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## OPPORTUNITY PROFILE

**AVP, Finance**

**Location: Calgary, Alberta**



## About Mount Royal University

[www.mtroyal.ca](http://www.mtroyal.ca)

Mount Royal University, situated in an ancient and storied place within the hereditary lands of the Niitsitapi (Blackfoot), Îyethka Nakoda, Tsuut'ina, and Métis Nations, is a community committed to quality undergraduate education that puts students first.

Founded in 1910, Mount Royal College opened its doors a year later to 179 students. Since then, Mount Royal has grown into a renowned University and a beloved Calgary institution, welcoming some 15,000 students each year. Since becoming a University in 2009, we have gone from primarily delivering access and transfer programming to nearly 80% of students enrolled in bachelor's degrees.

More than a century after it was written, our founders' vision for Mount Royal still rings true: we are a community drawn together in a common endeavour to learn. Our strengths and successes are rooted in our communities: distinguished faculty, exceptional students, talented and committed staff members, dedicated leaders, accomplished alumni, and engaged community partners. We are about opening minds and changing lives. We provide students with the critical skills and practical experiences that will prepare them to contribute to, and succeed in, an increasingly complex and ever-changing world.

### MRU At a Glance

- Home to over 15,500 students\*
- 80% of students enrolled in Full Load Equivalent (FLE)\*
- 74.2% of students are from Calgary\*
- More than 1,600 employees\*\*
- An international student population of 3.3%\*
- An average of 30 students per credit lecture as of add drop date
- 14 degree programs with 38 majors to choose from
- 5.8% self-identified Indigenous students\*
- Over \$5 million dollars in scholarships and bursaries distributed to students\*

## The Opportunity

Reporting to the Vice President, Finance & Administration, the Associate Vice President (AVP), Finance leads the overall financial strategy for the University to ensure long term financial sustainability. The AVP, Finance provides leadership and management of financial operations and reporting, modernizing and streamlining the University's budgeting, reporting, procurement, internal controls and financial systems. The AVP, Finance provides strategic and tactical insight to assist in the development of the University's annual and long-term operating and capital budgets. The AVP, Finance has management accountability for the financial operations of the organization.

The AVP, Finance operates in a complex environment with multiple stakeholders while exercising accountability for the overall financial posture of the organization. The AVP, Finance ensures that the Vice President has access to timely, meaningful, and accurate financial information for executive leadership and governing bodies.

### **The AVP Finance is accountable for:**

- Developing, mentoring, coaching and leading a high performing finance team.
- Fostering a positive and collegial team culture.
- Budgets and resource allocations.
- Financial reporting including the successful completion of the year-end audit and external granting agencies reporting.
- Financial systems and continuous improvement.
- Financial operations, procurement and supply chain management.
- A robust framework of internal controls and risk management to ensure University finances, operations and assets are protected against fraud and misappropriation.

### **Specific responsibilities include:**

As a member of the University's leadership team, the AVP, Finance participates fully in the University's strategic planning and development together with the President and Vice Presidents. The AVP, Finance works collaboratively with other senior leaders and financial administrators to ensure advocacy, management and support of the broad spectrum of the financial portfolio of the University.

The AVP, Finance leads the finance team with a collaborative and consultative approach across the University in providing resource allocation and budgeting related services efficiently, effectively, and aligned with strategic directions of the University to support teaching, research, and student experience. It is the AVP, Finance's responsibility to ensure that the finance team is regarded as a trusted partner and advisor at all levels, ensuring MRU makes efficient and effective use of resources, is mindful of long-term financial sustainability, and seeks to manage risk in all dimensions of the University's operations.

The AVP, Finance functions in a highly demanding environment that requires the foresight to balance a multitude of needs, demands and strategies, constant vigilance for issues and challenges and



prioritization of limited resources. The work is dynamic and fast-paced, requiring the ability to handle a high volume of complex tasks and problems. Success in this role involves managing tight timelines with accuracy and making decisions that range from routine to critical on a regular basis. This position requires confidentiality, discretion, a high level of integrity and independent judgement, and requires the management of unpredictable events in a sensitive and timely manner. The nature of the work requires the ability to assess and address the needs of multiple stakeholders, both internal and external, in order to achieve positive outcomes. The position requires a strong commitment to accountability, transparency, governance and continuous improvement.

## Key Accountabilities

### Strategic Planning and Financial Leadership

- Advises the President, Vice Presidents, Deans and University Leadership on financial matters and integration of finances into the University's strategy, recognizing financial sustainability as a critical enabler of the University's mission, vision and plans.
- Leads the development of institutional financial strategy in alignment with the University's mission, vision and various plans (balanced budgets, revenue generation, major capital projects and fiscal sustainability).
- Engages University senior management around issues, trends, and policy development in University financial management, budgeting, reporting, capital projects, enterprise-wide fraud risk management, internal controls and systems.
- Cultivates and maintains robust relationships with the government as a member of the University's team working with government and through financial reporting.
- Leads the development and implementation of a budgetary system that allocates resources in alignment with the University's strategic plan, academic plan and operational plans.
- Develops partnerships across MRU to cultivate an understanding of operational requirements, to support budget processes, and to empower data-informed decision-making.
- Provides strategic financial guidance and represents the University's fiduciary interest to internal and external stakeholders and partners.
- Provides vision and leadership to ensure employees support the implementation of the organization-wide budgeting model.

- Collaborates with University leaders to lead the design and implementation of strategies that contribute to financial sustainability.
- Works in partnership with relevant stakeholders to identify and lead change within the financial systems and organizational structures that ensure the success of the whole of the University's finance function.
- Ensures the portfolio is aligned with and a key contributor to the success of academic priorities.
- Works in partnership with other senior leaders to provide institutional leadership for financial stewardship ensuring resources are used to their best advantage and for the purpose for which they were intended.
- Supports and develops accountability for effective budget management within the institution.
- Works in partnership with leaders to develop innovative and creative solutions to resource challenges.

### **People and Organizational Leadership**

- Mentors and leads the finance team, providing mentorship and guidance to build a strong team culture of service delivery which establishes the finance team as a valued, trusted and credible resource across MRU.
- Ensures the delivery of an effective and superior service environment, financial and budgeting systems and associated business processes, policies and procedures.
- Provides guidance for budget support services in units, and coordinates with other functional service units, ensuring a robust budget development and monitoring program.
- Leads an enterprise-wide fraud management program.
- Leads the development of innovative and best practice solutions in service delivery and establishment of an engaged team.
- Attracts, motivates, energizes, and retains effective staff who are well qualified and committed to the work of the finance team along with the goals and initiatives of the University.
- Ensures direct reports are aligned with the University's vision and coordinated with other functional services.
- Ensures a positive, diverse, and inclusive work and learning environment in the finance team, promoting a culture of collaboration, professionalism and respect.
- Fosters a strong sense of community and a client service orientation in the finance team.
- Holds team members in the finance team accountable for high standards of performance and outcomes, willing and able to make employee decisions in service of high expectations.
- Interprets and applies collective agreements, labour legislation, and employment law with respect to the administration, allocation and reallocation of human resources, staff complement and direct reports within the finance team.
- Develops and implements strategic recruitment processes to attract and retain outstanding staff, building and developing a knowledgeable and productive finance team.



- Fosters an environment of innovation, collaboration; and develops mentorship to support the preparation and staff progression for future key leadership roles in the finance team.
- Promotes and celebrates employee success.
- Successfully leads change within the finance team portfolio and the implementation of financial strategy at the University.
- Builds organizational capacity for change.

### **Audits**

- Acts as the University lead for the annual interim audit and the year-end external audit with the Office of the Auditor General of Alberta and their agent.
- Responsible for successful execution of the interim audit and the year-end audit including managing audit timelines, planning and deliverables to ensure audit timelines are met, the audit is efficient and completed successfully in accordance with provincial financial reporting timelines.
- Responsible for enterprise-wide coordination of the annual audit.
- Provides year-end audited financial statements and audit updates to the Executive Leadership Team and to the Audit and Risk Committee of the Board.
- Acts as the primary liaison with the Office of the Auditor General of Alberta and their agent leading up to and during the interim audit and the year-end audits.

### **Financial Operations**

- Provides strategic leadership in the development and monitoring of annual and multi-year budgets as the University's lead on budgetary matters. Specifically, oversees, supports and directs the planning, development and implementation of University operations, ancillary, and furniture / equipment capital budgets, in accordance with regulatory requirements.
- Monitors liquidity and arranges the placement of University investments. Acts as the University lead with external investment managers and leads the development of the annual investment performance review process, investment policy review and updates.
- Provides budgeting information to the Executive Leadership Team, Academic Budget Planning Committee, Audit and Risk Committee of the Board, Finance Committee of the Board and the Board of Governors.
- Develops and monitors key performance indicators and a system of on-going assessment of reporting against plan.

- Liaises with the Assurance and Advisory function to provide effective oversight of internal audit, risk, and fraud.
- Establishes and maintains effective internal controls and procedures to ensure financial accuracy and integrity. Plans year-end and special audits including working papers, financial statements and liaises with external auditors, in accordance with regulatory requirements including acting as the University lead on the annual external audit to ensure successful execution of the audit and ensures annual audit meets Office of the Auditor General of Alberta (OAG) and MRU Board of Governors expectations.
- Leads the engagement with OAG and OAG's audit agent to ensure the annual audit is coordinated and is completed in an effective and efficient manner.
- Leads decisions regarding investments in financial technology and systems to improve financial processes, data analytics, and reporting capabilities.
- Engages in decisions and initiatives that may have financial implications.
- Communicates financial performance, strategies, and decisions to the Executive Leadership Team and other key stakeholders.

### **Risk Management**

- Ensures policies and procedures are in place to safeguard University resources.
- Ensures an enterprise-wide system of robust internal controls is in place to safeguard University assets from fraud and related risks.
- Incorporates the identification, assessment, and management of financial risks into the planning and decision-making process.
- Ensures communication, education and compliance with University policies, provincial and federal laws and regulations, collective agreements, and ethical and professional standards.
- Monitors and assesses legislation and evolving issues and recommends changes to avoid or minimize risks and liability.
- Ensures high standards of sensitivity, awareness, and compliance with respect to equity, diversity and inclusion.

### **Stakeholder Relations and Communications**

- Provides advice and support to other University leaders including through participation in the Executive Leadership Team, the Academic Planning and Budget Committee and the Finance Committee of the Board of Governors, the Audit & Risk Committee of the Board of Governors among other University committees as may be required.
- Understands the dimensions of service delivery and supports a diverse group of stakeholders in a complex operating environment.
- Communicates effectively at all levels and across all areas of the University to ascertain the needs of users, builds support for financial policies, processes, and systems, and advises on strategic business applications.



- Prepares and delivers budget and presentations to management, Executive Leadership Team, the Academic Planning and Budget Committee, the General Faculties Council and the Finance Committee of the Board of Governors, among other University committees as may be required.
- Represents the University at internal committees, board level committees and external committees.
- Sets and promotes service standards and ensures high-quality user experience, prioritizing a cohesive, service-oriented approach to delivery of financial services.

## The Person – Qualifications and Attributes

### Financial Expertise

- An accounting designation is required. A chartered professional accounting (CPA, CA) is preferred.
- Experience with finance function transformation and shared services in the public sector is desirable.
- At least ten years of progressive experience in a senior financial position within a large and complex organization. Prior experience in the public post secondary sector is preferred.
- Strong analytical and data-driven decision-making skills.
- Strategic, financial and operational expertise in leading a multi-faceted fiscal sustainability program.
- Strong administrative acumen to guide, influence, collaborate and lead in a complex operational environment.
- A strong and demonstrable understanding of how value is created through teaching and research in a University context.

### Leadership

- The ideal candidate will have a demonstrated record of leadership success and a strong record in leading change and enhancing services in the financial portfolio of a large and complex public sector organization.
- Ability to influence outcomes and provide guidance to business decisions, with excellent analytical and problem-solving skills, and manage multiple demands to meet deadlines.
- Strong communication skills, written, verbal and thorough presentations to large audiences is required.



- Visionary leadership with a commitment to the vision, mission, and values of the organization.
- Demonstrable success in developing a shared vision and leading people to achieve exemplary performance and outcomes together.
- Must possess outstanding organizational, interpersonal, and relationship skills, the ability to work collaboratively, and build relationships with internal and external partners. Government relations experience would also be valuable.
- Proven ability to think analytically and creatively in support of the University's vision, strategic plan, and key imperatives.
- High level of proficiency in personal effectiveness, relationship building and proven ability to encourage collaboration.
- Significant experience managing multiple initiatives, with changing and often conflicting priorities is essential.
- Experience working with diverse communities and stakeholders in an organizational setting is an asset.

### **Technology / Systems**

- Ability to lead the assessment and selection of financial technology systems, ensuring alignment with business needs, strategic goals, and regulatory requirements.
- Experience with leading the seamless integration and implementation of financial systems (for example: ERP, accounting software, data analytics platforms) to optimize performance, reduce risk, and improve financial reporting accuracy.
- Ability to drive modernization of financial workflows and processes by introducing new technologies, automation tools, and innovative solutions to improve efficiency and reduce manual errors.
- Strong cross-functional collaborative ability to work closely with Faculties, IT, HR, Facilities Management, operations, and leaders to ensure that financial systems and technology support organizational objectives and scale effectively as the business grows.
- Lead the change management process, ensuring smooth transitions during technology upgrades or shifts, and providing training and support to ensure organizational readiness and user adoption.
- Commitment to continuous improvement through monitoring of system performance post-implementation, through regular reviews, and recommendations to keep financial systems agile and responsive to evolving business needs.
- Ensure that new technology systems comply with financial regulations and industry standards, mitigating risks related to data security, privacy, and financial reporting.
- Ensure procurement and relationships with technology vendors, including contract negotiations, service level agreements (SLAs), and enterprise solutions are delivered on time and within budget.

### **Enterprise Perspective**

- An enterprise mindset with the ability to generate trust, credibility, develop, enable and execute University wide finance practices.



- Passion for technology enabled finance service interaction models and organizational models/structures, with the courage to embrace innovation and make difficult decisions that advance institutional goals.
- Passion for continuously evolving the finance service model to best serve University needs.
- Understand through experience how to navigate transformation and effectively manage change.
- Excellent skills and significant experience managing at both the strategic and operational level in a complex environment and serving a diverse group of stakeholders.
- Expertise in leading/designing finance programs for inclusion, accessibility, diversity and equity, coupled with awareness and understanding of the role Indigenization and decolonization play in MRU's strategic vision.
- Skilled in navigating complex situations and discussions with stakeholders of all levels, while being able to successfully build relationships and establish credibility across the University for the finance team.

## **Compensation**

A competitive compensation package will be provided including an attractive base salary and excellent benefits. A relocation package will be provided if required. Further details will be discussed in a personal interview.

## **Commitment to Diversity and Inclusion**

The Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion works with students and employees to implement Mount Royal University (MRU)'s commitment to equity, diversity, inclusion, accessibility (EDIA) and anti-racism through EDIA strategies, policies, evidence-based best practices and programs.

As a student-centered University, MRU embraces all aspects of individual and group identity. MRU has a history of working towards EDIA and humbly acknowledges this work needs to evolve to effectively respond to calls for social justice and enable the systemic change necessary to deconstruct racism and colonization. The Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion strives to foster a campus where people never doubt they belong, can freely share their perspectives and experiences and fully participate in our social and academic community.

While MRU places great value on freedom of expression, in no way does that imply that the institution, its governing bodies, its leadership or its community members agree or endorse any expressed views. As a campus community and institution of higher learning, it is expected that ideas, statements and espoused beliefs may be challenged and examined, with each individual free to make the independent decision to accept or reject them. Everyone on our campus has both the right and the responsibility to decide which ideas hold merit for them, and which do not. We encourage compassionate and respectful dialogue in hopes of learning from all people's experiences at MRU.

## Express Your Interest

Email a cover letter and tailored resume to [calgary@leadersinternational.com](mailto:calgary@leadersinternational.com) to the attention of **Shalini Bhatti** or **Chelsey Howarth** indicating the job title in the subject line of the email.

**Leaders International**

[www.leadersinternational.com](http://www.leadersinternational.com)