



**Athabasca
University**



**Vice President Finance & Operations and
Chief Financial Officer**

athabascau.ca

About Athabasca University

As Canada's leading open university, Athabasca University's (AU) approach to accessible yet transformative education and research is truly distinctive. Its academic mission is to remove barriers to post-secondary education for learners, regardless of their age, location, career, or educational background.

Based in the beautiful region of Athabasca, AU is one of four Comprehensive Academic and Research Universities (CARUs) in the province. AU is a public, board-governed, open, and online university serving more than 35,000 students across Alberta, Canada, and around the world.

With Faculties spanning health, science, humanities and social sciences, and business – AU provides more than 70 undergraduate and graduate programs in ways that are uniquely accessible and responsive to today's demands of life and work.

AU seeks to be an agile and inclusive workplace in which all team members can grow, make their highest contribution, and each make a difference to our academic vision and mission.

Led by President Dr. Alex Clark, AU is embarking on its exciting next chapter with the launch of its new strategic plan – [Like No Other](#). Drawing from five decades of growth in distance and online education, we aim to reinforce our position as Canada's foremost innovator in open and accessible learning. With the recent formation of an inclusive Senior Leadership Team dedicated to empowering every team member to contribute and thrive, AU stands poised for an exciting and ambitious next stage of development.

Almost 70% of undergraduate program students are the first in their families to get a degree.



About the Town of Athabasca

AU is committed to being a university that is uniquely local to global in its operations, activity and impacts. With a rejuvenated campus continuing to grow in Athabasca and offering choice to work fully on campus as part of a hybrid university, AU is developing its home and impacts in the town of Athabasca: the health, education, shopping, cultural and service centre for the region.

For those seeking a quality of life beyond the constraints of traditional urban settings, residing in Athabasca provides rich and ready access to first class amenities for individuals and families alike. This extends to an array of rich trails and lakes, first class fishing, golf, music and theatre- Athabasca is a community that offers the best of community life and nature.

Historically, Athabasca has been known as the "Gateway to the North," a jumping-off point for those travelling along the Athabasca River north to Peace River and to Fort Chipewyan. Today, the town is the modern gateway to the new North Country, its economic prospects, natural resource industries, tourism opportunities, and natural beauty. While the Town of Athabasca is steeped in history and tradition, it is very much focused on the future.

Athabasca First

Wherever possible, AU seeks to attract and hire qualified team members to reside in the region. We will offer relocation assistance for the right candidate should you decide to relocate to the Town of Athabasca. As a resident of the town or county of Athabasca, you can choose to work on and from our beautiful campus in Athabasca.

To discover the town and region of Athabasca, go to [Visit Athabasca](#).





The role

Reporting to the President, the Vice-President Finance & Operations and Chief Financial Officer (VPFO/CFO) is a key member of Athabasca University's (AU) senior leadership team. Integrated with the President's strategic direction and the University's strategic plan, the VPFO/CFO supports AU's academic, teaching and research mission and strategic direction through planning, directing, and overseeing the administrative and business functions of the university.

Working under the direction of the President, the VPFO/CFO is responsible for a diverse and varied portfolio. The VPFO/CFO:

- Has overall accountability for the university's budget, forecasting and financial reporting.
- Works collaboratively with the Provost and Vice President Academic (Provost) to foster and support integration, innovation, and quality in financial planning, budgeting, capital projects, facilities operations, internal audit, emergency management/ business continuity planning, enterprise risk management, procurement, contract services, and financial services in support of the academic mission.
- Is responsible for the overall quality of services, meeting legal and reporting requirements within portfolio areas, deploying resources, and planning improvements that enhance the University's ability to carry out its academic mission and strategic plan.
- Endeavours to integrate and advance the University's commitments to its strategic plan.
- In collaboration with other vice presidents and executive officers, ensures that VPFO/CFO portfolios and operations are integrated and aligned with all university strategic planning and processes, SLT priorities and the work of other VP portfolios.
- Maintains a professional reputation which preserves and promotes the values and standing of the University and represents effectively AU's unique mission and the many achievements of the University, both internally and externally.
- As directed by the President, participates actively at the Board of Governors and other university governance committees relating to areas of responsibility; and carries out other responsibilities as set out in policies and procedures approved by the General Faculties Council and/or the Board of Governors.
- Is a member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and is an Executive Officer at AU.



Educational qualifications and experience

Includes education, experience, skills, abilities, and any other special qualifications required. The qualifications relate to the position, not the incumbent.

Education and Experience

- A Master's degree in Finance, Accounting, Business Administration, or related field is required. An equivalent combination of education and experience may be considered.
- A CPA or equivalent professional designation.
- Fifteen or more years of progressively advancing professional and management experience.
- A minimum of seven years at the management level, of which at least five years are in a senior management position.
- Strong knowledge of financial planning, budgeting, public sector accounting principles and regulatory compliance.
- Demonstrated ability to lead financial transformation, revenue generation, cost management and process improvement initiatives.
- Experience in post-secondary or public sector management.
- Experience in a unionized environment.

Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities

- Ability to demonstrate strong work ethic.
- Strong self-starter and superior team player.
- Integrity and self-awareness.
- Excellent problem-solving skills to handle a wide variety of both routine and unusual requests.
- Ability to meet strict deadlines.

- Committed to upholding confidentiality and sensitivity to controversial issues.
- Understands and responds effectively to the needs of both internal and external customers.
- Ability to resolve conflict and problems, while creating a positive work environment and advancing the interests of the University.
- Ability to develop the rapport necessary to maintain and strengthen partnerships inside and outside the institution.
- Ability to foster collegial and cooperative attitudes towards attaining the strategic goals of the University.

Additional Skills and Abilities:

Visionary: Provides a strategic vision based on environmental and industry trends, and organizational mission, values, and resources, to guide employees to effectively contribute to the overall university's goals and objectives.

Professionalism: Is an integral part of several teams. Possesses high ethical standards and an honest, open, and consistent approach to working with peers, employees, Senior Leadership Team, and the Board.

Leadership: Acts as a leader, coach, mentor, and positive role model with the ability to initiate, influence, motivate and delegate.

Change management: Initiates necessary cultural transformations to help the university and employees adapt to the changing environment (both external and internal).

Emotional intelligence: Possesses the ability to recognize and understand the feelings, moods and emotions of the self and others, especially within the university's diverse workforce, and to manage emotions with social skills in one's interaction with others in order to build relationships and move others towards the university's goals.

Service-orientation: Exhibits an engaging accessible personal style that builds a service-orientated, responsive, and value-added university relations culture.

Decision-making: Recognizes priorities and changing approaches, especially at times of volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity. Shows common sense and intuitive judgment. Able to make, implement and act upon operational decisions as well as inspire decision-making by others.

Negotiation skills: Is a diplomatic and effective negotiator who works systematically towards solutions. Skillful in conflict resolution.

Communications: Exhibits strong written, verbal and presentation skills and is an active listener. Builds trust through demonstrated objectivity and consistency.

Innovation: Adopts innovative strategies and approaches to engage employees and community members in the story of the university.



To apply for this role:

Athabasca University develops and maintains an environment that supports equitable working conditions for individuals traditionally under represented in universities. AU is committed to employment equity and encourages applications from women, Indigenous people, persons with disabilities and members of visible minorities.

We will only accept applications received through our online recruitment system. Please include your resume, letter of application, and the names, telephone numbers, and email addresses of three references.

Note: Online applications are accepted until 11:59 p.m. Mountain Standard Time on the closing date. All qualified candidates are encouraged to apply; however, Canadians and permanent residents will be given priority.

A competitive compensation package will be provided including an attractive base salary and excellent benefits.

Please note: we will be reviewing qualified applications as we receive them.

For more information:

For a detailed job description, visit: [Vice President, Finance & Operations and Chief Financial Officer](#)

You may also contact Pauline Smeltz, Chief Human Resources Officer via email at: psmeltz@athabascau.ca