

## Job Description

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<b>Job Title:</b>	Director, Innovation and Special Projects
<b>Department:</b>	Waterloo Ventures
<b>Reports To:</b>	AVP Commercialization Entrepreneurship
<b>Jobs Reporting:</b>	Administrative Assistant
<b>Salary Grade:</b>	USG 14
<b>Effective Date:</b>	August 2023

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### **Primary Purpose**

The Director, Innovation and Special Projects is a facilitator between University of Waterloo ecosystem of groups and activities that serve to enhance Waterloo's overall performance and reputation in research commercialization, entrepreneur development, and startup creation. Through engagement and collaborative execution with campus innovation ecosystem leaders, the director innovation and special projects is responsible for identifying innovation opportunities working with relevant stakeholders to ensure that Waterloo is in a equipped to advance in its position as a global commercialization and entrepreneurship leader. As a leader, the director, innovation and special projects inspires and is able to drive initiatives by building rapport and inspiring collaborative effort and offering unique approaches to the Waterloo commercialization community to complete projects to a high degree of excellence.

### **Key Accountabilities**

#### **Campus Innovation Community**

- Sets strategy to build community and trust amongst innovator leaders across campus to accelerate innovation, commercialization and entrepreneurship success.
- Act as a key member of the Waterloo Innovation Ecosystem Council, actively participating in meetings and discussions to raise awareness on pertinent matters related to Waterloo's commercialization and entrepreneurship competitiveness, including but not limited to government compliance requirements, policy, industry trends, representation, etc.
- Serve as a point of contact and a campus resource for facilitating collaboration and client success among various campus commercialization and entrepreneurship support groups including thought leadership and social impact.
- Interfaces with and monitors activities amongst Innovation Arena members in residence to ensure alignment and performance are in line with contractual targets and university strategy.
- Collaborates and supports commercialization and entrepreneurship groups to develop coordinated programs, resources, and initiatives that enhance the overall ecosystem of entrepreneurship and commercialization on campus.
- Work closely with on-campus startup incubators, research institutes, and other relevant entities to strengthen institutional capacity for commercialization. Stay updated on industry trends, best practices, and emerging technologies in commercialization and entrepreneurship support to provide informed guidance and advice to campus stakeholders

- Partners with the AVP, C&E and members of the Waterloo Ventures team to sustain positive relationships with innovation leaders across campus.

### **C&E Strategy, Implementation and Customization**

- Develops knowledge, know-how and business intelligence to develop insights and strategic options to support Waterloo Ventures mission
- Ensure the institution aligns with the requirements set out in the Commercialization Mandate Policy Framework and work with AVP, C&E to address any gaps
- In conjunction with the AVP, C&E, support the development and refinement of the institution's Ontario Annual Commercialization Plans, including timelines, strategies, and execution plans.
- Collaborate with campus leaders, including staff and faculty to foster a shared commitment to intellectual property (IP) generation, protection and commercialization.
- Work with relevant stakeholders to address misalignments, capacity gaps, and institutional policies hindering effective IP commercialization.

### **Operations**

- Develop and implement a scalable client management framework to ensure efficient and effective support services for campus innovators, including streamlining processes, tracking progress, and providing necessary resources.
- Facilitate regular meetings, workshops, and networking events to encourage cross-collaboration and knowledge sharing among campus support groups including thought leadership and social impact.
- Support the development and delivery of educational programs, workshops, and training sessions to educate campus stakeholders about commercialization, data collection, reporting, and compliance processes.
- Organizes a network of campus resources (e.g. core facilities) to support the business and technical development work for commercialization teams.
- Assist in identifying potential partnership opportunities and facilitating introductions between campus innovators, entrepreneurs, and industry collaborators including thought leadership and social impact.
- Work with communications groups in Velocity and across campus to highlight the university's accomplishments on commercialization, entrepreneurship, innovation, thought leadership and social impact.
- Be a respected spokesperson for the Waterloo Ventures office at the University of Waterloo and for various units associated with the office.

### **Commercialization and Entrepreneurship (C&E) Data**

- Identify data gaps and needs within the Waterloo ecosystem in concordance with various government reporting requirements for commercialization outcomes.
- Working with relevant campus stakeholders, develop systems and processes to collect, analyze, and report on key performance metrics to track progress towards improving commercialization outcomes.
- Collaborate with Ontario's Joint Working Group on Commercialization Metrics to ensure accurate and standardized reporting across the institution.
- Collaboratively work with Thought Leadership and Social Impact academic and innovation partners on campus to develop and implement a framework for administrative and research use of C&E data.

### **Interaction with Government Agencies**

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- In conjunction with the AVP C&E, serve as the primary point of contact for interfacing with government regarding commercialization data and reporting initiatives at the institution. (e.g. Ontario's Commercialization Mandate Agreement framework).
- Responsible for coordinating and submitting required government innovation performance reports (e.g. Ontario's Annual Commercialization Plan)
- In close consultation with Waterloo's Government Relations unit and Waterloo Ventures team, develop and maintain strong relationships with government representatives, ensuring effective communication and collaboration.
- Stay updated on federal and provincial government policies, regulations, and funding opportunities related to intellectual property (IP), innovation, commercialization, entrepreneurship, thought leadership and social impact.
- Infuse government policy compliance into commercialization initiatives across campus in harmony with existing university policies

*\*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**

- Degree from post-secondary institution from sciences or engineering, masters or PhD preferred; a degree in business or commerce is an asset

#### **Experience**

- 5+ years in senior manager or leadership role in technology incubation environment or innovation centre
- 5+ years managing intellectual property or sound working knowledge of various IP protection pathways (eg. patents, copyright, trademarks) in support of innovators
- 5+ years reporting to senior leaders (e.g. ED, AVP, VP, board)
- 5+ years' experience establishing and managing KPI driven partnerships/relationships where outcomes achieved through intensive and formal collaboration, investment, or partnerships
- Ideally, demonstrated experience liaising with government officials/agencies
- Ideally, experience around data access, governance, and analysis
- Development of networks, ecosystems, and partners to syndicate support around new initiatives
- Fundraising from granting agencies

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

- Proven ability to convene innovators, researchers, administrators around innovation initiatives to create programs and strategic options through collaborative work
- Working knowledge of intellectual property management including patents, trademarks, copyrights
- Pathways and strategies to start and build startup that is commercializing new technology
- Demonstrated know-how to build productive connections with government, grant agencies in collaboration with faculties or academic support units within universities
- Presence and agency to develop and sustain collaborative relationships, both to find pathways to help startups get to their first round of fundraising, and develop external relationships
- Proven ability to develop networks by building rapport and trust
- Customer service orientation with an empathetic posture

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- Ultimately, the director is self-motivated, passionate about learning, and possesses energy and enthusiasm to build an ecosystem of resources for commercialization and entrepreneurship activities in the Waterloo ecosystem.

### Nature and Scope

- **Contacts:** [*external*] federal and provincial government IP and innovation agencies, managers of incubators and innovation centres in Canada and globally, support organizations for early-stage company development, key opinion leaders at research institutions, [*internal*] campus innovation groups, units that support operations (e.g. plant ops, office of research ethics, etc., innovation leads within faculties)
- **Level of Responsibility:** Influence, leadership, and presence of executive focused internally within a growing innovation centre and externally to manage complex relationships to achieve organizational goals.
- **Decision-Making Authority:** Strategic direction setting, hiring of staff, financial (e.g. capital purchases, travel approvals)
- **Physical and Sensory Demands:** Ergonomic risks associated with work within office environment
- **Working Environment:** office-based, exposure to complex relationships and situations, occasional travel (domestic and international), evening and weekend work and meetings as required