Job Description

| | |
|---|---|
| **Job Title:** | Director, Research and International Agreements |
| **Department:** | Partnerships, Entrepreneurship and Commercialization |
| **Reports To**: | Associate Vice-President, Partnerships, Entrepreneurship and Commercialization |
| **Jobs Reporting:** | Senior Managers, Research and International Agreements; Grants and Contract Managers; Legal Counsel; Assistant Director, Research Programs; Manager, International Agreements |
| **Salary Grade:** | USG 16 |
| **Effective Date:** | October 2025 |

## Primary Purpose

The Director, Research and International Agreements provides leadership to the Agreements Team in the Partnerships, Entrepreneurship and Commercialization Unit that is part of the Vice-President, Research and International (VPRI) portfolio. The incumbent will serve as a central resource point to the University in areas related to agreements and contracts to ensure that the University's reputation as a leader in research and international partnerships is maintained and enhanced in a competitive and dynamic environment, thus intensifying research activities and promoting real-world knowledge mobilization of research results.

In consultation with institutional stakeholders at the University, the incumbent will lead a wide spectrum of agreement administration operations, including the preparation, review, and negotiation of terms and conditions for agreements within the VPRI portfolio, the execution of agreements, the provision of consultation advice on contractual matters pertaining to the VPRI portfolio to members of the University, the reporting of research agreements, and resolution of arising issues or conflicts with research funders/partners. The incumbent will be responsible for leading the administration of a wide range of contracts, such as sponsored research agreements, master agreements, collaboration agreements, service agreements, material/data transfer agreements, non-disclosure agreements, and inter-institutional agreements with both Canadian and international partners from the industry, government, non-profit organizations, and academic institutions. The incumbent will also be accountable for the management of risk related to research, including financial, contractual, environmental, and intellectual property, as well as compliance with statutes and regulations.

## Key Accountabilities

**Leadership & Strategic Direction**

- Provides contractual expertise and leadership to advance collaborations with industry, government, non-profit, academic, and international partners.
- Develops and maintains meaningful interactions with other support groups, both within the Office of Vice-President, Research and International, and across the University.
- Contributes to the development, negotiation, and execution of agreements for strategic projects that advance the objectives of the VPRI portfolio and the University.
- Counsels and resolves as required on issues, conflicts, and disputes pertaining to intellectual property and agreement terms for sponsored research.

- Represents the University on internal and external committees, boards, and advisory groups as appropriate.
- Champions projects and initiatives to improve contract management and services related to the support of research projects and research programs.
- Fosters strong, trust-based relationships with external partners by ensuring timely communication, transparency, and a seamless experience throughout the agreement lifecycle.

**Operational Management and Service Excellence**

- Oversees the efficient execution of all stages of the funding cycle for partnerships within the VPRI portfolio, from agreement preparation, matching grant submissions, to administration of funding.
- Manages contractual matters arising from partnerships within the VPRI portfolio in collaboration with the Partnerships Team.
- Supervises contractual operations and matters that may arise in research grants in collaboration with the Grants and Proposal Development Team.
- Addresses funding administration matters arising from agreements within the VPRI portfolio in collaboration with the Research Finance Team.
- Leads the negotiation of agreements with external partners, including ones that are of strategic importance to the VPRI portfolio and to the University, as required.
- Ensures that all agreements and contracts to be signed are compliant with the University's policies and procedures.
- Develops and implements appropriate operational practices and protocols to effectively manage and administer agreements and contracts within the VPRI portfolio.
- Oversees record-keeping operations related to agreements within the VPRI portfolio in collaboration with the Data Analytics Team.

**Risk Management and Compliance**

- Identifies and mitigates security risks in agreements and contracts within the VPRI portfolio.
- Negotiates contract terms and intellectual property rights in alignment with institutional policies and national and international compliance requirements.
- Ensures adherence to controlled goods regulations and manages industrial security obligations for government-sponsored research contracts.
- Develops and maintains security and compliance documentation, including industrial security plans as required for government contracts and attestation forms for risk declarations.
- Serves as the Company Security Officer for the University, as required, with respect to participation in government-sponsored research contracts under the Industrial Security Program.

**Team Leadership and Development**

- Provides leadership, direction, and mentorship to the Agreements Team, fostering a collaborative and high-performance culture.
- Assigns work, sets priorities, and ensures optimal workflow across the team's operations.
- Coaches and develops staff through feedback, training, and professional development opportunities.
- Designs and delivers onboarding and capacity-building programs for team members to strengthen expertise in agreement management.
- Develops, revises, and periodically reviews standard operating procedures to ensure efficient administration of agreements and contracts within the VPRI portfolio.

## Required Qualifications

**Education**

- Advanced Degree(s): research-based post-graduate degree with additional legal and/or business degrees are preferred.

**Experience**

- 10 years of experience in business or research administration, including a minimum of 5 years at an academic institution and with progressive leadership responsibilities.
- Extensive experience in drafting agreements and contracts related to research partnerships, international partnerships, intellectual property management, commercialization, and knowledge mobilization.
- Broad experience in working with senior leaders, academics, researchers, students, and staff in a university environment.

**Knowledge/Skills/Abilities**

- Demonstrated knowledge of University policies and procedures related to research and international agreements.
- Effective communication skills (both written and oral), including the ability to: draft and edit legal documents; prepare and deliver presentations to large, diverse audiences.
- Exceptional negotiating skills, situational awareness, and ability to compromise with competing priorities.
- Outstanding critical thinking and decision-making skills.
- Outstanding interpersonal skills, including the ability to manage both internal and external relationships. Must be comfortable working with students, faculty members, academic leaders, and senior executives from small, medium and large multinational corporations, government officials, and international partners.
- Strong analytical skills, including the ability to identify and articulate contractual trends affecting the priorities of research sponsors and how they will impact the research funding process and the execution of funded research projects.
- Extraordinary team management ability, including motivation, leadership, mentorship, conflict management, and intervention.
- Demonstrated ability to understand and manage intellectual property issues, legal issues, risk and academic requirements in research and international agreements.
- Ability to balance competing demands and manage priorities.
- Understanding of the research process, and an ability to understand complex research projects to a level required to identify potential issues that may arise.
- Multidisciplinary technical knowledge and ability to recognize and develop research opportunities with potential industry partners and Principal Investigators.
- Advanced IT skills and technical proficiency with MS Word, MS Excel, MS PowerPoint, MS Outlook, Adobe Acrobat, and electronic signature platforms.

**Nature and Scope**

- **Contacts:** Internally, communicates regularly with senior leadership and colleagues within the Office of Vice-President Research and International, Faculties, Departments, and other academic support units to handle research contract matters. Externally, communicates frequently with research partners, including both Canadian and international entities, to negotiate contract terms and to execute research and international agreements.
- **Level of Responsibility:** Responsible and accountable for operational leadership, staff management, coaching, and direction setting of the Agreements Team. Incumbent must be nimble, and creative with the ability to anticipate trends and lead change management initiatives.

- **Decision-Making Authority:** Holds signing authority of research agreements and contracts as defined in UW's Signing Policy and Registry and will be responsible for all operations, risk management, and strategic initiatives of the Agreements Team within the Partnerships, Entrepreneurship and Commercialization Unit.
- **Physical and Sensory Demands**: Requires managing ongoing deadline pressure with rapidly evolving priorities that may compete with each other. The incumbent is required to be prepared for an unpredictable workload, continuous interruptions by others on an ongoing basis, and exposure to emotionally charged situations.
- **Working Environment:** Operates in in-person, professional office environment. It may include exposure to disagreeable conditions and stressful situations consistent with senior level responsibilities in a complex academic environment. Position may include long hours and occasional travel may be required.

**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.*