Job Description

Job Title:	Senior Director, Strategy and Implementation
Department:	Office of the President
Reports To:	President
Jobs Reporting:	None
Salary Grade:	USG 16
Effective Date:	May 2023

Primary Purpose

As part of the President's senior leadership team, the Director, Strategy and Implementation works with senior academic and administrative leadership across the University to execute priorities on behalf of the President, implementing project plans and mobilizing the University community around specific objectives and priorities determined by the President. He or she oversees effective two-way communication between the Office of the President, the University community, and external stakeholders to ensure successful implementation of Institutional strategic priorities, and will advise the President on any trends or opportunities resulting from environmental scans. Key activities of the Director, Strategy and Implementation include a: focus on horizon-sweeping, medium and long-term opportunities; relentless attention to strategic choices; as well as the effective articulation and execution of key priorities. The incumbent will develop a framework to measure the on-going success of projects supporting institutional priorities, and will work collaboratively with the Executive Director, Office of the President to ensure information is exchanged appropriately as it relates to a variety of key projects and initiatives underway across the Office.

The Director, Strategy and Implementation works to strengthen and enhance the relationship of the institution with both internal and external stakeholders and is responsible for bringing issues and opportunities identified by the University community to the President's attention, advising on strategy options, and working with the Executive Director and other senior University administrators, resolves stakeholder issues involving the Office of the President. The incumbent builds strong relationships with the Vice-Presidents, and their teams and advises these leaders and their teams in developing their business strategies. The incumbent must maintain awareness of and sensitivity to audience/stakeholder sensibilities, the wide variety of communities within the University, and the history and culture unique to each, and their role within/relationship to the University as a whole. On behalf of the President, the incumbent may represent the University on a variety of internal and external committees.

In addition, reporting to the President and in conjunction with the Associate Vice-President, Innovation the incumbent will participate in establishing and implementing priorities and plans to ensure optimal impact of University-wide priorities.

Key Accountabilities

Strategic Planning

- Develops and maintains an in-depth understanding of the Institutional vision, ensuring it is translated into a comprehensive strategic, operational and budget plan.

- Provides high-level strategic advice and recommendations to the President on opportunities and concerns raised by members of the University community and helps to mobilize the community around specific strategic objectives and priorities.
- Communicates and interprets the President's key priorities internally and externally so that members of the University community understand the Institutional vision, and how department and unit initiatives and strategic plans contribute to the overall goal(s)
- Facilitates the development of Institutional priorities and procedures that align with, and support, Institutional initiatives, focusing on long-term goals and strategies (i.e. how the University will achieve the Institutional vision).
- Ensures alignment of Presidential, Vice-Presidential, and Executive Council members annual priorities with Institutional strategic and operational plans
- Works collaboratively and effectively with senior stakeholders from both inside and outside the University community to provide for integrated approaches to strategy design, development, and implementation with a focus on successful outcomes and continuous improvement.
- Participates in the development of programs and materials to assist the President and senior administration with the advancement of the goals and objectives of the University.
- Conducts both internal and external environmental scans, to better understand how the University relates to its environment (i.e. within the community, relative to peers, etc). Identifies and assesses opportunities and risks in its external environment, and assess internal strengths and weaknesses.
- Develops and maintains strategies to initiate and enhance stakeholder relationships with the public, corporate partners, donors, and alumni.

Strategy Execution

- Works to advance substantive policy goals with sensitivity to the interests, concerns and accomplishments of wide-ranging constituents, and will need to move agendas forward in a principled and prudent manner, even in the face of competing priorities and/or crises.
- Leads projects and tasks on behalf of the President, working cross-functionally with representatives from various Vice-Presidential portfolios, and other senior stakeholders to support execution of strategic initiatives.
- Supports the organization in achieving its strategic objectives by helping design and implement large transformation programs.
- Provides objective insights about strategic opportunities in the internal and external environments.
- Works collaboratively and consultatively with the Executive Director and other staff in the Office of the President in support of a wide variety of activities and projects involving the President.
- Establishes measures of success for implementation of Institutional initiatives and oversees on-going monitoring of initiatives in progress as well as those which have been implemented. Adjusts, or makes recommendations to adjust, initiatives and projects which are found to be at risk, or less successful than anticipated.
- Secures and monitors resources (both personnel and financial) to implement strategic projects as well as other initiatives for the President.
- Oversees the development and execution of change management strategies and plans, with measurable objectives, in support of Institutional initiatives.
- Anticipates potential points of resistance in implementation of Institutional priorities and projects, and proactively identifies means to resolve associated issues or areas of concern.

Stakeholder Engagement and Management

- Builds strong relationships with key external stakeholders – alumni, advancement prospects, industry, government in collaboration with appropriate portfolios
- Facilitates Presidential engagement of, and interactions, with internal stakeholders (faculty, departments, staff, students, university administration, etc.), to help foster relationships that advance institutional priorities and support the achievement of annual and multi-year strategic goals.
- Develops and implements a senior stakeholder management strategy that ensures Presidential priorities continue to advance.
- Recruits, enlists, and coaches staff and faculty to be spokespersons to showcase special initiatives.
- Develops and delivers initiatives and special events incorporating the President and Senior Executives, community members, faculty, staff, and students as appropriate.
- Provides opportunities for collaboration and shared decision-making between faculty, staff, and other members of the University community.
- Provide advice to the President regarding developing trends and opportunities.
- Identifies and advises the President on University initiatives and programs that are no longer in step with community, cultural, or societal norms and recommends changes.
- Represents the President's Office as appropriate on external working groups and committees. Accompanies the President on official UW business and to events, and provides follow-up.
- Maintains awareness and knowledge of background and rationale behind previous UW policy decisions and executive actions to bring these forward where relevant to current circumstances.
- Maintains awareness of and sensitivity to audience/stakeholder sensibilities, the wide variety of communities within the University and the history and culture unique to each, and their role within/relationship to the University as a whole.
- Maintains awareness of, and sensitivity to, relations between the University and its affiliated institutions, government and other partners, and key representatives of same.
- Maintains current awareness and knowledge of University's administrative priorities, including decisions made at the Board of Governors and Senate and follow-up actions required or being taken because of these decisions.
- Maintains current post-secondary education sector awareness and knowledge of university and external events, policies, and announcements potentially affecting the public positioning of the University of Waterloo. Brief the President and the Executive Director, Office of the President as required.

Strategic Communications

In collaboration with the AVP Communications and with the Director, Executive Communications, the Director supports effective two-way communication between the Office of the President and the University community in support of the successful implementation of presidential priorities.

Conducts research and analysis to support the President's thought leadership in strategic areas and develops major external speeches, (select) internal speeches, governance remarks, presidential statements, academic book chapters, keynotes, Op Eds, administrative responses to task forces, and policy papers

- Drafts high-level correspondence for the President's consideration, working with University Communications to coordinate messaging on issues as appropriate
- Supports the development of Presidential remarks for governance bodies and leadership committees to ensure strategic focus.
- Maintains current awareness and knowledge of university and external events, policies, and announcements potentially affecting the public positioning of the University of Waterloo and, where

applicable, the President's Office, and briefs the President and Executive Director of the Office as required.
- Collaborates with AVP Communications and/or Vice-Presidents with respect to key messages to be conveyed by the President.
- Works collaboratively with Offices of Research, Advancement, University Relations to convey President's messaging.

Policy Research and Advice
- Drafts briefing notes and position papers on a variety of topics for review by the President.
- Completes specific research projects, as assigned.
- Compiles statistics and charts on academic research, scientific citations, and other subject data to incorporate in speeches and presentations made by the President.
- Drafts position and policy papers/reports based on input provided by ad hoc committee members for the President's review.
- Review journals and reports for items of interest for the President.

**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
- Post-graduate degree in a related field (e.g., Public Policy, Business, Marketing, Communications) or an equivalent combination of education and experience

Experience

- Minimum ten (10) years' in progressively responsible roles in post-secondary leadership, with an emphasis in strategic planning, implementation and accountability, performance and planning and communications
- Minimum ten (10) years' experience in project management and proven ability to align Institutional priorities and realize strategic goals
- Highly developed people management and leadership skills with the demonstrated ability to develop and support a professional, service and continuous improvement focused workplace culture
- Significant experience in writing, proofing and editing materials and of presenting proposals and plans to senior level executives
- Evidence of being a persuasive and dynamic leader with highly developed communication and interpersonal skills, who is comfortable with networking, influencing and persuading at the highest level to achieve required outcomes
- Experience planning for and managing interrelated, complex projects, and coordinating and collaborating with cross-functional team members to deliver quality results within deadlines
- Ability to form relationships with all levels of the community to serve the mission of the University

Knowledge/Skills/Abilities
- Demonstrated ability to:
  - Manage multiple concurrent projects with different stakeholders;
  - Lead meetings effectively with internal and external stakeholders;
  - Take a productive approach in service delivery

- Excellent communication skills (oral and written), relationship building, customer service, negotiation, consultation, presentation, analytical, leadership and organizational skills
- A high level of interpersonal skills and the capacity to listen effectively and sensitively to a broad range of diverse stakeholders, including students, faculty and staff members
- Experience in collating and analyzing qualitative and quantitative data and information in order to draft reports provide briefing materials and recommendations to a range of audiences including senior leadership
- Critical thinking and excellent analytical skills to enable immediate and appropriate assessment of complex issues of concern to stakeholders
- Ability to manage confidential and sensitive materials and situations with the utmost discretion
- Ability to make decisions with good judgment and with acute sensitivity to the political environment and to the reputation of the University
- Strong research writing, communication, presentation and interpersonal skills
- High degree of political acuity and judgment; ability to work with senior leaders in a manner which facilitates cooperation and consensus building
- Ability to work under pressure, superior organizational skills in planning, project management and task coordination; flexibility and problem-solver orientation
- Diplomacy combined with an excellent understanding of, and commitment to the University's mission, vision and values and their intersection with the broader community
- Ability to translate and communicate complex topics in a variety of forums, tailoring communications to effectively fit and influence the targeted audience, strong executive presence
- Ability to work in a hectic and results-oriented environment with a strong focus on results
- Integrity, creativity, sense of humour, perseverance and the demonstrated ability to provide a consistent high level of service

Nature and Scope

- **Contacts:** Works closely with the President, staff within the Office of the President and within the portfolios reporting to the President including other senior leaders across the institution in support of institutional and presidential priorities. Interacts with colleagues across the university and at all levels to deal with, influence and motivate others, often with different perspectives and without supervisory responsibilities. Internal contacts include direct interaction with the Vice Presidents, the senior UW leadership team, academic and academic support units
- **Level of Responsibility:** The position is responsible for ensuring cross-collaboration, management and implementation of institutional and presidential initiatives. High-level oversight and organizational responsibility for discussions; integral involvement in strategizing on issue of importance to the President.
- **Leadership without Authority:** 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.
- **Decision-Making Authority:** Must be capable of making decisions independently and knowing when to escalate matters to the Executive Director or the President and must be capable of contributing positively and creatively to discussions around strategic decisions to be made by PVP. This position will independently make high-risk decisions that have significant consequences on the reputation of the University and on the campus community.
- **Physical and Sensory Demands**: Strain from focused visual concentration or focused listening for periods of time Work at a keyboard on a daily basis for many hours

- **Working Environment:** Minimal exposure to disagreeable conditions typical of a position exposed to stress and pressure associated with conditions typical of a C-level office. Work is performed in a controlled environment with almost no exposure to disagreeable environmental conditions. Regular office equipment required Regular daytime hours with additional hours as required to complete projects.