

## Job Description



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<b>Job Title:</b>	Director, Government Relations
<b>Department:</b>	Government Relations
<b>Reports To:</b>	Associate Vice-President, Government Relations (AVP GR)
<b>Jobs Reporting:</b>	None
<b>Salary Grade:</b>	USG 13
<b>Effective Date:</b>	February 2022

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### **Primary Purpose**

Provide advocacy and advice for the University of Waterloo's relations with all levels of government. Supports the Associate Vice-President, Government Relations (AVP GR) and senior leadership on the development of University priority projects and positions on University issues. Develops relationships with key government stakeholders to advance University priorities. Leads the coordination of campus-wide government relations strategies, activities and information sharing with campus leaders.

### **Key Accountabilities**

#### **Environmental scanning, opportunity and threat analysis, and advice**

- Proactively monitors, analyzes and interprets government programs, legislation and activities and provides advice on the implications and opportunities for the university.
- In conjunction with the AVP GR, the Institutional Analysis and Planning (IAP) department and the Office of Research, conducts environmental scans of various issues as it pertains to government activity and the post-secondary sector.
- Advises and leads the writing of briefing notes, presentations and reports for the Vice-President, University Relations and members of the senior UW leadership team in advance of meetings with government officials or sector-wide meetings with government.
- The Director will provide in-depth analysis through both written notes and formal briefings, along with recommendations on advocacy initiatives and emerging issues and opportunities.

#### **Issues management**

- Evaluates emerging and longer-term opportunities and threats to the achievement of the University's priorities and the critical success factors for the University as they relate to government.
- Responds to and meets with a broad range of internal and external individuals and groups, frequently related to matters of immediate concern, and coordinates responses, solutions and follow-up with the AVP GR, senior UW administration and other University officers as appropriate.

#### **Host for high-value guests to campus and the region**

- Creates and/or identifies opportunities for government officials to participate in activities at the University and opportunities for the University to engage in government initiatives.
- Leads government visits, campus and ecosystem tours, and meetings on campus and in Waterloo Region with support from the Senior Manager, Government Relations and AVP GR.

#### **Leadership of government communications activities**

- Leads, writes and coordinates projects with other University departments or faculties related to government advocacy of priority projects and issues.
- Develops high-level communications or briefing materials for dissemination to target audiences in collaboration with other units in the University, as appropriate (e.g., University Relations, Institutional Analysis and Planning, Office of Research, Advancement, Deans' Offices, etc.) to advance the University's message, profile and reputation with government.

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- Provides leadership, writing and advice on responses to inquiries from government officials, advocacy documents, proposals for funding and special projects.
- Writes or provides input to speeches and remarks for the senior UW leadership team relating to government and thought leadership.
- Works with University Communications on written materials in support of thought leadership goals.
- Works with Marketing and Strategic Initiatives on University collateral impacting government audiences.

### **Relationship management**

- Establishes and manages high-value relationships with government, industry and community organizations.
- Builds a network of government and influential relationships in both Toronto and Ottawa including politicians, public service officials and thought leaders.
- Develops, builds and nurtures strategic relationships with key post-secondary advocacy organizations (e.g., Council of Ontario Universities (COU), Universities Canada, and U15) and colleagues at other institutions, which can be leveraged in advocacy or partnership opportunities.
- Represents the University regularly in Toronto or Ottawa and occasionally at various local meetings
- Supports senior UW leadership team in their meetings with government officials.
- Acts as an additional contact for government officials at all levels.
- Develops positive relationships within University Relations and with its primary stakeholders, both internal and external, and identify opportunities for internal collaboration and consultation with faculties, colleges, institutes and departments on government relations.
- Develops and builds strong relationships and maintains a network with University colleagues involved with government relations.
- Contributes to the development and implementation of annual and longer-term government relations plans.
- Builds collegial relationships based on trust and mutual respect is critical to the effectiveness of this role.
- Develops and maintains a strong cross-campus network of senior administration and advocacy professionals, providing visibility to campus-wide GR initiatives and opportunities, and leveraging the support of campus advocacy channels.
- Identifies and supports opportunities to advance the University's image and reputation with targeted audiences through multiple channels and engagement opportunities; including public and industry events; speaking opportunities, consultations and budget advocacy.
- May be required to act as a University spokesperson and must ensure that the University maintains strong relationships with all government officials locally, nationally and internationally.

### **Other Duties**

- Performs other duties of a comparable level/type as assigned.

*\*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 a related field or equivalent education and experience.

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- Seven (7) to ten (10) years of experience working in the government (federal, provincial or municipal) sector or a post-secondary institution, including building relationships with multiple stakeholders.
- Experience in a post-secondary institution is an asset.
- Experience leading high-profile projects.

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

- The highest ethical standards, tact and diplomacy are essential.
- Must be confident, organized and an accomplished problem solver.
- The ability to handle complex multiple assignments at the same time and with competing demands and deadlines while maintaining a calm demeanor is essential.
- Advanced oral and written communications skills including the ability to write and edit quickly, accurately and creatively.
- Advanced mediation, communication and relationship management skills including an ability to influence, negotiate and build productive working relationships with key stakeholders, senior UW management and external partners, including government, are essential to achieve the required outcomes.
- Highly developed people management, relationship building and leadership skills with the demonstrated ability to develop and support a professional, service and continuous improvement focused workplace culture.
- Ability to think and act strategically, creatively and dynamically in a high-pressure work environment.
- Ability to make difficult and complex decisions with good judgment and with acute sensitivity to the political environment and to the reputation of the University.
- Ability to quickly assimilate information, analyze data and be able to provide strategic advice, guidance and decisions on behalf of the AVP GR as required.
- Strong analytical and financial skills to understand budget, proposal and planning documents.
- Ability to manage confidential and sensitive materials and situations with the utmost discretion.
- Advanced MS Word, PowerPoint and Outlook required; Intermediate Excel and project management software.
- Must be confident with public speaking.
- The ability to use or learn emerging collaborative applications, tools, software and best practices such as Airtable, Smartsheet, Adobe Connect, Microsoft Teams, Cisco WebEx, social media, etc.
- The ability to write communications on behalf of a senior executive.
- Ability to adapt to varying management styles.
- Ability to be proactive in anticipating the needs of leadership.
- Excellent critical thinking and analytical skills to enable assessment of complex, higher education issues of concern to stakeholders.
- Collaborative team player comfortable leading as well as executing and taking constructive input from multiple sources.
- Fluency in written and spoken French is an asset.

### **Nature and Scope**

- **Contacts:**  
Internal and external contacts are required in order to exchange and interpret information, provide advice/counsel on issues and respond to inquiries. Internal contacts include direct interaction with the Vice-President, University Relations, President, the senior UW leadership team, Waterloo employees and heads of departments, such as Deans, IAP, Office of Research, President's Office, etc. External contacts include various stakeholders, including community groups and government officials.

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- **Level of Responsibility:**

This position reports directly to the Associate Vice-President, Government Relations and leads the work of project teams as required. This position will also have direct interaction with the Vice-President University Relations (VPUR), the President and other members of the senior UW leadership team.

The following are requirements of the position:

- \* Instructing other employees in methods or procedures needed to carry-out their job, even though the incumbent is not the direct supervisor;
- \* Planning the work of others; and
- \* Providing advice, professional expertise, support, and occasional coaching and mentoring to peers and other more senior roles at Waterloo in a way that allows for careful and thoughtful consideration before making a decision (e.g., providing advice regarding community engagement and engaging with government officials).

**Problem Solving:** The majority of problems encountered in this position tend to be non-routine. Sometimes the incumbent will seek direction from the AVP GR, work together with the AVP GR to reach a solution, or obtain advice from other managers or directors.

**Nature of Assignments:** Assignments in this position generally are from contact with the AVP GR, community stakeholders and government officials. Occasionally, they will arise from contact with the Vice-President, University Relations and other senior UW leadership.

**Deadlines:** The incumbent is often required to increase the pace of work in order to meet frequent and conflicting deadlines. The incumbent is also required to handle frequent schedule changes and multiple conflicting deadlines. On occasion, schedules must be re-organized to meet unforeseen and unpredictable circumstances.

- **Decision-Making Authority:**

The Director, Government Relations makes regular decisions related to expenses and costs incurred in the implementation of the Government Relations plans. As required, they make decisions related to the University's broad advocacy and engagement strategy as it relates to Government Relations. The Director, Government Relations must exercise sound judgment and consider the consequences of their decisions while exercising this judgment.

Highly complex issues are managed and may involve all levels of government, media, corporate leaders, opinion leaders, faculty, staff and students minimizing impacts on institutional reputation.

Provides guidance and problem solving support to senior administrators on a wide range of issues involving strategic and government matters, which may include interpretation of policies and procedures, or may require decisions for which no known precedent exists.

- **Physical and Sensory Demands:**

This position requires regular mental and visual concentration while working on the computer, writing and reviewing documents for details and accuracy. Visual strain may result from these activities. Listening concentration is often required to respond to requests for information from employees, students and other internal and external groups and individuals.

**Effort:** Most of the time, this position requires routine physical activity, including a mix of standing, sitting, walking and light lifting. Writing, editing and attendance at meetings requires the incumbent

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to sit for extended periods of time. Manual dexterity is required for occasional lengthy periods of keyboarding.

This position requires outstanding customer service, strong work ethic, calm demeanour, the ability to work under very challenging time constraints, constant interruptions and competing priorities.

- **Working Environment:**

Minimal exposure to disagreeable conditions typical of a position exposed to stress and pressure associated with management level responsibilities and conditions typical of a C-level office.

The majority of the incumbent's time is spent in normal office conditions. A varying work schedule and frequent deadlines sometimes requires the incumbent to work periods of overtime.

Travel to various destinations in support of the University's government advocacy is expected.

The incumbent must be available to accommodate extended hours beyond the traditional UW workweek for communications and travel.