

Professional Job Position Description

Section I: Position information

Effective date	2024-06-01	<input type="checkbox"/> Update only	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Classification review
Position title	Graduate Funding and Strategy Lead		
Position number	998768		
Classification level	Professional B		
Position affiliation	<input type="checkbox"/> AUFA <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excluded		
Location	Virtual		
Department	Faculty of Graduate Studies		
Reports to	Associate Dean, Students and Awards, FGS (999310)		

Position summary

Reporting to the Associate Dean, Students and Awards, FGS the Graduate Funding and Strategy Lead (GFSL) provides administrative and operational leadership to the faculty in support of graduate scholarships and awards and strategic initiatives. The GFSL is responsible for all aspects of the management and administration of internal and external graduate scholarship competitions and processes in the FGS, serves as the Master Scholarship Liaison Officer for NSERC, SSHRC, and CIHR, and liaises with other organizations or agencies providing graduate scholarship support.

The GFSL also liaises with the AU Graduate Student Association (AUGSA), the Office of the Registrar, and the teaching Faculties and Research Services Office regarding other internal and external graduate award administration.

The GFSL will work with University Relations, the Research Services Office, faculties, and other AU units to promote awards and scholarship opportunities for graduate students.

A key responsibility of this position is to operationalize aspects of the FGS Strategic Plan related to graduate awards by:

- Increasing capacity of faculty to assist students with completing competitive awards applications
- Assisting students directly with awards applications
- Promoting internal/external awards to faculty and students
- Developing procedures, processes, guidelines, and mentorship to FGS awards committee(s)
- Representing AU to external funders, including attending Tri-Agency meetings on student awards
- Updating external awards links and processes

Duties and responsibilities

Organize by key responsibility area and include % of time spent where possible.

70% Administration, coordination, facilitation, and support for graduate awards and FGS

- Manages budget for graduate-level awards.
- Develops, updates, and enforces graduate awards policies and procedures related to graduate awards administration, coordinating with the Office of the Registrar when necessary.
- Identifies and addresses gaps in AU-wide graduate awards administration and recommends enhancements to existing processes and procedures that facilitate efficiency and effectiveness.
- Oversees the workflow, processes, and operational activities associated with specific graduate student award competitions across AU, both internal and external to the university.
- Ensures advertising of the awards occurs in a timely manner, which includes an understanding of social media marketing. Answers questions and provides advice to students and faculty members.
- Reviews guidelines and updates for graduate funding and ensures that all deadlines for applications and reporting are known and can be met.
- Leads and participates in the adjudication of some awards internal to AU.
- Liaises with AU faculties and works across AU business units to ensure appropriate and timely financial processing of awards.
- Oversees academic progress of funded students according to established parameters, ensuring that funding eligibility is not negatively affected.
- Develops webinars and other training opportunities to support graduate awards and enhance the quality of awards applications and processes at AU.
- **Liaise with external funders and stakeholders**
 - Oversees the development and approval of investment agreements (e.g. Alberta Innovates Graduate Student Scholarship).
 - Liaise with Tri-Agencies regarding arranging onsite regional information events.
 - Travel to or attend virtually annual Tri-Agency regional information meetings.
 - Liaise with external and government funding agencies regarding process and application requirements.
- **Liaise and coordinate with internal/AU stakeholders**
 - Maintain regular and ongoing communication with internal stakeholders (AUGSA, Office of the Registrar, and Research Services Office) to support advocacy efforts and to provide support for internal graduate awards administered by the OR as well as awards that are jointly administered (e.g., the Governor General's Gold Medal, etc.).
- **FGS Administrative duties**
 - Providing backup coverage to the Assistant to the Dean, which includes cross-training and providing coverage on HR-related tasks, budget-related tasks

(forecasting, variance reports, router for expense claims), governance, and general administration.

30% Strategic initiatives

- **Strategic planning and innovation**
 - Spearheading strategic initiatives that reflect the institution's mission and are tailored to meet the dynamic needs of graduate students. This involves engaging in comprehensive strategic planning sessions, identifying innovative solutions to enhance graduate student support, and continuously assessing the effectiveness of these initiatives in achieving desired outcomes.
- **Data-driven decision-making**
 - Utilizing data analytics to inform strategic decisions and identify trends and insights that can lead to the improvement of graduate services and outcomes. This includes measuring student satisfaction and identifying areas for growth and improvement.
- **Stakeholder engagement and communication**
 - Foster strong relationships with key stakeholders, including faculty, departments, administration, external partners, and students, to gather input and build consensus around strategic initiatives. Ensure transparent and effective communication channels are maintained to facilitate feedback and promote the visibility of strategic projects across the university community.

Occupational health and safety

Employees:

Responsible to participate in the AU OHS program as required.

Supervisors:

Responsible for awareness of one's OHS Responsibilities as an AU employee and supervisor, for participating in the AU OHS Program as required, and for ensuring the participation of employees in the AU OHS Program as required.

See: <https://ohs-pubstore.labour.alberta.ca/li008>

Classification factors

Communication

Communicate effectively and efficiently, in writing and verbally, with university students, staff, and external individuals.

Must display a high degree of diplomacy and tactfulness, respect for individuals, and maintain confidentiality.

A high degree of accuracy is required.

Ability to work under pressure and meet conflicting deadlines.

Set and communicate deadlines based on several factors, including student intake cycles, external funding cycles, stakeholder needs, etc.

Demonstrates understanding of FOIP policy.

Supervision

Supervises FGS Awards Administrator

Impact of service or product

The incumbent will have a substantial impact on the quality of service to students, faculty, and FGS Awards Committee(s). This impact is critical to the smooth functioning of several operations within FGS; poor decisions could result in serious implications for students, staff, and the institution.

Independence of action

The incumbent will work independently to determine the priority of the work required.

The incumbent has the authority to resolve conflicts independently, make decisions to improve operations within FGS' awards portfolio, and develop, plan, and execute strategic initiatives within the faculty.

The incumbent will have access to extremely confidential material and student information and must uphold the utmost degree of confidentiality.

Complexity

The incumbent will be expected to coordinate the service operations of the graduate student awards portfolio within FGS, ensuring alignment with institutional priorities.

The incumbent must be adept at interpreting and applying a wide range of policies and procedures from different funding bodies while ensuring compliance with university guidelines and strategic objectives. This includes developing and implementing innovative approaches to promote scholarship opportunities, enhance application processes, and improve overall administrative efficiency.

The role requires exceptional analytical skills to evaluate the effectiveness of scholarship programs and identify opportunities for improvement. The incumbent must engage in detailed research, policy analysis, and continuous learning to stay abreast of evolving trends in graduate funding and education, translating complex information into actionable strategies.

The incumbent must possess strong relationship-building skills and the ability to work collaboratively with a diverse array of internal and external partners. This includes fostering relationships with faculty, students, funding agencies, and other university departments to enhance the support framework for graduate scholarships. The incumbent serves as a critical liaison, bridging gaps between stakeholders and ensuring cohesive efforts toward achieving the strategic goals of the Faculty of Graduate Studies.

The incumbent requires a wide range of complex skills, including decision-making, analytical skills, relationship-building, discretion, conflict resolution, time management, research, and organizational skills.

Planning

Prioritize work in a dynamic and constantly changing environment.

Ability to effectively and independently research, analyze, prepare, and develop reports, presentations, and correspondence.

Develop a plan for awards coordination across all university departments and personnel.

The incumbent will be expected to adapt the long-range plans for FGS and Athabasca University to develop operational plans.

The incumbent will be expected to initiate proposals for improving services, developing or modifying procedures, and suggesting implementation of new procedures.

Signatures for section I

Incumbent signature		Date Select a date.
Supervisor signature		Date Select a date.

Section II: Qualifications

Qualifications

A graduate degree and five years of progressively responsible experience in a post-secondary environment is preferred. Other combinations of education and experience may be considered.

Excellent written and verbal communication, interpersonal, time management, organizational skills, and the ability to manage multiple priorities at once are essential.

Strong computer skills—The candidate should be proficient in the Office 365 environment, including Word, Excel, and MS Teams. The candidate should also have a working knowledge of or be willing to learn the Banner, COGNOS, and Degree Works systems.

Understanding of post-secondary-level policies and procedures, especially those that pertain to the administration of graduate programs, is essential. A working knowledge of graduate awards and budget-related work would also be an asset.

Demonstrated ability to perform detailed work accurately and timely, with minimal supervision.

Experience in a fast-paced and continually changing environment, as well as outstanding student customer service skills, are essential.

Signatures for sections I and II

Department Head signature		Date
Executive Officer signature		Date
Human Resources review		Date Select a date.