

## New

Ministry

Advanced Education

### Describe: Basic Job Details

#### Position

Position ID

Position Name (30 characters)

Senior Policy Advisor

Requested Class

Job Focus

Policy

Supervisory Level

00 - No Supervision

Agency (ministry) code

Cost Centre

Program Code: (enter if required)

#### Employee

Employee Name (or Vacant)

#### Organizational Structure

Division, Branch/Unit

AE/STP/IRI/PSRIS

Current organizational chart attached?

Supervisor's Position ID

Supervisor's Position Name (30 characters)

Director, PSRIS

Supervisor's Current Class

Senior Manager (Zone 2)

### Design: Identify Job Duties and Value

#### Job Purpose and Organizational Context

Why the job exists:

Reporting to the Director, the Senior Policy Advisor provides support to the PSRIS unit which is responsible for the Ministry's leadership and development of strategies, policies and tools that strengthen the role of post-secondary institutions in Alberta's research and innovation ecosystem to advance Alberta's economic growth, competitiveness and diversification. The Senior Policy advisor supports development of research and innovation policies and strategies in collaboration with other Ministries including Technology and Innovation (TI).

The unit is responsible for close linkages with the Ministry of TI (and other relevant Ministries) on strategy development for the province's research and innovation ecosystem as it relates to the role of the post-secondary system. A key accountability for the unit is to ensure critical issues and strategically important opportunities are identified for implementation where necessary in the area of research and innovation. The unit ensures that AE has highly effective and collaborative working relationships within the Ministry, across government and with external stakeholders, including industry and post-secondary institutions, to achieve the Minister's mandate and Ministry business plan, including the implementation of Goal 3 (Support Innovation and Commercialization) of Alberta 2030 and other related Government of Alberta priorities (e.g., Alberta Technology and Innovation Strategy).

Reporting to the Director, the Senior Policy Advisor is responsible for contributing and providing some leadership in the development of policies and strategies related to the research and innovation ecosystem, issue identification, research and analysis, engagement with other Ministries, divisions and stakeholders

for policy purposes, options development, decision making, implementation plans and evaluation of policies and strategies. The Senior Policy Advisor will lead and contribute to other adult learning and economic policy teams; represents the Ministry on various cross-ministry teams related to economic policy and research and innovation; identify rising issues and potential solutions, work closely with industry and post-secondary leaders; provide and research and innovation policy perspective and ensure alignment with other adult learning policies and provide strategic advice to the Minister and senior leaders on post-secondary research and innovation issues. The position also supports the Ministry's business and strategic planning processes, participates in various related cross ministry teams and drafts a variety of materials for senior staff. Responsibilities include advising Ministry staff on research and innovation directions and supports the unit's work in advancing priority initiatives. It is necessary for the position to take into consideration complex programs, funding approaches, other jurisdictional directions, research, economic opportunities, political and stakeholder sensitivities and ensure alignment with government priorities and direction, established policies and legislation and environmental factors. The impact of the scope of this job is broad, impacting Alberta's post-secondary research and innovation ecosystem and the province's broader economic and political agenda.

This position functions within the parameters of applicable government and department legislation, regulations, policies, directives and procedures.

## Responsibilities

Job outcomes (4-6 core results), and for each outcome, 4-6 corresponding activities:

1. Support and develop strategic programs, frameworks, tools and policies that advance Alberta's post-secondary research and innovation priorities (relating to Alberta 2030 Goal 3 and other emerging priorities), in collaboration with partner Ministries, industry and post-secondary partners and other divisions.

Activities:

- Sets the direction for and supports the development of specific frameworks and strategies that help advance post-secondary research commercialization including building and maintaining connections with other Ministries and between industry and post-secondary institutions where appropriate.
- Leads the development of strategic policy tools for consideration in the growth and attraction of research talent in and to Alberta.
- Identifies potential opportunities in existing Ministry programs and frameworks which could be leveraged to advance research commercialization efforts of institutions and build research talent in key sectors.
- Works closely with the other unit staff to develop a one-government approach to research priority setting and funding, establishing parameters for various files e.g., research security.
- Undertakes research on longer-term trends and jurisdictional "leading practices" and innovations in tying post-secondary research to economic competitiveness to inform Alberta post-secondary performance.
- Ensures alignment of program and operational policies and frameworks with strategic policy frameworks and directions on research and innovation.
- Provides support and develops, where required, frameworks, models and other tools relevant to postsecondary research and innovation policy.
- Leads, prepares and develops background papers and potential policy and strategy options on post-secondary research and innovation for consideration by the Director, Executive Director, Assistant Deputy Minister (ADM), Deputy Minister (DM) and Minister.
- Contributes to strategic direction and capacity in the Ministry.

2. Develop a research and innovation policy agenda for the Ministry

Activities

- Conduct and coordinate policy research and analysis on emerging issues that will have significant implications for Alberta's post-secondary research and commercialization efforts, and which will impact the Ministry and research and innovation ecosystem in Alberta.
- Develop recommendations to address issues discovered through research and jurisdictional reviews/scans.
- Track emerging policies and strategies generated from various jurisdictions to impact economic competitiveness and post-secondary performance in innovation.

3. Support and provide advice on strategic direction for relationship building and working closely with industry, post-secondary representatives and other Government Ministries and entities (e.g., Alberta Innovates) for strengthening post-secondary research and innovation in Alberta.

#### Activities

- Identify key strategic partnerships and alliances to pursue for Alberta-made initiatives for increasing research commercialization and innovation.
- Maintain collaborative relationships with other divisions/Ministries to enhance strategic decision-making on post-secondary research and innovation.
- Work closely with industry, post-secondary institutions and other Ministries on an ongoing basis to develop strategic tools and policies that strengthen research commercialization and innovation in Alberta's post-secondary system (e.g., Research Commercialization Working Group, one government approach to research funding).

4. Provide leadership and support when required, to strategic, priority policy initiatives and projects that contribute to the advancement of post-secondary research and innovation in Alberta.

#### Activities

- Participate on, and sometimes lead, strategic policy committees, teams and working groups related to research and innovation and other related items.
- Support other units in delivering on key policy priorities.
- Consult with other department officials, other government departments, and external stakeholders on policy changes and impacts for post-secondary research/innovation.
- Provide the Minister, senior decision makers and officials within the department with timely, relevant and accurate information on research and innovation policy issues.
- Lead and support in the development of discussion papers, decision-making documents, issue briefings, and other policy documents, which includes framing post-secondary research and innovation policies within the context of department and government priorities.

5. Support the Director and Executive Director in achieving the mandate and goals of the International, Research and Innovation Branch and help with the supervision of policy analyst staff, when required.

#### Activities

- Provide input, perspective, and recommendations relating to issues, opportunities, challenges, and options associated with branch work.
- Develop briefings and other documents in response to requests from the Minister, Deputy Minister and Executive Team, as well as to bring issues identified within the branch to the attention of those senior decision-makers.
- Develop key messages, briefings and other materials on behalf of the branch to support the Minister during sittings of the Legislative Assembly.
- Participate in, and occasionally lead, departmental committees, cross-functional teams, and working groups, providing branch perspectives and expertise to ensure thoroughness and consistency in policy and program development.
- Collaborate with branch and department staff to ensure coordination and integration of activities, and promote collaboration within the branch and department and with system stakeholders.
- Establish and maintain relationships with department and cross-government representatives and stakeholders.
- Develop recommendations to support continual improvement of branch functions and maintain awareness of associated processes, tools, and best practices that can be tailored to meet branch requirements.
- Remain current and informed as to department issues, pro-actively recommending review and evaluation of policies and programs; and develop related options, strategies, and recommendations, in consultation with department representatives, by providing perspective and ensuring a coordinated approach that considers linkages across policies.
- Mentorship of policy analyst staff where needed.
- Serve as Acting Manager, when required.

### **Problem Solving**

#### Typical problems solved:

In the course of strategy development and analysis, the Senior Policy Advisor liaises with multiple stakeholders and partners both internal and external to the Ministry and across the research and innovation ecosystem to achieve the post-secondary research and innovation priorities of Government.

The Senior Policy Advisor is called upon to solve a number of problems in the process of supporting and leading

post-secondary research and innovation policy development for the department.

There are often few established precedents available to guide efforts, with this position continually providing support to the Director for the development and enhancement of the province's post-secondary research and innovation system. This includes providing the Director and senior department and government officials with advice and support relating to strategies, policies, governance issues and approaches that affect the system. To accomplish this, a wide variety of skills are required including strong strategic problem solving, consultation, collaboration and prioritization skills.

The position requires the ability to identify the fundamental questions related to post-secondary research and innovation policy initiatives and how they relate to similar questions in similar initiatives and to the broader strategic intent expressed by government. The position must have the ability to draw on and analyze information from a variety of sources and perspectives to help formulate positions on behalf of the department. This position is then required to assist the Director in conveying information and advice to a broad audience including executive level management from across the department and government.

Challenging situations typically handled by Senior Policy Advisor include:

- Working with industry, post-secondary representatives and colleagues from other departments, in the development of research and innovation policy;
- Managing development of research and analysis activities to support long-term decision making;
- Establishing solutions and/or recommended options to senior department representatives and officials for emerging issues and policies related to post-secondary research and innovation;
- Helping to ensure policy directions consider and integrate stakeholder input, department direction, political and fiscal realities, and operational feasibility, to arrive at options that reflect government direction; and
- Identifying opportunities for improved outcomes in the department.

Types of guidance available for problem solving:

The Senior Policy Advisor functions within the context of established statutes, policies, directives, and guidelines developed by Cabinet and Alberta Treasury Board and Finance, as well as the Minister and Deputy Minister. Key statutes and policies that set parameters and expectations for the work of the Senior Policy Advisor include the Financial Administration Act, Government Organization Act, Public Service Act, Protection of Privacy Act, Access to Information Act, and various departmental statutes and regulations.

These acts, policies and directives provide the mandate for the major outcomes expected of the Post-secondary Research and Innovation Strategy unit. The Executive Director and Director determine work unit goals, objectives, and priorities; the Director assigns all responsibilities and projects to the Senior Policy Advisor and is available for consultation and guidance.

Direct or indirect impacts of decisions:

Long-term strategic direction and key priorities for the Senior Policy Advisor's unit are determined by the Executive Team and other senior department and government officials, with relevant legislation, regulations, policies and frameworks providing the broad parameters within which to operate. As a member of the Post-secondary Research and Innovation Strategy unit, the Senior Policy Advisor is responsible for supporting the Director in achieving relevant outcomes and helping define strategic direction. The work carried out by this position is complex and affected significantly by political decisions and priorities established in government's strategic plans and the department business plan.

The post-secondary system is evolving and dynamic, with post-secondary research and innovation policies and strategic direction playing a strong and growing role in Alberta's economic well-being and growth. Departmental policies in this area directly impact a broad and diverse government agenda and has an impact on Alberta's learners and workers. Ministry programs are subject to strong societal and economic influences, with strategic decisions affecting economic recovery, the supply of a trained workforce and the role of research and innovation in economic growth and social impact.

The position requires the Senior Policy Advisor to be up to date, knowledgeable and conversant on evolving technologies, innovation and research advancements. The Senior Policy Advisor is relied upon to identify the impact of policies and proposals on the department and post-secondary system, as well as provide the Director, Executive Director, Assistant Deputy Minister, and senior department representatives with strategic information having the potential to directly affect government policy and the role of the post-secondary system in Alberta's competitiveness. The actions taken and recommendations made by this position have potential for considerable influence on critical decisions for policy and program directions. Ultimately, these decisions have potential for

significant impact on departmental representatives, stakeholders and partners in terms of policies and the allocation of resources and financial commitments.

## Key Relationships

Major stakeholders and purpose of interactions:

The Senior Policy Advisor requires excellent interpersonal skills to establish and maintain effective relationships with a wide variety of department and government representatives, and external stakeholders related to the research and innovation ecosystem and relevant policies, issues, and programs.

Issues dealt with are often sensitive and/or controversial, with the Senior Policy Advisor often called on to balance and reconcile differing and often competing interests while demonstrating responsiveness, flexibility, and adaptability. Cooperation, collaboration, and teamwork are emphasized when achieving results.

### Internal

The Senior Policy Advisor has regular contact with:

- Director, Senior Policy Advisor, Senior Policy Analysts, and Policy Analysts within the Post-secondary Research and Innovation Strategy unit, and throughout the International, Research and Innovation branch, to deliver on key branch priorities;
- Department representatives, including Managers, Directors, and Executive Directors, to provide analysis, recommendations and perspective to support the development and implementation of related research and innovation policies; provide consultation and advice on emerging issues; exchange information; and represent divisional interests and strategic perspectives;
- Representatives of other units, branches, divisions, and departments to provide and exchange information, collaborate on projects and initiatives
- The Assistant Deputy Minister, Executive Team, and other senior decision makers, to share information related to emerging issues.

### External

- Representatives of post-secondary institutions, including VPs of Research and their offices; stakeholders including industry and employers, higher education organizations and agencies such as Alberta Innovates, other provinces, etc., to build and maintain collaborative working relationships; facilitate effective policy development; discuss and consult on complex policy issues; present advice to the Ministry on research and innovation priorities and research security issues that impede competitiveness; identify opportunities for collaboration; encourage innovation and negotiate solutions.
- Colleagues in other Ministries, including Technology and Innovation, JETI, Energy and Minerals, Agriculture and Irrigation etc., to facilitate effective strategy development and coordination with broader research and innovation ecosystem policies, provide expert advice and consultation relating to policies, practices, and options that relate to overlapping concerns; develop strategic plans and approaches and relationships; provide information and respond to sensitive and complex issues.

## Required Education, Experience and Technical Competencies

Education Level	Focus/Major	2nd Major/Minor if applicable	Designation
Bachelor's Degree (4 year)			

If other, specify:

Experience working with industry and post-secondary representatives and government policy are assets.

Job-specific experience, technical competencies, certification and/or training:

The Senior Policy Advisor requires comprehensive knowledge of the following:

- the research and innovation ecosystem;
- the political environment in which the Ministry operates;
- linkages between policy, planning, decision-making, monitoring and policy evaluation;
- Government strategic priorities and policy directions as they relate to the department's mandate and initiatives;
- the adult learning system, including post-secondary roles and mandates and research roles;
- Alberta's economic, political and adult learning issues;
- project planning and management tools and techniques;
- research agenda planning, tools and techniques;
- client and stakeholder community impacted by the department's mandate and operations, including industry

groups, relevant committees, government research entities, advisory groups and senior representatives; and  
 - software tools to carry out job responsibilities.

The Senior Policy Advisor requires strong and demonstrated:

- Experience with large grant writing and management; proven ability to successfully design and develop large grant applications as well as manage and oversee large grants; strong financial and reporting skills.
- Systems thinking, analytical and research skills, and the ability to synthesize and interpret information from disparate sources;
- Conceptual, strategic, and critical thinking skills;
- The ability to recognize implications of emerging issues and creatively solve problems/develop options and recommendations for a response that is in support of business priorities and goals;
- Consultation/engagement and interpersonal skills and the ability to build collaborative environments;
- Organizational skills, including the ability to be agile, multi-task and prioritize multiple responsibilities to meet deadlines;
- Political sensitivity and professional judgment;
- Verbal and written communication skills; and
- Commitment to developing and maintaining strategic networks, client service, confidentiality, discretion, tact, and innovation.

The Senior Policy Advisor must be able to:

- Support and provide leadership when necessary on a wide array of tasks and projects related to policy development;
- Identify emerging trends, issues, and opportunities related to adult learning policies and programs;
- Identify and assess related implications of trends and policy changes, and provide perspective, advice, and recommendations pertaining to sensitive issues;
- Develop and maintain collaborative working relationships with internal and external stakeholders based on strong interpersonal and communication skills;
- Maintain a strategic department and government focus while delivering results at the operational level;
- Function independently as well as contribute effectively within a team environment; and
- Demonstrate initiative, professional judgment, and flexibility.

### Behavioral Competencies

Pick 4-5 representative behavioral competencies and their level.

Competency	Level					Level Definition	Examples of how this level best represents the job
	A	B	C	D	E		
Agility	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Identifies and manages required change and the associated risks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identifies alternative approaches and supports others to do the same</li> <li>• Proactively explains impact of changes</li> <li>• Anticipates and mitigates emotions of others</li> <li>• Anticipates obstacles and stays focused on goals</li> <li>• Makes decisions and takes action in uncertain situations and creates a backup plan</li> </ul>	
Creative Problem Solving	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Engages the community and resources at hand to	

		<p>address issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engages perspective to seek root causes</li> <li>• Finds ways to improve complex systems</li> <li>• Employs resources from other areas to solve problems</li> <li>• Engages others and encourages debate and idea generation to solve problems while addressing risks</li> </ul>	
Build Collaborative Environments	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input checked="" type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	<p>Collaborates across functional areas and proactively addresses conflict:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourages broad thinking on projects, and works to eliminate barriers to progress</li> <li>• Facilitates communication and collaboration</li> <li>• Anticipates and reduces conflict at the outset</li> <li>• Credits others and gets talent recognized</li> <li>• Promotes collaboration and commitment</li> </ul>	
Develop Networks	<input type="radio"/> <input checked="" type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	<p>Works on maintaining close relations with all stakeholders:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identifies key stakeholder relationships</li> <li>• Has contact with range of interested parties</li> <li>• Actively incorporates needs of a broader group</li> <li>• Influences others through communication techniques</li> </ul>	
Systems Thinking	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input checked="" type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	<p>Takes a long-term view towards organization's objectives and how to achieve them:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Takes holistic long-term view of challenges and opportunities</li> <li>• Anticipates outcomes and potential impacts, seeks stakeholder perspectives</li> <li>• Works towards actions and plans aligned with</li> </ul>	

		APS values • Works with others to identify areas for collaboration	
Develop Self and Others	<input type="radio"/> <input checked="" type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	Seeks out learning and knowledge-sharing opportunities: • Reflects on performance and identifies development opportunities • Takes initiative to stay current • Shares with the team even when not asked • Actively coaches and mentors direct reports	

**Benchmarks**

List 1-2 potential comparable Government of Alberta: [Benchmark](#)

**Assign**

The signatures below indicate that all parties have read and agree that the job description accurately reflects the work assigned and required in the organization.

	Date yyyy-mm-dd	
Supervisor / Manager Name		Supervisor / Manager Signature
	Date yyyy-mm-dd	
Director / Executive Director Name		Director / Executive Director Signature
	Date yyyy-mm-dd	
ADM Name		ADM Signature
	Date yyyy-mm-dd	
DM Name		DM Signature