

## Job Description

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<b>Job Title:</b>	Manager, Research Communications
<b>Department:</b>	Office of Research
<b>Reports To:</b>	Director, Research Operations and Communications
<b>Jobs Reporting:</b>	Communications Officer, Gateway Communications & Administration Officer
<b>Salary Grade:</b>	USG 11
<b>Effective Date:</b>	December 2017

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### **Primary Purpose**

The Manager, Research Communications (the Manager) is a senior management position accountable to the Director, Research Operation and Communications, for institution-wide strategic leadership, effective management, successful implementation, and collaborative coordination of services and initiatives to enhance integrated communications strategies, the promotion and celebration of Waterloo research and the strategic positioning of the Office of Research in the campus community. The manager plays a critical role in the successful achievement of the institutional goal to become recognized as one of the top innovation universities in the world and increase the worldwide impact and recognition of Waterloo research.

The Manager, is responsible for leading Research Communications to support Office of Research goals and services (i.e., grow research opportunities and funding, facilitate the achievement of excellence in research, support commercialization of research results, communicate and celebrate research successes). Initiatives involving university research for University Relations, President's Office, as well as the faculties and centres and institutes. And, addressing specific high need communication areas, e.g., corporate research outreach, Gateway program communications.

### **Key Accountabilities**

#### **Provides leadership in the development and implementation of effective communication strategies and plans by:**

- Consulting with Office of Research senior management and staff, Associate Deans of Research, University Relations staff, and President's Office staff to identify communication needs, strategies, and support required
- Identifying goals, audiences, and strategies to create communication plans that meet the project specific objective and support the overall University/Office of Research goals
- Assigning and overseeing project work to Research Communications Officers while guiding each staff member to ensure high quality and effective communications, including brand compliance and university style, for internal and external clients
- Managing research communications work flow and volume to meet deadlines while balancing competing priorities
- Monitoring emerging issues and trends that may impact communication plans
- Guiding the development and monitoring of metrics to assess impact of communication initiatives

#### **Manages and directs task/initiatives for Research communications related to:**

- Three websites (Research, Corporate Research Partnerships, and OR intranet): Ensures home pages reflect the face of Research/ Research Partnership opportunities at Waterloo to support a diverse audience of internal and external stakeholders, and that content is up-to-date and easy to navigate. Ensures intranet provides OR staff with a central and primary communication tool to foster

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a sense of community and teamwork as well as maintaining up-to-date information about OR news and office processes (e.g., staff changes, social committee activities, office). Ensures all digital communications meet Waterloo brand and AODA.

- Research Talks series: Oversees development and execution of communication plans and promotional materials to support at least six Research Talks events per year
- Funding announcements: Leads university communications by gathering and developing content while ensuring accuracy, monitoring embargoes, developing communications plans to support the announcement, and facilitating cross-campus collaboration to ensure communication opportunities are leveraged and supported as needed
- Year in Review: Leads an annual 16-page research publication to showcase research results within the areas of groundbreaking research, partnerships, entrepreneurship/commercialization, and internationalization, as well as prestigious awards. This involves developing a content outline, guiding communications officers or freelance writers in the development of content, editing content, directing photography, overseeing design and ensuring required review/approvals.
- Social media: Identifies social media opportunities/strategies and guides/supports communications officers in building a following for research, partnerships, and Waterloo International.
- Speaking notes: Writes/edits and/or supervises writing and editing of speaking notes and messaging for AVP and VP, Research & AVP, International for a variety of internal and external events
- Print materials: Guides strategy and development through Creative Services of new (and maintains a supply of up-to-date communication materials (e.g., Strategic Research Plan, Office of Research strategic plan, Engage in Research Collaborations, and other brochures, etc. ) to support conferences, media, delegations, corporate/industry partners etc. while ensuring brand compliance and university style
- Support for funders/partners: This includes external initiatives including Research Matters and Research to Reality
- Media relations and issues management: Writes/edits or guides and edits development of news releases to support media coverage of research outcomes and other research news, e.g., Research Infosource. Provides guidance/support for media calls by liaising/facilitating between the OR and Media Relations, e.g., handling media calls and support as needed, and issues, e.g., media briefing for possible inquiries related to wind turbine study
- International delegations: Oversees photography, speaking notes, as well as editing and review of web content and social media to support these important visits
- Gateway project: Oversees and guides web development and supporting communications

### **Supervises Communications Officers and freelance writers including:**

- Manages and coaches the Communications team comprised of Communications Officers, the Gateway Communications and Administration Officer, co-op students, and freelance writers.
- Deploys staff most productively to meet department goals and objectives.
- Ensuring operational processes are in place for effective and timely development of communications activities and initiatives
- Coaches, trains and develops communications staff on writing/editing, university style/brand, and OR and University processes to assure growth and development of those individuals.
- Conducts Annual Performance reviews with direct reports, and ensures adherence to Annual Performance review processes within the department.
- Supporting professional development and encouraging a productive, competent, and positive team environment
- Developing annual measurable objectives to support communications objectives and supervise daily performance.

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- Maintaining accurate and current job descriptions, as well as conducting annual performance evaluations

### **Represent the Office of Research internally and externally**

- Collaborates with communications professionals internally (University Relations, faculty and departmental communicators) and externally (sponsoring agencies, Council of Ontario Universities) to promote University research to a wide variety of audiences.
- Develops and fosters effective working relationships with key stakeholders (Senior leaders, Associate Deans of Research, researchers, colleagues at other Universities, funding agency communications professionals, program managers)
- Represents the University of Waterloo as a key member of the provincial Research Matters campaign and the Office of Research as a member of Communications Working group.
- Assists faculty members to translate and promote the impact of their research to lay audiences

## **Required Qualifications**

### **Education**

- Bachelor's degree in communications, journalism, public relations or related field, Master's degree preferred, or equivalent education and experience.

### **Experience**

- 7+ years of experience in communications, project management and event planning
- Experience managing/leading a team

### **Knowledge/Skills/Abilities**

- Expert knowledge of communication strategies including web, social media, video, mobile communications and various web systems that enhance communications and provide a strategic communications approach to a diverse audience.
- Advanced knowledge of communications process and technologies
- Advanced - written and verbal communication skills; excellent copy editing and proofreading skills; multi-media storytelling experience
- Interpersonal and relationship skills with a range of stakeholders
- Proven ability to take initiative
- Proven ability to think strategically and with diplomacy
- Demonstrated ability to work collaboratively, build consensus and be sensitive to the needs and interests of various stakeholders
- Experience using social media and new media tools, social networking sites, video sharing sites, blogs and wikis
- Demonstrated understanding of best practices in information architecture, navigation, user interface, usability, accessibility standards and testing
- Expert knowledge of social media trends, analytics, technology

## **Nature and Scope**

- **Contacts:** Internal contacts include working extensively with the Office of Research senior leaders (Vice President Research, Associate Vice Presidents Research, Directors) and managers. Significant contact with Waterloo communications professionals from across campus, University Relations, faculty members and staff. External Contacts include communications professionals from funding agencies (Canadian Foundation for Innovation, NSERC, etc) and the Council of Ontario Universities, as well as, freelance writers, and photographers.

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- **Level of Responsibility:** Develops and oversees the execution of communications strategy and plan to produce creative and effective external and internal communications consistent with outlined strategy.
- **Decision-Making Authority:** Independently establishes internal and external communications' priorities to support strategic objectives defined by senior management.
- **Physical and Sensory Demands:** Minimal demands typical of working in an office environment.
- **Working Environment:** Minimal exposure to disagreeable conditions typical of a position exposed to deadline pressures and accountability