud-based computing practices).
- Responsible for ensuring that office space is equipped for hybrid working methods (e.g., shared workstations, all meeting spaces within the OR are equipped to allow hybrid meeting use.
- In conjunction with the Executive Directors of the University Research Centres and Institutes, reviews the information technology support and security requirements for the University Research Centres and Institutes and provides advice and support and training as required.
- Responsible for developing a shared services centre model for information technology support across VPRI units.

Leadership of Research, International and Commercialization Data Analytics and Reporting:

- Provides direction and oversight to the Senior Manager, Research Data Analytics.
- Oversees the development of metrics and KPIs for strategic planning and reporting for VPRI portfolio business units.
- Collaborates with senior leaders in partner units including IAP, IST, the Library and Finance to develop strategies, governance, and support for key initiatives.
- Oversees continuous improvement of business processes, including relevant data systems, related to reporting.
- Oversees the provision of proactive, analysis-based advice to university senior leadership to shape the strategic priorities and direction the University takes regarding major research objectives and initiatives.
- Oversees analytical support, gathering of data and information and the production of reports in

support of planning, decision-making and performance reporting processes.

- Provides leadership and oversight on specific data analytics projects ensuring best practice methodologies and consistent definitions are used to support evidence- based decision making.
- Oversees development of reliable forecasting models.
- Ensures there is a comprehensive approach to verifying, understanding, and explaining the use of university information in external contexts, including those related to national and international rankings and surveys.
- Ensures that the use of institutional research performance data by Faculties or Academic Support Units, particularly that intended for external audiences, conforms to and is consistent with the highest standards of analysis, proper interpretation, and respects appropriate confidentiality considerations.
- Oversees research or evaluation projects that address research performance.
- Supports the establishment and effective operation of an institutional research community of practice, drawing membership from Faculties and Academic support units to ensure a coordinated approach to supporting various internal/external KPI exercises and the deployment of resources and the acquisition of tools/products to ensure the institution's ability to undertake critical analyses.
- Contributes content, ideas, or identifies areas for development or strategic advancement.
- Ensures new tools, systems, and practices are researched to recommend improvements in data analytics.

Oversight of data and information security for the VPRI business units and broader research enterprise

- In partnership with IST, responsible for ensuring that hardware, systems, and data within the VPRI business units are secure from data breaches and other security threats.
- In partnership with IST. responsible for ensuring employees within the OR are provided with appropriate advice and training to ensure the security of data and information on any hardware or mobile devices wherever they are located or accessed from.
- In conjunction with IST, the Library and the Faculties ensure that appropriate advice and support is given to researchers on security of storing research data.
- In conjunction with IST and the Faculties providing advice and support and training sessions to researchers on data security while travelling and/or working remotely.
- In conjunction with IST provides advice and support on cybersecurity concerns as they relate to the research enterprise.
- Responsible for ensuring that VPRI business unit systems and technologies adhere to university policies and guidelines for data and record management.
- Oversees initiatives to address data quality issues.

Oversight of Project Management Office, including project, portfolio, and program management services.

- Provide direction and oversight to the Senior Manager, Project Management Office.
- Provide leadership and strategic oversight of the Project Management Office (PMO), ensuring effective governance, methodologies, and best practices are in place.
- Collaborate with the Senior Manager, Project Management Office, project managers and partners to prioritize and execute projects that align with the VPRI's strategic objectives.
- Oversee the development and management of program and project portfolios, ensuring they are delivered on time, within scope, and within budget.
- Oversee the establishment and maintenance of standards and processes, including documentation, reporting, and performance metrics.
- Serve as a key point of contact for project-related escalations and issue resolution.
- Ensures the provision of regular updates and reporting to the VPRI Senior Leadership Team on project statuses and key milestones.
- Ensures continuous improvement mechanisms are in place for relevant processes.
- Oversee the establishment of training programs for key contacts and researchers.

Leads, directs, motivates, and coaches staff.

- Leads the OVPRI Research Systems and Analytics teams ensuring appropriate hiring and team management practices are in place to ensure achievement of team goals and objectives.

- Ensures that staff receive appropriate coaching, training, and opportunities for personal growth and professional development.
- Evaluates the contribution of direct reports, providing ongoing feedback and conducting Annual Performance Reviews.
- Ensures that all staff under their direction participate in the establishment of, and adherence to, strategic plans for the achievement of departmental and team objectives.
- Ensures the creation and maintenance of a work environment that fosters, recognizes, and rewards consistent application of the Basic Principles of the University of Waterloo workplace.
- Identifies and directs the execution of strategies for promoting team development, cohesiveness, motivation, and commitment to the delivery of outstanding customer-focused service and continuous quality improvement.
- Prioritizes projects and activities, appropriately delegating responsibility, allocating work, and deploying resources.
- Other general and specific duties as required.

Required Qualifications

Education

- A university degree in a relevant discipline is required (e.g., Computer Science, Data Analytics, Statistics) - advanced degree in a relevant discipline and/or business preferred.

Experience

- 7-10 years of progressive experience in information systems and technology preferably including systems implementation and project management experience in a research or academic environment.
- Demonstrated experience in data analytics, statistical analysis methods and/or performance metrics preferably in a research or academic environment is preferred.
- 3-5 years of management experience preferably in a research-driven academic environment.
- Demonstrated experience in project management preferred.
- Track record of providing strategic advice to those in institutional leadership roles.

Knowledge/Skills/Abilities

- Strong background in data collection and research methodologies, quantitative and qualitative data analysis, development of accountability frameworks and decision support processes and systems.
- Working understanding of data management concepts and relevant analytical applications.
- Technical expertise at the expert level in information systems management, implementation, and information security, including experience working with complex cloud-based software platforms.
- Technical expertise in project management technologies.
- Strong strategic and business planning knowledge
- Strong organizational, analytical, and problem-solving skills.
- Ability to work independently and as a member of a team.
- Exceptional oral and written communication skills.
- Excellent interpersonal skills with the ability to build effective relationships and partnerships across all organizational levels.
- Strong leadership and project management skills.
- Attention to detail.
- Proven success in diagnosing, isolating, and resolving complex issues and processes, and recommending strategies and plans to senior leadership.
- Ability to communicate technical concepts to technical and non-technical audiences.
- Flexible adaptable management style. Ability to conceptualize and address current and future challenges in a logical manner.

Nature and Scope

- **Contacts:** Internally, the Director must build close relationships with Director and AVP level colleagues both within the OVPRI and with other academic support units such as the Library, IAP, and IST. They also must consult with and provide advice to the VPRI and senior leadership team within the VPRI business units and to Faculty ADRs and Deans with respect to VPRI portfolio

Systems, Analytics, and Project Management. Externally, communicates effectively on behalf of the University with software/system vendors and various government departments and agencies.

- **Level of Responsibility:** Responsible for making high dollar value strategic recommendations to the VPRI and senior leadership on research systems implementations. Responsible for ensuring that research systems and data with the VPRI business units are secure and appropriately maintained. In conjunction with IST, Faculty IT teams and the library, responsible for providing advice and support to researchers on security and privacy of research data and results. Responsible for ensuring the integrity and accuracy of research data reported both externally and internally. Responsible for providing key research data analytics and performance metrics as an aid to senior leadership decision making. Responsibility for high level oversight of key projects.
- **Decision-Making Authority:** Makes high-level material decisions pertaining to the implementation, upgrading, management and operation of new research systems and reporting tools. Provides expert strategic decision-making support to the VPRI and senior leadership team on research systems and analytics. Establishes the priorities of the VPRI Portfolio Systems, Analytics and Project Management team to meet objectives.
- **Physical and Sensory Demands**: Minimal demands typical of a leadership position operating within an office environment.
- **Working Environment:** Minimal exposure to disagreeable conditions typical of a leadership position; exposure to stress and pressure associated with senior-level responsibilities.

**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.*