

Job Description



Job Title:	Associate Director, Strategic Initiatives
Department:	Office of Vice-President, Academic and Provost
Reports To:	Director, Strategic Initiatives (Office of the Vice-President, Academic and Provost)
Jobs Reporting:	None
Salary Grade:	USG 12
Effective Date:	April 2024

Primary Purpose

Accountable to the Director, Strategic Initiatives, this position is responsible for strategic initiatives within the purview of the Provost. The Associate Director is positioned to lead large scale initiatives related to the Provost's work, ranging from ongoing activity, such as at Deans' Council to University-wide transformational projects that include multi-stakeholder management. the development and oversight of activity that is adapted or created in response to campus needs and/or emerging opportunities. In addition to working with members of the strategic initiatives team, the Associate Director regularly collaborates with Deans and ASU leadership to create mutual benefits and ensure alignment with operational and strategic priorities. The Associate Director translates new ideas, proposals, and opportunities into mature initiatives that receives support from across the portfolio, often leveraging expertise and collaboration across the University.

Key Accountabilities

Strategic and operational initiatives, and execution

- Leads and manages initiatives through scaled initiation, planning, and execution
- Establishes clear, concise agreed upon initiative objectives/goals/vision, benefits, scope and success criteria
- Ensures alignment of outcomes and requirements with University and Unit strategies
- Demonstrates accountability for activity visibility and management
- Establishes realistic plans that proactively manage risks, issues, tasks, schedules, communications, and delivery of solution(s)
- Manages constraints (schedule, scope, resources), dependencies, and priorities for projects and activities
- Demonstrates strong analysis, problem solving, and conflict resolution skills towards diverse issues
- Makes recommendations to the Director, Strategic Initiatives to adjust or intervene in initiatives and projects that are at risk or less successful than anticipated and to escalate issues that could have an impact on the quality of outcomes for strategic and operational priorities

Engagement, organization, and relationship management

- Contributes to the production of content related to strategic and operational initiatives, including written communication, and presentations, in addition to working with Internal and Leadership Communications to support new and ongoing activity
- Supports the positive reputation of the Office of the VPAP by representing the strategic initiatives team in various settings, as assigned
- Offers strong, effective communication skills to enable facilitation, negotiation, information flow, buy in, and engagement on activity aligned to the Provost's priorities
- Builds stakeholder relationships based on trust and integrity
- Analyzes existing initiatives or projects and initiates opportunities for improvement to enable success

Collaboration and relationship management

- Consults and builds persuasive consensus to provide recommended solutions towards complex problems
- Participates in working groups or project-specific teams and supports plans for major institutional initiatives, including but not limited to, activity delegated to offices of Associate Vice-Presidents reporting to the Provost
- Works with a diverse set of stakeholders across all levels of the institution to advance strategic and operational priorities of the Office of the VPAP
- Develops and manages relationships with broad audiences, including working in collaboration with external consultants
- Liaises with internal stakeholder groups to address feedback and propose solutions to common concerns with tact, diplomacy, and a positive attitude
- Fosters a culture of positive, supportive communication, and person-centric solutions

Leadership for program operations and special projects

- Creates data-informed recommendations and reporting for existing initiatives
- Creates and implements long-term operational frameworks to support success, and ensure compliance with new and existing internal and external policies, procedures and processes
- Makes critical decisions and escalates concerns based on evidence provided across the VPAP portfolio
- As a member of the strategic initiatives team:
 - Participates in the development of operational and strategic initiatives and vision building
 - Establishes processes and procedures for project activity

Required Qualifications

Education

- Master's degree, or equivalent post-secondary education and/or related experience required
- Preference will be given to candidates with Project Management Professional (PMP) certification or working towards completion of PMP certification.

Experience

- 5+ years working on special projects with a proven ability to align multiple competing priorities and work from implementation to completion to realize strategic and operational goals
 - Minimum of 2 years' experience in supporting senior leadership in complex initiatives in a multi stakeholder environment
 - Experience leading across portfolios of a complex organization, including providing guidance and direction to various stakeholders across all levels
- Experience developing and implementing initiatives at an institution-wide level, and in establishing measures for success

Knowledge/Skills/Abilities

- Expert verbal and written communication skills with an emphasis on presentations, report writing and editing
 - Highly developed interpersonal skills, including building strong relationships, working collaboratively, and contributing to change management
 - Demonstrated decision-making abilities and able to operate independently
 - A high degree of political acumen and interpersonal skills; able to inhabit a variety of perspectives, achieve compromise, and communicate decisions with empathy and tact
 - Able to navigate a complex matrix organization within the unit with agility and resourcefulness
 - Familiar with university policies, procedures and processes
 - Demonstrated commitment to the core values of respect, equity, diversity, inclusion, and anti-racism
- Intermediate Microsoft Office skills (Word, Excel, PowerPoint)

**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.*

Nature and Scope

- **Contacts:** Internally works directly with the Director, Strategic Initiatives, and may work closely with staff within the Office of the Vice-President Academic and Provost and within the portfolios reporting to the Vice-President Academic and Provost, and other senior leaders. Engages Human Resources, Faculties, EDI-R Office, Indigenous Relations Office, IAP, Secretariat, President's Office, and others as needed.
- **Level of Responsibility:** Incumbent is responsible for achieving success for their assigned projects and initiatives by: Building effective, collaborative relationships with the stakeholders and project team members, managing a project/initiative throughout its life cycle, using appropriate project management methodologies, processes and tools, and adapting to evolving needs while still ensuring the project/initiative is managed appropriately based on size and complexity.
- **Decision-Making Authority:** Accountable and responsible for decisions related to deliverables for assigned projects, coordinating, and facilitating project decisions throughout the project life cycle to achieve successful project/initiative deliverable(s). Accountable and responsible for the escalation of any issues, risks, or concerns regarding assigned projects/initiatives that are beyond the authority of the Manger, Strategic Initiatives. Accountable for presenting recommendations to be considered for escalated decision-making. The Associate Director, Strategic Initiatives 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, Academic and Provost.
- **Physical and Sensory Demands:** Minimal demands typical of a position operating within an office environment; extensive periods of sitting and concentrated use of visual sense.
- **Working Environment:** Minimal exposure to disagreeable conditions typical of a senior position exposed to stress and pressure associated with a dynamic environment of changing priorities, tight deadlines and competing priorities impacting multiple stakeholders. This position will be in contact with a wide variety of people at all levels of responsibility and must maintain excellent relationships. This requires excellent personal and communication skills.