Job Description

Job Title:	Director, Strategy and Operations
Department:	Office of the Vice-President University Relations
Reports To:	Vice-President University Relations
Jobs Reporting:	Administrative Coordinator
Salary Grade:	USG 14
Effective Date:	January 2023

Primary Purpose

Reporting to the Vice-President University Relations (VPUR), the Director, Strategy and Operations (DSO) manages priorities for the VPUR by undertaking key process, communications, structure, core activities and improvement-focused projects that support the effective and impactful delivery of the VPUR's strategic goals. The DSO is a key liaison with the VPUR's Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and has regular engagement with senior leaders across portfolios, Directors of Strategic Initiatives in the President's Office as well as others in VP portfolios. The DSO interacts with other senior administrators to facilitate a seamless flow of information to ensure strong communication between and amongst offices. The DSO identifies and mitigates any issues arising, together with senior leaders assigned by the VPUR.

The DSO is responsible for overall business operations, administrative infrastructure and the advancement of strategic and operational initiatives within the Office of the VPUR. The DSO coordinates and communicates between the various units within the portfolio; monitors, manages, measures and tracks progress towards goals; coordinates governance structures including internal administrative bodies, Board of Governors, Senate and works with the AVPs to implement portfolio objectives. Supports the work of the VPUR's Senior Leadership Team (SLT) in the areas of: Communications, Community Relations & Events, Government Relations & Economic Development, Marketing & Brand Strategy by identifying opportunities to enhance systems/processes/programs that support the priorities of the VPUR portfolio. The DSO ensures effective communications and decision-making between and within the VPUR's Office and other executive offices, and constituencies and is accountable for the development of the VPUR's reporting on achievements, priorities, initiatives, and actions.

Key Accountabilities

Strategic Initiatives

- Leads research, planning and execution of strategic initiatives for:
  - Advancing key priorities of the VPUR
  - Enhancing the visibility of the work of the VPUR building greater awareness of productivity and impact
  - Enabling conditions that support the achievement of strategic initiatives
  - Identifies and cultivates relationships with key individuals in organizations and with other strategic partners who have objectives and interests that align with the VPUR
  - Strengthening the relationships between the VPUR and campus stakeholders
  - Facilitating discussions with key internal and external stakeholders in strategic initiatives
- Collaborates with members of the SLT to identify, research and implement initiatives for advancing key priorities of the Office of the VPUR
- Gathers intelligence and maintains environmental scans for major initiatives and developments, both on campus and externally that are relevant to the VPUR's mandate

- Leads the coordination of multi-year workplans and detailed current year operating plan, including measurement and evaluation of the workplan initiatives with a focus on the creation of a portfolio dashboard for impact and organizational effectiveness
- Maintain a strong knowledge base of current UW programs, procedures, policies, resources and services
- Develops strong relationships with senior leadership to effectively liaise, anticipate issues and opportunities and identify trends
- Supports the VPUR in key areas of the portfolio including Communications, Community Relations & Events, Government Relations & Economic Development, Marketing & Brand Strategy

Project Management

- Provides in-depth analysis through both written notes and formal briefings on a variety of topics for review by the VPUR, including recommendations on initiatives and emerging issues and opportunities
- Provides strategic support for initiatives relating to Board and Senate business under the VPUR's portfolio
- Conducts background research and develops timely reports for action
- Responsible for the planning, execution, monitoring, and reporting of project related activities
- Develops key communications, reports, presentations, and other project documents as required
- Ensures timelines are adhered to for initiatives, by identifying capacity, pacing, and resourcing issues needing the VPUR's attention, including red flags, and is accountable for timely completion of objectives and key results
- Identifies and manages risks associated with projects that might jeopardize the success of the methods and/or the outcomes
- Employs expert level Project Management approaches, also ensuring that equity and anti-racism lenses are integrated into the effective management of projects, including monitoring of information, logistics and progress, and reporting on project deliverables

Relationship Management

- Develops and fosters effective liaison with key stakeholders to successfully achieve the VPUR's initiatives
- Develops positive relationships within and among VPUR portfolios and staff and identifies opportunities for internal collaboration
- Develops and maintains a strong cross-campus network of senior administration providing visibility to institutional and portfolio initiatives and leveraging the support of campus communications channels
- Ensures effective communications and decision-making between executive portfolios
- Works on behalf of the VPUR's office to develop or follow up on governance matters for the Board/Senate/Committees and internal administrative committees and councils
- Oversees both the timetable and preparation of key documents required for Board/Senate and internal committee meetings for the VPUR
- Member of the Directors group charged with collaboration and coordination on behalf of vice-presidential portfolios

Communications and Coordination

- Works with various SLT members to manage issues of a broad nature proactively and reactively as required
- Supports the VPUR by developing and writing key communications, including briefing notes for PVP, Deans Council and other bodies

- Maintains current awareness and knowledge of University's administrative priorities, including decisions made at governance bodies or internal administrative committees and follow-up actions required because of these decisions
- Communicates on the VPUR's behalf with various members of the PVP, Deans, VPUR-SLTs as required
- 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 VPUR and other appropriate university officers

Administrative Leadership

- Responsible for the administrative operations of the unit, the DSO monitors and identifies opportunities for improvement in business processes to support the management of financial, operational, and legal risk to the unit
- Creates and presents reports regarding the Office of VPUR challenges and successes and develop recommendations for administrative strategies to enable the unit to achieve its goals
- Oversees high-level communications or briefing materials for dissemination to target audiences in collaboration with other units in the University, as appropriate, to advance the profile and reputation of the portfolio
- Provides leadership, writing and advice on responses to inquiries from internal and external stakeholders to administrative staff
- Reviews key communications with respect to correspondence to be published over the VPUR's signature
- Facilitates the recruitment processes and performance reviews for SLT members and supports SLT members with their hiring plans in conjunction with Human Resources
- Manages administrative staff within the Office of the VPUR
- Monitors budget development and financial reporting in VPUR units

**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, Administration) or equivalent combination of training and experience

Experience

- Minimum ten (10) years of progressively responsible experience in strategic planning, strategic management, project management and administration
- Minimum of 3-5 years' experience in project management and proven ability to align work priorities and realize strategic goals
- 7 years' experience managing staff and leading diverse teams to implement new operational and administrative procedures
- Demonstrated experience in supporting executive level planning, communications and management
- Proven experience of working in an organization with a high-profile reputation
- Ability to handle complex multiple assignments at the same time and with competing demands and deadlines while maintaining a calm demeanour is essential

- Advanced oral and written communications skills including the ability to write and edit quickly, accurately, and creatively.
- Advance influencing, negotiating, mediation, communication, and relationship management skills including an ability to influence, negotiate and build productive working relationships with key stakeholders, senior UW management and partners are essential to achieve the required outcomes
- Highly developed people management and leadership skills with the demonstrated ability to develop a professional, service and continuous improvement focused workplace culture
- Ability to form relationships with stakeholders across all levels to serve the mission of the University
- 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 environment and reputation of the University
- Significant experience in writing, proofing, and editing material and of presenting proposals and plans to senior/board 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
- Experience planning for and managing interrelated, complex projects and coordinating and collaborating with cross-functional team members to deliver quality results within the project deadlines

Knowledge/Skills/Abilities

- Demonstrated ability to:
    - Manage multiple concurrent projects with different stakeholders
    - Lead meetings effectively with internal and external stakeholders
    - Take a proactive approach in service delivery
- Exceptional communication (oral and written), relationship building, customer service, negotiation, consultation, presentation, analytical, leadership and organizational skills
- 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
- Demonstrated understanding of human rights and equity issues; and ability to interpret and communicate human rights and equity concepts
- Experience in collating and analyzing qualitative and quantitative data and information 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 disretion
- Strong research, writing, communication, presentation and interpersonal skills
- High degree of political acuity and judgment, ability to deal with senior University administrators in a manner which facilitates cooperation and consensus building
- Ability to work independently with a high degree of initiative, discretion, and tact
- Ability to work under pressure; superior organizational skills in planning, project management and task coordination; flexibility and problem solver orientation, comfort and effectiveness with information technologies (e.g., advanced skills in Microsoft Office)
- 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 work in a hectic and results-oriented environment with a strong focus on results
- Integrity, creativity, sense of humour, perserverance, and the demonstrated ability to provide a consistent level of service

Nature and Scope

- **Contacts:** Internally works closely with the VPUR, staff within the Office of the Vice-President University Relations and within the portfolios reporting to the VPUR, and other senior leaders. Engages Human Resources, Finance, IAP, VP Offices and others as needed
- **Level of Responsibility:** This position is responsible for ensuring the implementation and management of projects and strategic initiatives within the Office of the Vice-President University Relations.
- **Decision-Making Authority:** The Director, Strategy and Operations is expected to be self-directed, independently sourcing and analyzing internal and external information and data to support the mandate of the Office of the Vice-President University Relations. Must be capable of making decisions independently and knowing when to escalate matters to the VPUR or one of the VPUR Senior Leadership Team, and of contributing positively and creatively to discussions around strategic decision to be made by the VPUR. Decisions with respect to allocation of VPUR's time as well as determining what issues require the VPUR's time and what issues can be resolved by others. Makes decisions regarding the external and internal messaging and communications being delivered from the VPUR office.
- **Physical and Sensory Demands**: Minimal, typical for an administrative position in an office environment. Strain from focused visual concentration or focused listening for periods of time. Working at a keyboard on a daily basis for several hours
- **Working Environment:** Office based/hybrid, regular working hours with some evening/weekend work as required in emergency situations or in peak periods**.** Minimal exposure to disagreeable conditions typical of a position exposed to stress and pressure associated with conditions typical of a C-level office