



POSITION PROFILE

**Associate Director,
Development,
NexusHealth
McMaster University**

PHC
PRESTON HUMAN CAPITAL GROUP



Position Overview



Organization:	McMaster University
Title:	Associate Director, Development, NexusHealth
Reports To:	Director, Development, NexusHealth
Team:	One
Location:	McMaster University, 1280 Main Street West, Hamilton, Ontario. Two - Three days per week in office/donor meetings.
Compensation:	\$110,000 - \$125,000 plus a performance pay bonus eligibility of up to 10% of base salary, and comprehensive benefits and vacation. More below.

Is This You?



You are a focused, professional and capable major gift fundraiser with a demonstrated track record of success. You are ready to step into a role with more autonomy and where you will have the opportunity to work on gifts that will help bring forth some of the most innovative and exciting medical advances ever seen.

You are a very independent fundraiser, but you truly enjoy collaboration with your team and your academic partners. You are a subject matter expert, yet you lend your expertise with ease – and frankly this lights you up. You enjoy teaching ‘non fundraisers’ how to fundraise alongside you. Driving strategy, developing complex proposals, and cultivating brilliant donors brings you energy. You know when to put up your hand and ask for help – and when you do you are the type of person who presents a solution rather than a problem.

You are creative and flexible – you don’t need a prescribed to do list to thrive, rather you are looking for a role where you can be in the driver’s seat, and have the autonomy, infrastructure and team support to do what you do best.

Do you want to play a direct role in shaping a brighter world? Then read on.

About McMaster University



Founded in 1887, McMaster University is a research-intensive public university. McMaster is dedicated to advancing human and societal health and well-being. McMaster is ranked in the world's Top 80 publicly funded universities by the Times Higher Education (THE) World University Rankings.

With a total student population of more than 37,000, McMaster welcomes students from 120 countries as well as Canada. Home to more than 70 research centres and institutes, McMaster University is comprised of the six faculties of Business (DeGroote School of Business), Engineering, Health Science, Humanities, Science, and Social Sciences. McMaster's 30-acre main campus, located in the Westdale neighbourhood of Hamilton, Ontario, is comprised of 300 acres of scenic property at the western end of Lake Ontario, between Toronto and Niagara Falls. McMaster University also has three other regional campuses: Burlington, Kitchener-Waterloo, and Niagara.

NexusHealth

NexusHealth is a partnership-focused health innovation accelerator based in McMaster University's Faculty of Health Sciences. Working across Health Sciences, Engineering, and other disciplines, NexusHealth brings together academic and non-academic partners across government, public health, industry, and communities to co-develop transformative health solutions with broad social impact.

The Raison D'être

A tremendous chasm prevents many of the promising discoveries made in academic laboratories from ever reaching society and benefitting our communities. While universities — and McMaster in particular — excel at publishing 'high-impact' research, that impact is too often limited to the academic sphere. To more efficiently move innovations from universities out into society, critical partnerships with leaders from industry, government, public health, and our communities must be forged. At NexusHealth, they have created a still-growing ecosystem of partners who, together, can find new efficiencies and opportunities on the road to translation.

Advancement at McMaster University

McMaster's vibrant student experience, world-class research, and community engagement are empowered by the support of thousands of alumni and donors who also believe strongly in McMaster. Together, McMaster's donors and alumni help make the university what it is today and help nurture the next generation of leaders in our world.

The Advancement leadership team provides overall strategic leadership and direction in the areas of fundraising; developing and building partnerships; and engaging with donors, alumni and stakeholders. The Advancement team also plays a critically important role in advancing the McMaster's strategy, in support of McMaster's ambitious vision, in partnership with the academic and administrative leaders across the University. The Advancement team has a centralized/decentralized structure, with strategies established and coordinated centrally, along with some programs and services (e.g. Annual Giving, Leadership Giving, Principal Giving, Corporate Giving, Estate Giving & Legacy Planning, Stewardship, overarching Alumni programs, Research & Prospect Analytics, and Gift Processing services), whereas other programs and services are delivered 'locally' through decentralized, dedicated Development and Alumni staff embedded within the Faculties and units. McMaster is currently in the planning phases for a comprehensive fundraising campaign.

Leadership



Heather Colwell, Associate Vice President, Pan University Advancement

As part of the University's highly professional and award-winning fundraising team, Heather has implemented effective advancement strategies, designed transformative development structures and established innovative partnerships and collaborations. Heather oversees development strategies in McMaster's faculties of

health sciences. Throughout her time at McMaster, Heather has been instrumental in driving revenue growth across the University.

Heather has been with McMaster since 2016 in multiple development leadership positions. Prior, Heather held development roles at a number of independent schools in Ontario and Quebec.

Heather received her B.A. in Biomedical Sciences from SUNY at Buffalo and holds a Master of Philanthropy and Non-Profit Leadership from Carleton University. Heather is a Certified Fund Raising Executive.



Courtney Vandervelde, Director, Development, NexusHealth

Courtney Vandervelde is Director, Development for NexusHealth at McMaster University. Courtney is a donor-centric development leader with over 15 years of experience in the philanthropic space. Courtney is a creative and strategic thinker with demonstrated skills in collaboration with senior staff and volunteers. Prior to joining the NexusHealth team, Courtney was a Director of Major Gifts for The Princess Margaret Cancer Foundation, tasked with raising funds for various cancer care and research initiatives. Courtney's work focused on multiple disease sites and programs, including breast, gynaecology, joint department of medical imaging, laboratory medicine, neuro-oncology, and others. In 2023, Courtney was awarded the 40 Under 40, by the Association for Healthcare Philanthropy (AHP), which recognizes 40 professionals each year who have helped shape the future of healthcare philanthropy. Her advancement leadership experience in a large, complex healthcare setting is instrumental to the NexusHealth mission.

The Position



The Associate Director, Development, NexusHealth, will work collaboratively with advancement and academic leadership to contribute toward major gift fundraising benefiting NexusHealth. NexusHealth is a McMaster-based health innovation accelerator, designed to transform how the modern university catalyzes the translation of health-related discoveries to tangible new health solutions. It brings together stakeholders from across sectors and working together in new ways to more efficiently move novel health solutions from university labs to society, where they can benefit the patients who need them. Their ethos of co-design ensures stakeholders from different sectors have input at all stages of research, helping to shorten the pathway from ideation to implementation. The Associate Director will work alongside their team to identify, cultivate and solicit major gift donors who align to the mission and vision of NexusHealth. As a key priority for McMaster, the NexusHealth funding priorities have been well-defined, and the Associate Director will use their fundraising expertise to fuel the mission by securing major philanthropic commitments. As Associate Director, Development you will drive the identification, cultivation, and development of a customized fundraising and recognition/stewardship plans for some of McMaster's most significant funders.

In addition to managing a personal portfolio of major gift prospects, the Associate Director will directly supervise a Senior Development Officer, providing coaching,

performance management, portfolio strategy, and professional development to ensure strong pipeline growth and donor stewardship across NexusHealth priorities.

Our candidate will be very comfortable leading a portfolio of major gift prospects. They will have demonstrated experience operating independently and with a high degree of excellence and tact. Past direct donor solicitation of six figure (and larger) gifts will be a requirement for this role.

University Advancement at McMaster University is a flexible, dynamic and ambitious team. They strengthen McMaster's relationships, secure new revenue and develop a pipeline of funders and supporters for the University.

Key Accountabilities



- Be the primary driver of overall private fundraising revenue for NexusHealth, the Faculty and the University in support of their objectives.
- Lead a Senior Development Officer, providing coaching, performance management, and assistance with portfolio strategy and providing professional development opportunities
- Proactively champion opportunities for new revenue in support of McMaster's research and educational goals, within the Faculty.
- Work with funders toward gifts of a minimum of \$50,000 - \$5,000,000 which have a mid-to high degree of complexity and involve many different stakeholders, some of whom may be internal and external to the University.
- Work collaboratively on strategic gifts in partnership with University Advancement's senior leaders, consistent with a team approach to development strategy.
- Advance and enhance the relationships, reputation, and resources of NexusHealth and the Faculty, through relationship building and revenue generation.
- In conjunction with the Director, Development, provide counsel to senior academic leadership on the largest gifts to the Faculty.
- As a leader on the FHS Development team, provide peer leadership efforts to secure and grow a base of major and principal gift-level supporters, and to steward these supporters in a manner so as to inspire them to establish, grow and sustain meaningful relationships with the University.
- As a leader on the FHS Development team, create and maintain positive, productive relationships and build and support a vibrant, diverse and high-performance team of professionals within the Faculty.

- Provide peer leadership efforts to secure and grow a base of major and principal gift-level supporters, and to steward these supporters in a manner to inspire them to establish, grow and sustain meaningful relationships with the University.
- Ability to work closely with the senior officers of the University, in particular the President, Chancellor, Vice-Presidents, and Provosts and Deans.

The Ideal Candidate



Key Qualifications

- A University degree, or consideration given to equivalent combinations of education and experience.
- CFRE designation or equivalent is an asset.
- Proven track record of success in securing five to six figure gifts.
- Demonstrated experience in major giving fundraising, preferably within a matrixed environment.
- Experience working with senior executives and leadership volunteers. Ability to work effectively in a complex organizational environment.
- Exceptional ability to inspire and engage high-net-worth prospects, articulate institutional priorities, and present philanthropic opportunities. Strong prospect management, strategic planning, budgeting, and financial management skills.
- This position may require travel. A valid driver's license and passport are necessary.

Working at McMaster University



At McMaster, you will find a community of talented individuals who are inspired by the University's Mission and the sense of purpose this mission brings. It is through these talented individuals, their creativity and drive for results that McMaster University has earned its reputation as being Canada's "most innovative" University.

McMaster University strives to embody the values of integrity, quality, inclusiveness and teamwork, and has a strong commitment to employment equity. Building an inclusive community with a shared purpose is something that McMaster University prioritizes. They believe it is important for their workforce to reflect the diversity of their students and community. The diversity of their workforce is at the core of their innovation and creativity and is a key area that strengthens their research capabilities and teaching excellence.

Compensation & Benefits

To learn more about the total rewards available to the successful candidate, please access McMaster's [interactive guide](#) with a summary of the compensation, benefits, retirement income, work life, development and career opportunities, and performance and recognition provisions offered at McMaster. To further explore the extensive total rewards program, detailed information can be accessed through the links throughout the guide. The hiring range for this position is \$110,000 - \$125,000 plus a performance pay bonus eligibility of up to 10% of base salary, along with an excellent [benefits package](#).

Application Instructions



The University seeks qualified candidates who share their commitment to equity and inclusion, who will contribute to the diversification of ideas and perspectives, and especially welcomes applications from indigenous (First Nations, Métis or Inuit) peoples, members of racialized communities, persons with disabilities, women, and persons who identify as 2SLGBTQ+.

Preston Human Capital Group has been retained to conduct this search on behalf of McMaster University. If you would like to apply, please send your CV and cover letter to **Lindsay Preston (lindsay@phcap.ca) by October 16, 2026, at 5pm ET.** Accommodation is available on request for candidates taking part in all aspects of the selection process. If you require any accommodation, please notify Lindsay Preston.

McMaster University is located on the traditional territories of the Haudenosaunee and Mississauga Nations and within the lands protected by the “Dish With One Spoon” wampum agreement. The diversity of their workforce is at the core of their innovation and creativity and strengthens their research and teaching excellence. In keeping with its Statement on Building an Inclusive Community with a Shared Purpose, McMaster University strives to embody the values of respect, collaboration and diversity and has a strong commitment to employment equity.

We thank you in advance for your interest. Only qualified candidates will be contacted.