Western UNIVERSITY · CANADA All in.



Careers at Western Advancement

Candidate Information Pack

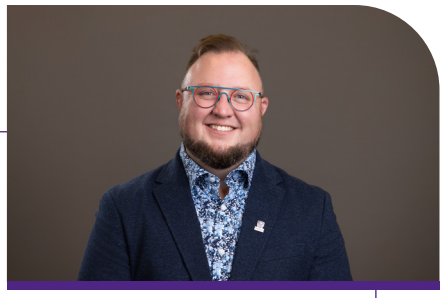
Executive Director, Principal Gifts

JOB ID 43531

June 2026







Letter from **Bobbie O'Connor**

Dear Prospective Candidate,

Thank you for considering the opportunity to join Western Advancement as our next Executive Director, Principal Gifts.

This is one of the most senior fundraising leadership roles at Western University, advancing its highest philanthropic priorities and contributing to the success of Western's $1B *All in* campaign. You will work at the intersection of donor vision, academic leadership, and institutional ambition, supporting major initiatives across research, teaching, and the student experience.

In this role, you will partner closely with the President, Provost, Vice-President (Western Advancement), Deans, senior leaders, donors, and volunteers to advance complex, high-impact opportunities.

We are seeking a strategic leader with sound judgment, strong emotional intelligence, and exceptional relationship-building skills—someone able to navigate sophisticated environments, build trust, align perspectives, and move important work forward through influence and collaboration.

Alongside managing a portfolio of principal gift opportunities, you will help strengthen fundraising capacity across Westen Advancement by sharing expertise and supporting others in securing transformational gifts.

This role also offers the opportunity to build on an already strong foundation—enhancing alignment, connecting work across the institution, and translating strategy into meaningful results.

Our culture is grounded in integrity, collaboration, accountability, respect, and excellence, with a shared commitment to supporting one another in complex and meaningful work.

If you are a relationship-driven leader motivated by advancing ambitious philanthropic goals and making a lasting impact at one of Canada's leading universities, I encourage you to consider this opportunity.

Best Wishes,

Bobbie O'Connor

Bobbie O'Connor
Associate Vice-President, Development

The Position

The Executive Director, Principal Gifts provides strategic direction and leadership for Western University's highest-value and most complex philanthropic initiatives. This role is central to advancing the University's most ambitious priorities—shaping fundraising strategy, guiding execution, and ensuring that principal gift activity is aligned with Western's academic vision and institutional goals.

Reporting to the Associate Vice-President, Development, the Executive Director leads both the strategic and operational development of principal gifts activity across the University. This includes overseeing a dedicated team of fundraising professionals, while also working collaboratively across faculties and units to identify, design, and advance opportunities that inspire significant philanthropic investment.

As a key member of the Development leadership team, the Executive Director operates at the most senior levels of the institution—partnering closely with the President, Deans, Vice-Presidents, academic leaders, and volunteers. The role serves as a trusted advisor and thought partner, helping to translate academic priorities into compelling philanthropic opportunities that resonate with donors and align with Western's long-term ambitions.



Where philanthropic ambition meets academic excellence to enable transformational gifts

The Executive Director also plays a critical role in strengthening principal gifts capacity across Western Advancement. Acting as an expert resource, coach, and collaborator, they support colleagues across the university in building relationships, developing strategy, and successfully navigating complex gift discussions.

Ultimately, this role is about connection—connecting people, ideas, and opportunity—to advance Western's mission and secure the transformational investments that will shape its future.



Western Advancement

Across three departments—**Advancement Operations , Alumni Relations, and Development** —Western Advancement works to build lasting connections between graduates and their alma mater, engage a growing community of donors and nurture opportunities for them to realize their personal, professional and philanthropic goals through the University.

By joining our dynamic, highly collaborative and diversely skilled team, you'll play a vital role in helping Western make a meaningful difference in the world as you amplify the University's impact today—and for generations to come.

Vision

To inspire lasting impact through meaningful philanthropy and lifelong connections.

Mission

We believe in the transformative power of higher education and research. We advance Western's impact by building global connections that inspire philanthropy and lifelong community.

I-CARE

At Western Advancement, our work is rooted in the unwavering values represented by I-CARE:

Integrity **C**ollaboration **A**ccountability **R**espect **E**xcellence

All in.

A grand collaboration
for Canada and the world



All in is the largest campaign in Western's history, harnessing the talent, imagination and resources of our global community to build a better future for Canada and the world.



Watch our All in Campaign video.

As a member of our Western Advancement team, you'll be at the heart of this movement — helping to mobilize the talent, imagination, and generosity of Western's global community.

Together, we'll raise $1 billion to advance life-changing research, enhance the student experience, and create learning environments that foster innovation, inclusion, and collaboration. This campaign is about meeting the moment and ensuring Western remains a place where bold ideas thrive and make an impact that lasts generations.

There's never been a more exciting time to be part of Western Advancement. Joining us now means helping to shape the story of the *All in* Campaign from the ground up — building connections, inspiring philanthropy, and championing the ideas that will define the future.

Over the course of the campaign we will:

raise
$1 billion
to fuel transformational research, innovation, learning and student experience

inspire
185,000
alumni to connect with us as volunteers, donors, advocates and champions

create over
1.5 million
meaningful interactions worldwide

Western
UNIVERSITY · CANADA

We're all in. Join us.



About Our Team

With a team of more than **120 staff members**, Western Advancement is an energetic, team-oriented and inspiring workplace committed to advancing Western's global impact.

Together, the Western Advancement team represents diverse backgrounds and a broad spectrum of skill sets. We recognize the valuable impact that this diversity, difference and mutual understanding have on strengthening our team and enriching the work we do every day.

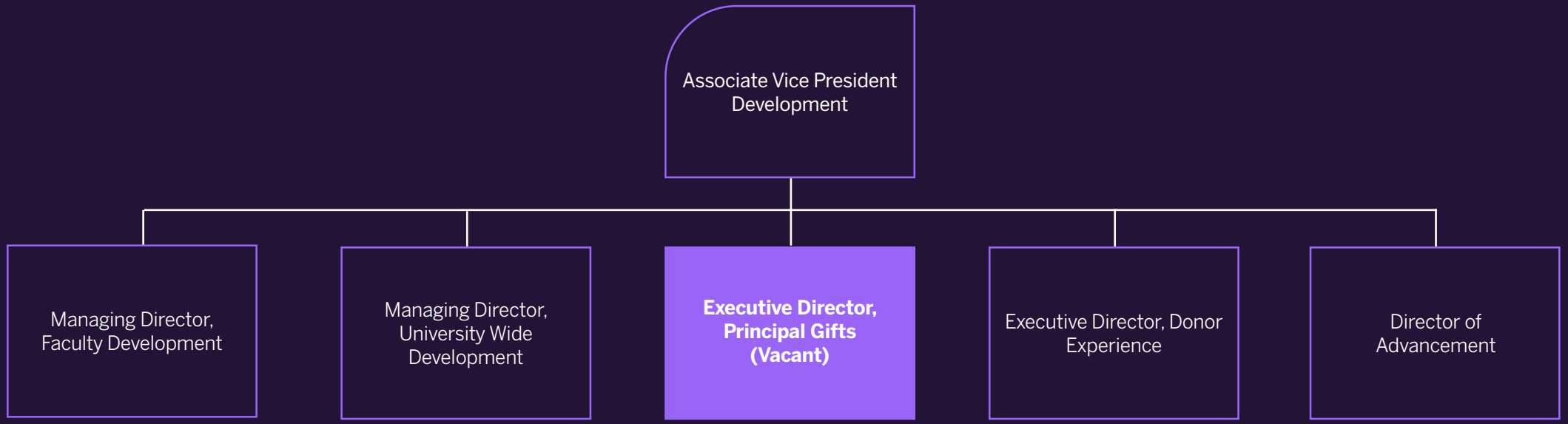
A values-driven divison, Western Advancement puts people first. Through recognition initiatives, we remind our staff of the significant impact their contributions have on our collective success, while staff engagement committees spark their creativity and collaboration to shape the culture of our workplace.

If you're looking to grow your career in a place where your work is valued, your voice is heard and your impact is felt—Western Advancement is the place for you!



Organizational Chart

Development





Key Accountabilities

- Leads and plays a key role in designing, implementing, managing and evaluating principal gifts activities across the university
- Raise an average of $20M from principal gifts each year for the Principal Giving portfolio
- Personally close a minimum of two Principal Gifts a year.
- Manages a portfolio of principal gifts donors and donor prospects, identifying and building a pipeline of 10 - 25 solicitations
- Leads principal gifts cultivation and solicitation for assigned principal gifts prospects and supports principal gifts cultivation and solicitation for prospects assigned to partners and teammates across the university
- Provides expertise to the AVP (Development), Vice-President (Western Advancement) and the President & Vice-Chancellor on principal gift cultivation and solicitation strategy
- Provides strategic and integrated leadership to principal gifts staff (approximately 3-5 staff), while articulating a clear vision, which supports and enables staff to excel in the delivery of services and fundraising efforts



Key Accountabilities

- Sets and monitors team and individual objectives and metrics
- Works with development staff as a coach and mentor, working to develop staff to reach their maximum potential in generating philanthropic funds
- Provides leadership to external volunteers involved with principal gift solicitations, either directly or indirectly
- Leads university-wide projects and initiatives related to Western Advancement (e.g. partnering with Western Research to support Institute fundraising), and supports the development of strategic campaign plans for the University
- In consultation with the AVP Development, oversees and leads the planning, design, development, implementation and evaluation of strategies and initiatives, enabling the portfolio and Western to achieve fundraising goals
- Provides ongoing support and engagement for initiatives within University Advancement (e.g. culture, We Speak, CRM design and implementation, talent development)
- Engages and supports university volunteers (the Chancellor, members of the Board of Governors, campaign cabinet and advisory boards) through working with the AVP Development, Managing Director, Faculty Development, and Managing Director University-Wide to create and implement the best structure for principal gifts development
- Participates with Western Advancement Leadership in setting, implementing, monitoring and evaluating long-term advancement strategies and campaigns for Western
- Monitors the principal gift activity pipeline across all staff, faculties and external divisions, working with Development Leaders and Prospect Management to build a pipeline for gifts (target to increase pipeline of prospects rated $10M+)
- Ensures that annual and long-term goals for principal gifts are set, monitored and evaluated (current annual target of $40M with potential for growth), in conjunction with overall development objectives of the University
- Partners with the Managing Director, Faculty development and Managing Director, University-Wide to develop strategies, and to coach, mentor and monitor the development of principal gifts capacity in all faculties and divisions
- Collaborates with the Managing Director, Faculty development and Managing Director, University-Wide to manage and drive the overall annual pledge targets
- Continues to advance a team approach to principal gifts to build culture and capacity across the team
- Develops strong, collaborative working relationships with Western Communications colleagues to ensure the smooth and successful delivery of communications and marketing activities related to Western Advancement



Key Accountabilities

- Ensures an appropriate development structure is in place to demonstrate Western's value for matching donors' highest philanthropic aspirations with the strategic needs of the University
- Leads the budgeting process for their portfolio (approximately $500K) ensuring resource allocations align to the strategic priorities of the unit
- Develops strategies and oversees the corporate and foundation portfolio, including establishing program objectives and metrics
- Ensures an appropriate recognition and stewardship structure to demonstrate Western's value and respect for donors to provide them with a meaningful lifelong relationship and experience with the University
- Presents on key performance indicators related to their portfolio, and prepares reports for Western Advancement leadership on the implementation of projects and programs, successes and areas of improvement



Person Specification

Professional Qualifications & Education

- Undergraduate Degree in a related field
- Master's Degree in a related field (preferred)
- Certified Fund Raising Executive (CFRE) designation (preferred)

Experience

- 8 years experience (minimum)
- Senior leadership experience leading a fundraising, or revenue-generating portfolio towards multi-million dollar targets
- Experience executing gifts at the $1 million dollar plus level
- 7 years' experience with accountability for leading staff, budgets and projects
- Experience fundraising within a university or other complex non-profit environment (preferred)

Knowledge, Skills, & Ability

- In-depth knowledge of fundraising principles and techniques, as well as project management methodologies
- Compelling and persuasive communication skills to engage individuals and teams inside and outside the University
- Ability to collaborate across internal and external boundaries to meet common objectives, improve outcomes and support work beyond one's own unit
- Ability to develop strategies and tactics that are in line with the University's mission and which balance competing priorities
- Ability to deal confidentially with information that has financial, political, regulatory and reputational implications
- Critical thinking and analytical skills to assess complex higher education issues of concern to stakeholders, including the media and the public
- Ability to effectively drive and manage change initiatives that align with organizational strategies and/or provide opportunities to increase efficiency

Knowledge, Skills, & Ability

- Ability to draw on diversity of skills, backgrounds and knowledge of people to achieve more effective results
- A desire to grow and advance skills, which is demonstrated by attending conferences, workshops and other professional developmental opportunities to enhance performance
- Ambitious with the ability to identify opportunities, develop action plans and set challenging goals in order to achieve desired outcomes
- Project management skills to align projects with strategic goals and operational objectives
- Ability to remain highly motivated, resilient, innovative, and collaborative when faced with challenges



Terms and Conditions

Location

1151 Richmond St, London, ON N6A 3K7

* The work location for this role is in-person on campus and will include work within the community, to best serve important donor-facing engagement

Salary

Salary Grade 18 : $ 130,000 - $ 160,000

Hours of Work

- This role is based on a standard 35 hour work week
- Western's core business hours are 8:30am - 4:30pm
- Western offers flexibility in hours of work, and through personal days and caregiving days. This enables staff to care for a sick child or an aging parent, attend medical appointments, or even tend to an important home repair

Length of Appointment

Regular Full-Time

Vacation Entitlement

In the first two years at the rate of 1.25 working days for each completed calendar month of continuous regular full-time employment (15 working days per year). Upon completion of two full years of continuous regular full-time employment, at the rate of 1.67 working days per month (20 working days per year). The University will designate up to a maximum of three additional days off during the end of year holiday period.

PMA Eligible members are also eligible for 2 Personal Days and 3 Caregiving days per calendar year to attend to urgent or critical health needs of their family members.

Pension Eligibility

Western's pension plan is among the most valuable benefits of working at Western. Details are available on the University web pages. **Pension Plan**

Flex Credits

Eligible members have $2,000 in credits that may be allocated annually toa Health Care Spending Account and/or Professional Expense Reimbursement.

Equity Diversity and Inclusion



Western Values Diversity

The University invites applications from all qualified individuals. Western is committed to employment equity and diversity in the workplace and welcomes applications from women, members of racialized groups/visible minorities, Indigenous persons, persons with disabilities, persons of any sexual orientation, and persons of any gender identity or gender expression. Accommodations are available for applicants with disabilities throughout the recruitment process.

If you require accommodations for interviews or other meetings, please contact **Human Resources** or phone **519-661-2194.**

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

Western's equity, diversity, inclusion and decolonization (EDID) approach aims to combat racism, discrimination and ableism in all their manifestations. We strive to cultivate a campus environment where all community members can fully engage in university life, learning, working, contributing, thriving and feeling safe. You can read more about our committment to diversity at **edi.uwo.ca**

Western's Vision for Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, Decolonization and Accessibility (EDIDA): Fostering safe, accessible and equitable places, spaces and experiences where every person belongs and feels empowered to achieve their full potential. **edi.uwo.ca/strategic-plan**

Indigenous Initiatives

Western is committed to increasing Indigenous voices and presence across all levels of work, study and research. The Office of Indigenous Initiatives plays a lead role in championing Indigenous strategic directions, building collaborative and community-engaged partnerships, and supporting campus partners in implementing Western's Indigenous Strategic Plan. To learn more about the office of Indigenous Initiatives please find more resources located here: **indigenous.uwo.ca** →

How to Apply

To learn more about careers at Western, please visit: **uwo.ca/careers →**

To apply for this vacancy, please visit: **recruit.uwo.ca →**

Once there you can locate this role by searching for **Job ID # 43531**

There you will need to click '**Apply for Job**' and register an account with the University's Careers application website.

The closing date for this position is **July 28, 2026.**

Please contact **ua.humanresources@uwo.ca** if you have any queries about this position.

