

Job Description

Job Title:	Research Project Manager
Department:	Civil and Environmental Engineering
Reports To:	Director, Water Science, Technology & Policy Research Group
Jobs Reporting:	None
Salary Grade:	USG 8
Effective Date:	March 1, 2017

Primary Purpose

The Research Project Manager is directly responsible for a variety of research and administrative activities of the Water Science, Technology & Policy Research Group within the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering. The Research Project Manager functions as the management interface of the Water STP Group with industry and government partners, and broader research partnerships led by the group, such as the *forWater* Network. The Water STP Group is a multi-disciplinary undertaking directly involving several distinct major foci, the direct participation of professional and technical staff and students, and requiring close liaison with its funding partners (typically municipal drinking water providers and federal/provincial funding organizations). The Water STP Group currently has a number of large municipal drinking water provider partners including the cities of Toronto, Calgary, and the Region of Waterloo, as well as consulting firms and other government agencies. Typically, a dozen or more research projects are underway simultaneously including (but not limited to) those funded by NSERC (including for example Collaborative Research and Development, Discovery, Engage, and Industrial Research Chair grants), the Canadian Water Network, Alberta Innovates, MITACS, Stantec Consulting, and the Grand River Conservation Authority. The total annual budget for the Group from all sources varies but in 2017 it is anticipated to be in the range of \$1.0 to 1.5 million.

The Water STP Director also leads an NSERC Strategic Partnership Network entitled “*forWater*: NSERC Network for Forested Drinking Water Source Protection Technologies.” The *forWater* Network consists of 28 university research collaborators from across Canada and internationally, 23 funding partners (6 of whom are international), and in the vicinity of 60 graduate students. It is overseen by a 12-member Board of Directors which meets annually with all Network participants and a 9-member Scientific Committee which meets semi-annually. Researchers meet quarterly by web conference. High quality personnel (HQP) participate in bimonthly webinars. The Research Project Manager serves as the general *forWater* Network manager and provides guidance and advice to the Network’s Knowledge Mobilization Manager, HQP Training Co-ordinator, and HQP field training staff.

The Research Project Manager plays a key role and is the first point of contact for university research collaborators, funding partners, and other individuals and organizations approaching the Water STP Group and the *forWater* Network. The primary function of the position is to assist the Director and other senior members of the team with the management, prioritization, and coordination of a complex research agenda consisting of a number of specific projects involving multiple funding organizations and partners, staff, and students. This extends to include financial, research, academic, and scheduling activities.

Key Accountabilities

List the major responsibilities of the job, divided into 3 to 5 broad categories. These should reflect 80 - 90% of “what” the job does not the “how”. Insert a category heading and in bullet form below, state specific responsibilities.

Research Network Management:

- Managing the activities of the UW-based Water STP group and the *forWater* Network.
- Coordination of communications, science, and financial reporting for in excess of 30 university research faculty collaborators, ~60 students, and 2 post-doctoral fellows.

- Synthesis and integration, specifically with respect to technical/reporting requirements, organization including the development of a critical path to ensure objectives are met in a timely manner, and scheduling for all research activities described above.
- This includes being involved with the editing of research proposals, reports, and papers, and scientific proofreading. Even more importantly, the Research Project Manager must be capable of communicating and generating communications at an appropriate level for laypersons and/or a generalist scientific audience. The incumbent will assist with the preparation of large complex collaborative proposals and reports involving the integration and harmonization of contributions from co-investigators and, when appropriate, work actively with the Office of Research to ensure that budget information, letters of support, approval, etc. are in place to meet the deadlines for submission.
- Provide general assistance to undergraduate and graduate students including assisting with the preparation of paperwork, presentations, proofreading documents, identification of resources, and issues related to the acquisition of materials and supplies.
- Communication and coordination of scientific committee activities, face-to-face and on-line meetings
- Communication and coordination with the *forWater* Network Board of Directors activities.
- The incumbent will also be expected to conduct primary screening of unsolicited applications from graduate students, post-doctoral fellows, and job seekers.
- Plan *forWater* Network Annual General Meeting which will take place at remote field sites somewhere in Canada (60 attendees).
- Substantial financial management (described below).
- Due to the size and level of activity of the research group, this position is an important link in a chain that ensures uninterrupted progress and information flow between members of the Group and external contacts. The incumbent will need to be able to assess the level of importance of the contact and distinguish between what should be immediately redirected and what can be appropriately dealt with without further involvement of group members.
- On occasion, supervise junior administrative staff (in association with Strategic Network Partnership grant).

Communications, Events and Coordination of Activities:

- Be responsible for event planning and organization. This includes assuming substantial responsibility for planning and ensuring the success of workshops and symposiums, and larger conferences that may be local, national, or international in scope.
- Be instrumental in all organizational aspects related to the Group's showcasing event(s). This could in the form of a one-day conference style workshop highlighting achievements to funding partners and invited guests representing, among others, provincial and federal regulatory agencies. It is an integral component with respect to retaining existing, and attracting new funding sources.
- Keep funding partners informed, and in so doing, connected to what is occurring within the Water STP group. This is accomplished in part by taking the lead in the creation of a Group newsletter (from initial conceptualization to writing, editing, and distribution). This is also accomplished by the timely dissemination of publications in response to requests.
- Assist with the development of the Group's webpage and manage all elements from design to maintenance, as well as ensure that content on external internet databases is kept up-to-date.
- Co-ordinate the day-to-day activities of the Group by facilitating the various aspects associated with the conduct of internal project meetings, and site visits by funding agencies and partners. In part, this and other listed accountabilities are achieved by the tracking of project schedules and other deadlines and, in conjunction with the Director, ensuring that these are met.
- Provide general assistance to undergraduate and graduate students including assisting with the preparation of paperwork, presentations, proofreading documents, identification of resources, and issues related to the acquisition of materials and supplies.
- Assist with the development and coordination of conference presentations.
- Is responsible for organizing site visits, grand openings, and all other special events related to the research activities of the group. (expand-integrate *forWater*)

Financial Administration:

- Is responsible for the financial administration of all research grants and contracts for the Water STP group and collaborators in accordance with relevant university policies and negotiated sponsor agreements. Specific responsibilities include financial forecasting, monitoring of accounts, authorization of expenditures, reconciliation, establishment of payroll, etc.
- Is responsible for financial reporting as required by funding agencies and the Office of Research. The incumbent works with the investigators and the Office of Research to ensure that industry cash and in-kind contributions are in place. Reporting will require identification of the necessary data, procurement of such data, analysis of the data, and production of the detailed and summary reports as are appropriate to the funding agency, industry contacts, or auditors.
- Act as a liaison with the granting agencies, industry, Office of Research, Finance, and the Department, and facilitate the administrative requirements of research staff (including technical staff, visitors, post-doctoral fellows, graduate and undergraduate students) involved with the various projects.
- Provides guidance/advice to Principal Investigators (PIs) and other research staff on financial rules and policies. Ensures that researchers and respective research personnel are compliant with UW research finances policies and procedures and those set forth by external granting agencies. Maintains project files and supports the efforts of audits as required. Assists PIs and researchers with the comprehension of financial reports.
- Coordinates the purchase of equipment and supplies for the group, including the sourcing and procurement of major equipment and is knowledgeable of Policy 17 outlining UW's standards of ethics for procurement. The incumbent is responsible for maintaining records of all purchases and for ensuring eligibility and budget allocations are adequate and appropriate.
- Works closely with the Department Financial Administrative Officer on matters relating to faculty research accounts and ensures that procedures are in place in order that monthly research account statements are reviewed and reconciled. Notifies Principal Investigators and/or designates of discrepancies and follows-up to resolve on a timely basis.
- Makes recommendations to Water STP Group Director, Associate Director, and the departmental Financial Administrative Officer with respect to deficit resolution strategies.
- The incumbent has signing authority on all accounts and is responsible for a variety of administrative aspects relating to staff and students (e.g. paperwork/forms, purchasing, shipping, travel/expense claims, cheque requisitions, etc.).
- With the oversight of the Associate Director, be responsible for financial reporting as required by research funding agencies and the Office of Research. The Research Project Manager works with Office of Research to ensure that industry and cash and in-kind contributions are in place. Reporting will require identification of the necessary data, procurement of such data as necessary, analysis of the data, and production of the detailed and summary reports as are appropriate to the funding agency or company.
- Organizes meetings for the various research groups/themes. The incumbent attends all meetings as a resource for financial queries. The Research Project Manager takes notes from meetings and distributes as necessary.
- Contacts individuals, granting agencies, on sensitive matters in order to obtain, provide, and/or clarify information.
- Answers non-routine enquiries concerning research and follow-up on granting agencies additional questions/requirements.

Human Resources:

- Acts as a liaison between the investigators, the Department, and Human Resources on issues relating to research staff personnel. Specific duties include preparation of job descriptions and advertising of research technical staff positions, and recruitment.
- Coordinates payroll for research staff (including technical staff, visitors, post-doctoral fellows, graduate and undergraduate students). The incumbent acts as a liaison in this capacity with Human Resources, Finance, the Office of Research, and the Graduate Studies Office.

Job Description

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Under the general direction of the researcher, the incumbent provides direction to research personnel including technical staff, administrative staff, visitors, post-doctoral fellows, graduate and undergraduate students in planning and undertaking research programs, internal reviews, and external visits. <p>Other:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stays up to date on changes in granting agency regulations, University policies and procedures, research administration practices, and new technology or programs. Maintain procedures and documentation pertaining to the responsibilities of the position. Attend all training on new systems and procedures, and meetings as required.
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Required Qualifications

If hiring today, what would be the required education, experience, knowledge, skills and abilities?

<p>Education</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Possess a university degree in Engineering, Environmental Studies, or Science.
<p>Experience</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7-10 years administrative/management experience preferably in a research environment. Experience with large collaborative projects is desired.
<p>Knowledge/Skills/Abilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Must possess excellent organizational, analytical, and problem-solving skills. Demonstrated ability to handle confidential information with discretion, and manage multiple and competing priorities is essential. Possess excellent interpersonal skills in order that he or she can effectively liaise with the campus community and external partners. A high attention to detail with extreme accuracy in work is required. Be able to be an effective team member as well as work independently with very little supervision within a very active and busy research group Demonstrate maturity of independent judgment in areas of time management, task prioritization, and decision-making. Have exceptional oral and written communication skills. Have knowledge of University policies and procedures. Be able to pay attention to detail, strong proofreading skills. Be familiar with and able to generate financial data using FORE (Financial Online Reporting Environment). Possess high level computing skills using a wide variety of software (i.e. Microsoft Word, Excel, Outlook, and in particular PowerPoint; Adobe Acrobat; etc.). Knowledgeable as it pertains to federal and provincial funding sources and related guidelines. Proven ability to manage a large volume of work, conflicting priorities, and deadlines.

Nature and Scope

Contacts:

- Water STP Group Director, Associate Director, collaborating faculty at UW and other universities: Obtain/provide and/or clarify information.
- Principal Investigators (and/or designates): Obtain/provide and/or clarify information. This can involve instructing, enlisting the cooperation and advising Principal Investigators on University and/or granting agency policies and procedures. Communicate detailed financial information.
- Research group members: Substantial verbal and written interactions.

Job Description



- Students (undergraduate and graduate): Substantial verbal and written interactions, processing of academic paperwork where appropriate, reimbursement of out-of-pocket expenses (travel, cheque requisitions, completion/processing of systems forms, and purchase orders, etc.).
- Collaborating researchers from UW and across Canada: Substantial verbal and written interactions, co-ordination of activities, events, reporting (financial and progress and final reports).
- Regulators (Health Canada, Provincial Ministries of the Environment, etc.): Co-ordination of research activities and information transfer.
- Conservation authorities: Co-ordination of research activities and information transfer.
- Municipal drinking water providers: Substantial verbal and written interactions, identify paperwork required by funding agencies, keep partners apprised of deadlines, and organize information transfer activities.
- Granting Agencies: Obtain and/or clarify additional information on guidelines and/or requirements. Convey detailed financial information.
- Office of Research, forWater Network, other Universities: Obtain/provide and/or clarify additional information on University and/or granting agency policies and procedures, guidelines and/or requirements.
- Investigators and/or departments of other universities (e.g. Office of Research Services, Research Accounting) to administer sub-agreement requirements.
- Faculty Financial Officer/Analyst, Finance or Payroll Department: Obtain/provide and/or clarify financial information or assistance.
- Assistant to the Chair: Obtain/provide and/or clarify information.
- Human Resources: Obtain/provide and/or clarify information.
- Research/administrative personnel, students: Act as a resource to University staff in research compliance and eligibility matters by providing effective advice, information and assistance to a wide range of customers (University departments, research administrators, research personnel and project holders) regarding Granting Agency rules and regulations, University policies, procedures and financial systems and Research Accounting processes for charging expenses to research projects.

Level of Responsibility:

- Non-compliance with contractual terms and /or Agency guidelines could result in the return of agency funds, loss of future funds, and /or inability to collect funds owed to the University. Incorrect interpretation of Agency and University policy provided to Faculty can result in non-compliance with agency terms on the use of funds. Incorrect analysis, and financial reporting or invoicing to the contract/granting agencies will provide misrepresentation on use of funds, and loss of University credibility in administration of research funds. A high degree of accuracy, a thorough understanding of policies and practices, the ability to anticipate, investigate and resolve problems, and the ability to meet conflicting demands are expected.
- While this position typically doesn't involve staff oversight, there is considerable interaction with students who can benefit from respectful interactions.

Decision-Making Authority:

- Establishes own priorities in accomplishing job duties, and receives instructions only on unusual problems. As part of the administration of funds, she/he will identify issues, exercise judgment and knowledge of University, granting agency, and accounting policies and procedures, seek to resolve if possible, and/or escalate to Manager for resolution.
- Not formally identified but will be required in some time-sensitive instances when the Director and Associate Director are not available.

Physical and Sensory Demands:

- Minimal demands; typical of an administrative position within an office environment.

Working Environment:

- The incumbent works in an office environment where there can be procedural change. Some travel is involved. Working hours are typical with potential evening/weekend work. The group functions in a fast-paced environment, involving multiple internal and external contacts.