Job Description

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Job Title:</th>
<th>Director, Strategic Initiatives</th>
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<tr>
<td>Department:</td>
<td>Office of Research</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reports To:</td>
<td>Vice-President, University Research</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jobs Reporting:</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salary Grade:</td>
<td>USG 15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Effective Date:</td>
<td>May 2018</td>
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**Primary Purpose**

The Director, Strategic Initiatives, working directly with the Vice-President, University Research (VPUR), is responsible for developing, executing and sustaining strategic initiatives in the Office of Research. The Director will focus on developing strategies to accelerate organizational performance through strategic planning and implementation, knowledge management and the implementation and monitoring of targets related to strategic initiatives. The Director conducts background research, develops reports, and provides advice on strategic priorities and objectives of the VPUR and, more generally, of the Office of Research. The Director facilitates discussions of key strategic priorities with stakeholders across the campus, and oversees, as well as acts as facilitator for, focus group discussions with the senior leadership team at the University, as well as town-hall discussions with the community at large. The Director writes key communications and reports for the VPUR. The Director will assist in creating and implementing a new Internationalization Strategic Plan for Waterloo with the Associate Vice-President International, the VPUR, and the President. The Director oversees the implementation of equity practices designed to increase representation of the four designated groups (FDG) (women, members of visible minorities, Aboriginal (Indigenous) people, and persons with disabilities) within the Office of Research and throughout the research community. The Director assists with the creation and implementation of the full Office of Research work-plan and monitors performance targets related to the work-plan. The Director assists in strategic discussions with government, industrial and other external stakeholders. The workflow includes setting strategic priorities, developing mandates, managing high-profile strategic projects, and developing and managing relationships with senior University administrators, government officials, and industrial partners.

**Key Accountabilities**

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<th>Strategic Initiatives:</th>
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<td>* Identify, research and implement, in conjunction with other members of the Office of Research team, strategic initiatives for:</td>
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<tr>
<td>o Advancing key priorities of the Office of the Vice-President, University Research.</td>
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<td>o Enhancing international recognition of Waterloo’s research and building greater awareness, of Waterloo’s research productivity and impact.</td>
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<td>o Supports development and implementation of internationalization strategic plan with AVP, International, VPUR and the President and ensures alignment with the University Strategic Plan.</td>
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<td>o Enabling conditions that support the achievement of research excellence and impact.</td>
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<td>o Increasing interdisciplinary research.</td>
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<tr>
<td>o Strengthening the relationship between research and teaching at the undergraduate level.</td>
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- Seizing opportunities to lead in new/emerging areas of research.
- Making entrepreneurship a key element of the Waterloo research brand.
- Facilitating discussions with key internal and external stakeholders on strategic initiatives.

- Lead the development of the strategic plan/framework and work-plan for the office of research, and the detailed current year operating plan, while adhering to direction set by the VPUR and AVPRs. This includes formalizing and leading the strategic planning process for the Office of Research, focusing on long-term trends and outlook, and developing competitive intelligence.
- Facilitate, working with the AVPR, a revision of the Research Strategic Plan.
- Maintain a strong knowledge base of current UW programs, policies, resources and services; develop strong relationships with senior leadership to effectively liaise, anticipate issues and opportunities, and identify trends.
- Convey, as appropriate, information on the VPUR’s involvement in high profile activities, including speaking engagements, nationally and internationally.
- Gather intelligence and maintain environmental scans for major initiatives and developments, both on campus and externally, that are relevant to the VPUR’s mandate.
- Research high priority projects and prepare backgroundersthat cogently identify both opportunities and inherent risks.
- Engage external business and industry experts to learn and influence business strategies, constantly remaining alert and forward thinking about opportunities and risks in the industry.
- Lead the Office of Research approach to measurement and evaluation of the work-plan initiatives with a focus on the creation of an organizational dashboard for impact and organizational effectiveness.
- Work collaboratively with Office of Research Communications, Media Relations, & Government Relations to convey VPUR messaging.
- Leverage external relationships to support achievement of the VPUR’s priorities and objectives.
- Oversee key written communications to ensure they accurately reflect the VPUR’s position.
- Facilitate executive recruitment efforts related to Centres and Institutes.
- Develop and foster effective liaison with key stakeholders to enhance strategic initiatives of the VPUR.
- Write speeches and prepare presentations for the VPUR.
- Facilitate development of the annual work-plan for the Office of Research.
- Organize Office of Research retreats, including setting an agenda and overseeing follow-up on agreed action items.
- Oversee risk management reporting with respect to the VPUR portfolio.

**Relationship management:**

- Work closely with the Associate Vice-President Human Rights, Equity and Inclusion and the Equity Office to support University objectives related to equality, diversity, and inclusion.
- Ensure effective communication and decision-making between the VPUR’s Office and other executive offices.
- Work collaboratively with University Relations, Advancement and the Office of Graduate Studies on behalf of the VPUR Office on matters of mutual responsibility.
- Liaise as appropriate with the Office of Research AVPs and Directors.
- Coordinate activities sponsored by the Office of the Research designed to engage and inform the broader community about UW research.
- Prepare invitations and draft guest lists for events; plan stakeholder receptions.
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**Equity:**
- Oversee the development and implementation of strategies to identify and remove systemic barriers faced by individuals from the FDG in the pursuit of research excellence.
- Oversee the development and implementation of strategies to increase the number of funding applications submitted by members of the FDG.
- Ensure effective communication and decision-making between the Equity Office and the Office of Research.
- Undertake professional development to remain current on issues pertaining to equity, diversity and inclusion.

**Required Qualifications**

**Education**
- Baccalaureate required; Master's degree or PhD preferred

**Experience**
- At least five years of experience in roles of progressive responsibility for strategic initiatives, preferably in an academic setting related to research
- A proven track record of providing strategic advice to advance the goals and objectives of an organization, taking account of priorities, mandates, and stakeholder - needs and aspirations
- Knowledge of federal and provincial Research & Development funding agency programs and policies would be an asset.

**Knowledge/Skills/Abilities**
- Strong organizational, prioritization and analytical skills; proven ability as a problem-solver
- An ability to work independently and as a member of a team
- Strong interpersonal skills; strong verbal and written communication skills; tact, good judgement, diplomacy and an ability to maintain confidentiality are essential
- Experience with Microsoft Office programs and SharePoint. Knowledge of UW policies, procedures and guidelines would be an asset

**Nature and Scope**
- **Contacts:** Broadly based, often at a very senior level, both within and external to the University
- **Level of Responsibility:** High-level oversight and organizational responsibility for discussions and events; integral involvement in strategizing on issues of the utmost importance to the Institution. More generally, contributing in a helpful, professional and timely manner to the management of a multitude of issues in a fast-paced, multifaceted environment
- **Decision-Making Authority:** Must be capable of making decisions independently, of knowing when to escalate matters to the Vice-President, University Research or one of the Associate Vice-Presidents, Research, and of contributing positively and creatively to discussions around strategic decisions to be made by the Vice-President, University Research
- **Physical and Sensory Demands:** Minimal, typical for an administrative position in an office environment
- **Working Environment:** Occasional travel; regular working hours with some evening/weekend work; minimal exposure to disagreeable physical conditions in the workplace