



PATHWAYS
EXECUTIVE SEARCH



VICE-PRESIDENT INDIGENOUS
UNIVERSITY OF VICTORIA



The Opportunity

Founded in 1963, the University of Victoria (UVic) is committed to respecting and supporting Indigenous ways of knowing, to ensure they permeate and enrich everything UVic does. The university is seeking a new Vice-President Indigenous (VPI) to provide inspirational, transformational, and visionary leadership to advance the institutional commitments to Indigenization, decolonization, and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action.

Reporting to the President, the VPI is a member of the executive and an integral member of the leadership team. This person seeks guidance and direction from Elders, Knowledge Keepers, and community leaders to achieve the university's goals, and brings important perspectives to activities and decisions made across the university. The President and leadership team share accountability and walk alongside the VPI in achieving these objectives.

The Organization

The University of Victoria (UVic) is a leading Canadian research-intensive university situated in Victoria, British Columbia, on the traditional territories of the Lək̓ʷəŋən (Songhees and X̱wsepsəm/Esquimalt) Peoples. Established in 1963, UVic is home to over 22,000 students – including more than 1,500 Indigenous students – supported by approximately 6,000 employees, including 900 full-time faculty members.

Recognized nationally and internationally for its academic strengths (Learn more about UVic's [rankings and reputation](#)), UVic consistently ranks among the top comprehensive universities in Canada and is a global leader in international research collaboration. UVic offers more than 280 undergraduate and graduate programs across 10 faculties, as well as a wide range of degrees, diplomas and campus services.

UVic is one of the largest employers in Victoria and has also been recognized as one of the [Best Diversity Employers](#) and [Greenest Employers](#) in Canada, as well as one of [Canada's Top Employers](#). The university's annual economic impact is significant, contributing over \$3.7 billion to the region.

Learn more at uvic.ca

Purpose, Pledge, and Principles

PURPOSE	Inspired by and honouring place, we are a community-minded, globally engaged university where we transform ideas into meaningful impact.
PLEDGE	We pledge to hold ourselves accountable to ʔetalnəwə́l ÁTOL,NEUEL by respecting the rights of one another, being in right relationship with all things, and by upholding the rights of Indigenous Peoples.
PRINCIPLES	Operating with excellence: We will pursue excellence in the way we teach, research, engage with the community and operate.
	Honouring lifelong learning: We will support learners through their lifelong educational journey, providing the skills and knowledge needed to reach their goals.
	Contributing to change: We will make meaningful contributions to social, cultural, economic and environmental progress.
	Lifting each other up: We will commit to helping people succeed in their endeavours, because we know that purpose and fulfillment are foundational to the fullest expression of human well-being.
	Upholding Indigenous ways of knowing: We will embrace and continuously promote Indigenous ways of knowing and being, with good hearts and minds.
	Adding value when we join others: We will work to ensure our engagement with every partner is respectful, relevant and responsive through thoughtful dialogue and shared goals.
	Creating a welcoming space: We will cultivate an environment that is inclusive, equitable and supportive. UVic will be a place where each person feels like they belong.
	Making room for risk-taking: We will nurture a culture that fosters trust, respect and accountability-where curiosity, courageous action and an openness to challenge are valued and encouraged.

UVic's Distinctly UVic [Strategic Plan](#) outlines the university's vision, values and priorities, inspiring excellence in research, creative activity, teaching, service, commitment to diversity and inclusion, and engagement to serve students, communities and the world.

<p><u>ʔetalnəwəí ÁTOL,NEUEL Respecting the rights of one another and being in right relationship with all things</u></p>	<p>We want to be a community that is open to learning, prioritizes being in right relationship with and respecting the rights of all people and things, and deconstructs systemic barriers to the full participation of First Peoples in the university's life and work.</p>
<p><u>People, places and the planet</u></p>	<p>From the campus to the global community, we support people's wellness and ability to thrive, and are addressing sustainability, climate action and the systemic barriers affecting equity, diversity and inclusion in multiple ways.</p>
<p><u>Change and transformation</u></p>	<p>Through a culture of trust, curiosity and flexibility, we will continuously re-imagine what we do, how we do it and why—being courageous and open to change helps us transform our communities and the world.</p>
<p><u>Partnerships and collaboration</u></p>	<p>We support collaboration among faculties, disciplines and divisions; between academic and administrative units; between the campus and our community; and between UVic and our international partners, alumni, research institutions, industry and governments.</p>

Commitment to Reconciliation

Deeply committed to reconciliation, UVic works actively to build strong and respectful relationships with Indigenous communities. This commitment is demonstrated through various initiatives, including the Office of Indigenous Academic and Community Engagement and the First Peoples House, which provides a welcoming space for Indigenous students. UVic offers a range of Indigenous-focused programs and support, and is home to the world's first joint Indigenous law degree.

X^wk^wənəŋistəl | W̱ÇENENISTEL | Helping to move each other forward, UVic's **Indigenous Plan** 2023, represents an essential foundation for UVic's future, alongside UVic's new Strategic Plan and other institutional plans. X^wk^wənəŋistəl | W̱ÇENENISTEL outlines ambitious goals to increase educational opportunities and success for Indigenous students and further integrate Indigenous perspectives across all aspects of the institution.

Furthermore, four (4) Laws and Philosophies became central to the work of creating UVic's first Indigenous Plan and continue to orient their work across campus and in communities. Additional information may be found throughout UVic's Indigenous Plan.

S̱ḵwes ṮFE SKÁLs I, ṮFE Š̱X ENAŋs The Laws and Philosophies
Héʔək ^w ʔə cə čəlénən ʔtə HÁEQ ŁTE OL ṮFE ČELÁŋEN ŁTE - Remember our ancestors and birthright
Nə́cəmaat k ^w əns čeʔi ČĀNEUEL OL - Work together
Nə́w es šx ^w cən ʔaý šq ^w eləq ^w ən ÁMEKT ṮFEN ÍY, Š̱KÁLEÇEN - Bring in your good heart and mind
Leʔt šx ^w helə ʔə cə məḵ ^w s̱čeʔi səʔ S,HOL EṮ MEQ EN ENÁ SE Š̱ČĀ - Be prepared for the work to come

To hear the Laws and Philosophies spoken and pronounced in Ləḵ^wəŋən and SENĆOŦEN, visit: www.uvic.ca/ovpi/language.

Administration & Governance

University plans guide the operational directions for a wide range of UVic activities. The organization operates under the authority of the **University Act** and is **governed** by a Board of Governors and Senate.

Learn more at uvic.ca/info-for/indigenous/



Position Summary

The University of Victoria (UVic) is committed to respecting and supporting Indigenous ways of knowing and to ensure they permeate and enrich everything we do. Moving this important work forward requires challenging conversations about what we value and prioritize as an institution, and how we can play a leadership role in decolonization in a good way. This work is done in accountability to Indigenous Peoples and Nations, and with the understanding that decolonization must centre lived realities and aspirations of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Peoples.

The Vice-President Indigenous (VPI) provides inspirational, transformational, and visionary leadership to advance the institutional commitments to indigenization, decolonization and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action. This leader walks in relationship with Indigenous Peoples, guided by Elders, Knowledge Keepers and community voices, with respect for the distinct rights and roles of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Peoples.

Reporting to the President, the VPI is a member of the executive and an integral member of the leadership team, bringing important perspectives to activities and decisions made across the university. The President and leadership team share accountability and walk alongside the VPI in achieving these objectives.

This is a role rooted in relationality – one that fosters belonging, ceremony, dialogue, and culturally grounded spaces for healing, learning, and transformation.

Learn more about [the Office of the Vice-President Indigenous](#).

Position Summary Continued

RESPONSIBILITIES

- Provides strategic leadership and direction in all aspects of the university's work towards decolonization and reconciliation.
- In consultation with the President and other members of the executive, leads the development and implementation of an Indigenous plan and strategies in support of the university's strategic vision and plan.
- Works with senior leaders to develop clear metrics and reporting mechanisms to track UVic's progress toward its Indigenous and decolonization commitments, ensuring transparency and accountability across the institution.
- Brings energy, vision, and visibility to Indigenous strategies and activities at UVic.
- Advances Indigenous engagement through communications and collaboration among all members of the university community, including those with specific expertise.
- Integrates and honours Indigenous histories, beliefs and ways of knowing and being into the mission and life of the university.
- Fosters a supportive and welcoming environment on campus for Indigenous students, staff, faculty and community members.
- Leads engagement on how colonizing structures and relationships continue to impact UVic's Indigenous students, staff, faculty, alums, and community members, and works with colleagues across campus to create change.
- In partnership with other university leaders, engages with faculty, staff and students to decolonize systems and structures in education, research and administration.
- Envisions and leads initiatives to increase Indigenous voices and presence across all levels of learning, teaching, research and work at the university.
- Builds and nurtures meaningful relationships with colleagues across campus, Indigenous communities on Vancouver Island, across Canada and around the globe.
- Represents the university locally, nationally and internationally, and provides leadership across the national post-secondary sector.
- Provides opportunities to foster intercultural understanding and connection and is a catalyst for decolonization and reconciliation through courageous conversations and actions.
- Working across portfolios at the university and with local communities, provides strategic advice and guidance as a key resource for leaders and Indigenous faculty, staff and students on campus.
- Participates in strategic and integrated planning processes; plays a key role in the generation and allocation of resources in support of the academic, teaching and research mission of the university.
- Prioritizes the creation and protection of safe, culturally grounded spaces on campus that honour Indigenous wellness, community care, ceremony, and land-based practices, and support Indigenous self-determination and resurgence.
- Applies a distinctions-based lens across institutional policies and practices to ensure meaningful inclusion of diverse Indigenous identities, rights, and priorities.

Position Summary Continued

REPRESENTATION

The Vice-President Indigenous provides leadership and representation on several university committees, including but not limited to:

- Indigenous Community Engagement Council (Co-chair)
- Indigenous Strategic Leadership Advisory Group (Chair)
- Executive Council
- President's Leadership Council

KEY RELATIONSHIPS

The following positions report directly to the Vice-President Indigenous:

- Executive Director, Indigenous Academic and Community Engagement
- Special Advisor to the Vice-President Indigenous
- Director, Indigenous Strategic Priorities and Community Engagement
- Director, Indigenous University Initiatives
- Director, Culture, Protocol and Community Relations
- Director, Indigenous University Communications (co-reporting to the ED, IACE)
- Director, Capacity Building (co-reporting to the ED, EQHR)
- Associate Deans Indigenous (co-reporting to Deans)
- Executive Assistant to the Vice-President Indigenous

The Vice-President Indigenous interacts with:

- President
- Vice-Presidents and University Secretary
- Associate Vice-Presidents and Special Advisors
- Deans, Associate Deans
- University Librarian
- Chairs, Directors
- Operational and administrative Leaders
- Faculty, staff and students
- Indigenous community leaders
- Board of Governors
- External partners, government, community





Candidate Criteria

While no one candidate will meet all of the desired criteria in equal measure, the Appointment Committee is seeking a person who has demonstrated experience, skills and attributes the following areas:

Education and Experience

- Has a post-secondary degree and, preferably, a graduate degree.
- Has a track record of success in a senior leadership role within a large, complex, multi-stakeholder organization.
- Understands the post-secondary sector and appreciates the benefits that education and research confer on students and society.
- Has a deep understanding of decolonization, Indigenous resurgence, and self-determination.
- Has personal, lived experience of Indigenous cultures, histories, and knowledges, preferably with the First Nations on Vancouver Island and/or those in British Columbia.
- Possesses broad cultural competence, with the ability to work closely with local First Nations, as well as Indigenous communities and organizations across British Columbia, Canada, and internationally.
- Has knowledge of key partner organizations and networks in First Nations, Métis, and Inuit communities.

Candidate Criteria continued

Commitment to Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Accessibility

- Understands and is committed to the relevance and importance of equity, diversity, inclusion and accessibility to the achievement of the university's goals; able to provide leadership in relevant areas to advance the university's goals in relation to these commitments.

Commitment to Decolonization and Reconciliation

- Understands and is committed to the university's goal to advance truth, respect and reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples, including the implementation of the Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act (DRIPA) and other decolonization and Indigenization efforts at the university.
- Upholds the teachings articulated in the university's Indigenous Plan: X^wk^wənəŋistəl | W̱ÇENENISTEL | Helping to move each other forward, and able to ensure the work of fulfilling the plan's commitments carries on.
- Is committed to working alongside local Nations to advance the Nations' goals and ambitions.

Leadership Guided by Indigenous Knowledge, Culture, Teachings and Histories

- Understands the distinct histories, rights, and contemporary realities of Indigenous Peoples, and how these shape experiences within post-secondary institutions.
- Has experience with Indigenous knowledge systems.
- Possesses knowledge of decolonization, inter-generational trauma, and the importance of positive self-concept in education.
- Respects and honours local teachings, ceremony, and protocols, and reflects these in their leadership approach.

Relational Leadership

- Able to provide university-wide collegial leadership with a human-centred focus and to bring people together to build shared understanding and consensus. Able to build connections, cohesion and integration in a complex portfolio.
- Experience building highly productive and trusting relationships with diverse individuals and groups and to apply competencies across diverse cultural contexts.
- Able to guide, mentor and motivate team members while supporting their growth and capacity with care and accountability.
- Able to constructively challenge entrenched systems and inspire change, while maintaining respect, patience, and perseverance in complex institutional settings.
- Understands the unique needs of university community members who are Indigenous, including faculty, researchers, students, and staff. Able to draw on this knowledge to influence and shape structural change and systemic transformation.

Candidate Criteria continued

Strategic and Administrative Leadership

- Demonstrates commitment to the principles, values and goals of the University of Victoria and is able to clearly articulate these to internal and external interest holders and partners.
- Able to develop and inspire a shared vision and strategy that will provide a strong sense of purpose.
- Has strategic planning experience with the skill to incorporate broad vision into short- and long-term goals.
- Able to generate innovative solutions and think expansively while driving institutional change.
- Able to assess difficult situations and make timely, effective decisions based upon analysis, consultation, experience and judgment. Able to deal proactively and reactively with crises and challenges.
- Makes decisions in a principled and transparent way; communicates difficult decisions effectively.
- Able to establish and grow a collaborative team and delegate effectively.

Communication and Interpersonal Skills

- Uses an open, collaborative and influential to build trusting, productive relationships.
- Leads with a trauma-informed, culturally safe, and distinctions-based approach, recognizing the unique histories, rights, and lived experiences of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Peoples.
- Leads with humility, courage, compassion, and tact.
- Fosters an inclusive culture where all ideas, perspectives, and experiences are invited and respected. Welcomes diverse voices and experiences from varied groups and communities.
- Able to communicate effectively across worldviews and cultures, and to apply competencies across diverse cultural contexts.
- Applies persuasive communication and negotiation skills to interactions. Listens actively and engages thoughtfully to build trust and foster collaboration.
- Approaches complex work with a spirit of curiosity, hope, and respect.

The VPI will be supported by and work in partnership with the President, executive team, and broader university community to realize these shared goals.



The Application Process

UVic is committed to upholding the values of equity, diversity, inclusion and [human rights](#) in its living, learning and work environments. In pursuit of the university's values, UVic seeks members who are eager to actively participate in that shared responsibility. The university actively encourages applications from members of [historically and systemically marginalized groups](#). Read UVic's [full equity statement](#).

The university acknowledges the potential impact that career interruptions can have on a candidate's record of research achievement and encourages applicants to explain in their application the impact that career interruptions have had on their record.

Persons with disabilities, who anticipate needing accommodation for any part of the application and hiring process, may contact a member of the Pathways Executive Search project team. Any personal information provided will be maintained in confidence.

To Apply

An initial review of applications will take place on July 16th, 2025, with a closing date of August 5th, 2025. To apply, please submit the following directly to Pathways Executive Search at Applications@PathwaysExecutiveSearch.com. The application package must contain:

- A cover letter, in which candidates must self-identify as Indigenous (First Nations, Métis, and Inuit), and include a brief statement describing ties to their community
- An updated Curriculum Vitae
- A brief statement describing any contributions made or planned in relation to advancing Indigenous leadership or inclusive excellence in research, teaching, or service within higher education, community-based or other professional settings (1-page maximum)

Please note that letters of recommendation are not required at the time of application. These will be solicited at later stages of the search process. The successful candidate for the position must be willing and able to fulfill the requirements for verification of Indigenous citizenship, as articulated in the draft university policy.

For more details or questions, please contact:

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Pathways Executive Search is an international executive recruitment firm, known for its ability to attract and recruit talent in culturally grounded ways. Guided by Indigenous values and principles of Indigenous inclusion, Pathways walks with those looking to broaden candidate pools, find qualified and experienced candidates, and live out their values and commitment to creating workplace cultures where people can thrive.