



Director, Research

Department: Research

Posting Date: May 16, 2025 - June 5, 2025

Term: Indefinite-term contract

Hiring Range: \$92,000 - \$113,000 annual salary

Benefits: Extensive benefit package inclusive of health, dental, RRSP matching, and paid personal days
Hybrid working options available for team members.

Vacancy: Existing Position

Background

The [Schlegel-UW Research Institute for Aging](#) (RIA) is a charitable non-profit organization that partners with the University of Waterloo, Conestoga College, and Schlegel Villages to enhance care and quality of life for older adults. Through engagement with key partners and collaborators, RIA supports practice-relevant research and knowledge mobilization. Research evidence is used to inform programs, education and training, and influence practice and policy.

RIA's research department is a dynamic, collaborative, and impact-focused portfolio. The department is responsible for research, evaluation and knowledge mobilization projects that embrace partnerships with researchers, people with lived experience, and sector organizations. The department is deeply committed to collaboration, responsiveness, and real-world application of evidence. In collaboration with other RIA departments, the research department works across disciplines to support system-level change in aging, seniors care, and seniors' health and well-being.

Primary Purpose

The Director, Research position at RIA is responsible for providing strategic and operational leadership to the research department, ensuring its work aligns with RIA's strategic plan and achieves impactful outcomes in the field of aging. This involves leading a team of professionals, collaborating with researchers to set priorities and allocate resources, coordinating and implementing research and evaluation projects, employing knowledge mobilization strategies to translate findings into policy and practice change, managing the departmental budget, and fostering relationships with partners.

The role will support RIA's vision, mission, and values as well as have an interest and passion for enhancing quality of life and care for older adults and those who care for them.

Key Accountabilities

1. **Leadership:** Provide strategic and operational leadership to RIA's research department and the organization, in alignment with RIA's strategic plan to ensure impact in the field of aging. Lead a team of professionals and work collaboratively with researchers to identify priorities, secure and allocate resources, profile impact and deliver on learned knowledge to influence policy and practice change. Work closely with the broader RIA team to leverage and align work and impact, and will lead efforts to identify and secure grant funding. Actively participate in team and organization-wide meetings virtually and in-person.
2. **Research and Evaluation:** Provide strategic oversight to research and evaluation initiatives. Champion collaboration with RIA researchers, organizational partnerships and across RIA departments. Present and discuss complex research and evaluation methodologies and results, fostering mutual understanding and collaboration to achieve shared goals. Ensure the effective collecting and analyzing of quantitative and qualitative data to ensure impact. Synthesize and present data to inform research knowledge and the organization's strategic direction, and oversee the development and maintenance of systems to ensure data integrity, track projects, partner engagement, and reach.
3. **Knowledge Mobilization:** Strategically guide research work plans and activities using implementation science frameworks, concepts, and tools with the goal of sustaining and scaling outcomes, and will identify and mobilize opportunities for impact across the sector. Lead or support the development of knowledge mobilization activities through the production of high-quality reports, presentations, templates, fact sheets, infographics, and other products that meet the needs of the target audience.
4. **Partnerships:** Proactively build and maintain strong relationships with new and existing partners to collaboratively discuss, develop, and implement projects that positively impact the quality of life and care for older adults. Liaise effectively with a diverse range of partners, including government and community organizations at local, provincial and international levels, and individuals with lived experience.
5. **Financial Accountability:** Develop and manage all funded project budgets and the research department budget. In partnership with the RIA accounting department, this role leads and oversees regular reporting of expenditures to senior leadership and funding agencies, as required, and managing spending in alignment with RIA policies and funder guidelines. This role will also effectively source and support work with consultants and vendors to ensure successful outcomes and complete all funder requirements.
6. **Communication and Reporting:** Strong written and verbal communication skills with the ability to tailor messaging to diverse audiences. Present and discuss complex matters with partners through a variety of virtual and in-person events and meetings. Proactively report to funders, team members, and key partners on activities, and contribute to the writing and dissemination of various written products, including funding applications, technical reports, and program reports. Represent the RIA as a chair or attendee of various committees, meetings, conferences, and events.
7. **Other:** Take on additional tasks, activities and special projects, as they arise.

Position Requirements

Education:

Master's degree or equivalent experience in social sciences, gerontology or other related discipline.

Skills and Experience:

- A minimum of 8 years experience in providing strategic direction and leadership to the successful implementation of large research projects.
- A minimum of 5 years of experience in leading and supervising project teams in alignment with organizational values and project goals.
- A minimum of 5 years of experience managing department and/or project budgets.
- A minimum of 3 years of experience building research and organizational partnerships, including funding organizations.
- Knowledgeable and experienced in the field of knowledge mobilization.
- Experienced at chairing meetings, fostering collaborative discussions and decision-making.
- Strong writing and communication skills to support board, funder and sector proposal, reporting and presentations.
- Knowledgeable and experienced in the field of older adult research and practice in Canada with a focus on enhancing quality of care and life in senior living settings.
- Highly motivated, detail-oriented individual with the ability to multitask, prioritize, and meet tight deadlines and manage change within a high demand environment.
- Proficiency in the use of computers and various software applications including Google, Microsoft Office Suite (Word, Excel, PowerPoint), and webinar platforms.
- Fluent in English. Fluency in French is an asset but not required.
- Must have a valid driver's licence and be available for occasional travel.
- Eligible to obtain a clear police background and record check.

Scope of Work

- **Interpersonal Skills:** Communicates effectively with internal team members and external partners; professionally represents the RIA in all communications and at events.
- **Level of Responsibility:** Responsible for ensuring the effective and efficient implementation of a department and providing strategic and operational insights to the RIA. Lead and support a growing team.
- **Decision-Making Authority:** Accountable to make strategic and operational decisions that are aligned with RIA standards and funder expectations.
- **Physical and Sensory Demands:** Minimal demands, typical of a position operating within an office environment; periods of extensive sitting at a desk and in meetings and concentrated use of visual senses; substantial repetitive keyboard/mouse movement; high sensory demands because of required concentration and attentiveness to detail and regular distractions and interruptions.
- **Working Environment:** Much of the time is spent sitting in a comfortable position with frequent opportunities to move about. The office is located in a comfortable indoor area and options for hybrid work are available for this position. The work is varied and assignments may change frequently. Work will involve regular interaction with RIA team members and external partners and collaborators. There are deadline pressures, while at the same time there is a demand for thoroughness and accuracy. Occasional travel is required.

Vaccination Statement

All researchers, employees and students of the RIA who will work with long-term care homes, colleges, universities and other partners are required to comply with the vaccination policies of those external organizations to complete their work. Of note, vaccination policies are subject to change. The requirement to comply with those evolving policies does not change.

Equity Statement

The RIA is committed to equity, diversity and inclusion within its community and organization. We strongly welcome and encourage applications from Indigenous Peoples, racialized groups, women, 2SLGBTQI+ people, persons with disabilities and people from other equity-deserving groups.

The RIA is pleased to accommodate individual needs in accordance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA) within our recruitment process. If you require accommodation at any time throughout the recruitment process, please let us know.

Funding Statement

Please note that all positions at the RIA and the continuation of these positions are conditional upon funding.

How to Apply

RIA invites applications (cover letter and resume) to be submitted by email to applications@the-ria.ca. Please include the job title in the subject line of the email.