Senior Grants and Contracts Specialist

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Professional and Managerial Group

Senior Grants and Contracts Specialist
Research Support Services, Office of Research
Temporary full-time from September 2019 to August 2021

Hiring #: 2019-0386

Please read the Application Instructions [1] before applying

Reporting to the Director, Research Support Services, the Senior Grants and Contracts Specialist serves as a subject matter expert to provide comprehensive, authoritative and independent administration of complex research grant proposals and research contracts; advise the senior management team on trends, potential opportunities, issues and challenges identified through the course of their work; and mentor and facilitate the work of Awards and Agreements Officers within the unit.

With respect to the grants and contracts portfolio, the Senior Grants and Contracts Specialist is responsible for a portfolio of funding programs as well as one-off awards and agreements. The position supports the Manager of Legal Review in drafting, assessing and advising Office of Research Services staff around the preparation and negotiation of a wide variety of legal agreements, including template contracts and legal documents. The position also supports the Manager, Legal Review in drafting, reviewing and negotiating complex research and service agreements (no dollar limit), such as collaborative, leveraged, or multi-party/consortia contracts, international awards and sub-awards. The Senior Grants and Contracts Specialist must ensure quality, completeness, compliance and on-time delivery of research grants and contracts. The incumbent is also responsible for identifying risks that could result in legal liabilities to the University and to researchers and for mitigating these risks through effective communications with appropriate stakeholders, negotiating and drafting preferable agreement terms and ensuring that all research activities are compliant with appropriate University, sponsor and government research policies.

The specialist provides support to Awards and Agreement Officers where complaints need to be resolved or where more complex or sensitive negotiations are required. The grants and contracts management portfolio also includes leading, designing, coordinating and delivering resources, tools and workshops aimed at assisting faculty with the management of their projects and contracts to prevent problems from occurring such that relationships with sponsors are maintained and for risk management purposes to protect the University from liability.

With the goal of providing excellent service to researchers, the Senior Grants and Contracts Specialist provides in-depth review, feedback and support on complex, standard and non-standard research funding proposals that is informed by broad awareness of government and sponsor funding priorities as well as adherence to relevant university and sponsor guidelines and policies. The specialist also creates resources and facilitates services to support research proposal development such as coordinating external scientific reviews; leading, designing, and/or delivering workshops; coordinating networking opportunities with external sponsors, university stakeholders and researchers to inform proposal development; and assists researchers in identifying funding opportunities and communicating with research sponsors.

Additional duties include supporting the Manager of Legal Review and Director, Research Support Services in defining parameters, mentoring and advising staff in the unit on key research administration activities, including their review of proposals; review and negotiation of standard and non-standard research agreements; and event organization and in drafting, reviewing and leading the implementation of business processes and policies, including to inform the university’s compliance with regulatory requirements. Other activities include research
administration, supporting the unit’s design and implementation of IT systems, chairing internal review committees for the adjudication of awards, and providing supervision of staff, as needed.

The Senior Grants and Contracts Manager must be able to manage a high volume of work, meet multiple deadlines, work in a fast-paced office and coordinate and collaborate effectively with a wide variety of stakeholders within the university as well as across partner institutions and sponsors globally.

Requirements of the position include: An undergraduate degree, involving a strong research component (a research-based Master’s degree with legal background preferred) and five (5) years of related experience that includes: leadership and supervisory experience; reviewing and facilitating research grant/proposal development and drafting, reviewing and negotiating complex legal agreements. Additional requirements include: negotiating skills; excellent interpersonal, conflict resolution and communication skills, combined with tact and discretion; ability to manage stressful and extremely busy conditions; knowledge of various kinds of intellectual property and processes for protection and ownership; and proficiency with MS Word and other Office software (Excel, Access).

Classification P05
Professional/Managerial Salary Bands [2]

At the University of Guelph, fostering a culture of inclusion [3] is an institutional imperative. The University invites and encourages applications from all qualified individuals, including from groups that are traditionally underrepresented in employment, who may contribute to further diversification of our Institution.

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