



Associate Vice President, Philanthropy & Alumni Engagement

EXECUTIVE BRIEF





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APPLICATION PROCESS

KCI (Ketchum Canada Inc.) is supporting Trent University in the recruitment of an Associate Vice President, Philanthropy & Alumni Engagement. For more information about this opportunity, please contact Sylvie Battisti, Senior Vice President, KCI Search + Talent, at TrentU@kcitalent.com.

Interested candidates should send their resume and letter of interest to the email address listed above no later than **June 18, 2025**. All inquiries and applications will be held in strict confidence.

The AVP, Philanthropy & Alumni Engagement position offers a competitive remuneration package including a salary of \$170,000 - \$200,000, a comprehensive benefits package, life insurance, and a University pension plan.

Trent University is actively committed to creating a diverse and inclusive campus community and encourages applications from all qualified candidates. Trent University offers accommodation for applicants with disabilities in its recruitment processes. If you require accommodation during the recruitment process or require an accessible version of a document/publication



Associate Vice President, Philanthropy & Alumni Engagement

THE OPPORTUNITY

Trent University is seeking a highly strategic, enthusiastic and driven fundraising leader to serve as Associate Vice-President, Philanthropy & Alumni Engagement. As a member of the Trent Senior Management Team, the AVP, Philanthropy & Alumni Engagement leads Trent's advancement portfolio, including fundraising, alumni engagement, advancement services, donor and volunteer stewardship, advancement communications, and events. They are responsible for developing, resourcing, and implementing a comprehensive fundraising plan, enabled by robust and meaningful donor relationships, communications and stewardship programs, effective alumni engagement strategies, and high-calibre events, all supported by an effective advancement services operation.

This is an exciting time to join and lead Trent's Philanthropy and Alumni Engagement team as we leverage our most ambitious philanthropic major fundraising campaign – the \$100 million *Campaign for Momentous Change* in support of the University's key strategic priorities. In partnership with the President, VP, senior administration, student leaders, academic leaders, volunteers and staff, the AVP will have the unique opportunity to bring the campaign across the finish line and to celebrate its historic and transformative impact on Trent University.



Reporting to the Vice-President, External Relations & Development, the AVP is a highly visible leader internally and externally. They forge a philanthropic culture, a welcoming environment for alumni, and develop key relationships within and outside the University to build affinity, attract funding and increase engagement with the institution.

The ideal candidate will embody a community-minded spirit and display an eagerness to develop a passion for Trent, its culture and traditions. A superb communicator and compelling storyteller, they are also an excellent strategist and relationship builder. The AVP will apply their creativity, entrepreneurial spirit and deep knowledge of the philanthropic sector to inspire, persuade and help individuals, corporations, foundations and partners to invest in the momentous change that Trent faculty and students are leading.

Cultivating a shared vision for strategic alumni relations throughout the University, the AVP will provide leadership and direction to foster pride and engage the alumni community in maintaining a lifelong connection with the University, inspiring giving, advocacy, and volunteerism. Working with alumni volunteer leaders, the AVP will ensure the execution of the new Alumni Engagement Strategic Plan for a new chapter of alumni engagement at Trent University in an increasingly growing and diverse community of 66,000+ alumni.

The Associate Vice-President will have experience nurturing collaborative, agile, and responsive team cultures. The new incumbent will build on a strong foundation of excellence and collegiality and ensure an integrated plan unifies and connects the work across the portfolio. As a role model who demonstrates



high integrity, authenticity, respect, trust, and excellence, the AVP will be an open and empathetic coach who will continue to lead the Philanthropy & Alumni Engagement team of more than 20 professionals in reaching their highest potential.

The staff team is based in Peterborough and works in a hybrid model. To ensure effective team leadership and participate in the life of the University and community, the AVP is expected to spend part of their work week in Peterborough.

The base target salary range for this position is \$170K to \$200K, and the University offers an excellent comprehensive benefits program.

ABOUT TRENT UNIVERSITY

Consistently recognized as one of Canada's top universities, Trent University is home to a dynamic community of scholars embodying our motto *Nunc cognosco ex parte* – now I know in part – valuing what has been learned, and what is yet to be discovered.

Attracting excellent students from across the country and around the world, Trent is known for leadership in teaching, research, and student satisfaction. Distinguished by excellence in the humanities, social sciences and natural sciences, Trent



brings critical, integrative thinking to life every day. Here, students connect and collaborate with faculty, staff, and their peers through diverse communities that span our unique collegiate communities, disciplines, hands-on research, co-op and career experience, and community-based activities.

Trent University currently offers over 13,000 undergraduate and over 1,200 graduate students, including **474** Indigenous and **2,695** International students, the opportunity to study in more than 100 programs across two campuses. The Peterborough campus features award-winning architecture and innovative and

academically rigorous programs housed on 1,400 acres in a breathtaking natural setting on the banks of the Otonabee River. A second campus, Trent Durham Greater Toronto Area, is located in Oshawa and offers career-ready academic programs and experiences.



We respectfully acknowledge that we are on the treaty and traditional territory of the Mississauga Anishinaabeg. We offer our gratitude to First Peoples for their care for, and teachings about, our earth and our relations. May we honour those teachings.



Trent is Canada's leading environmental university, and Trent is proud of our long-standing reputation as a leader in Indigenous education and reconciliation. From one of the world's top water analysis labs, wildlife forensic DNA laboratories, to our forensics crime scene facility, Canada's first certified zero-carbon building, and the first accredited nursing simulation lab at a Canadian university, Trent University is committed to advancing knowledge through research and innovation. Trent's distinctive research strengths and [strategic directions](#) are summarized around a central focus on Healthy & sustainable environments and communities.

The University hosts an impressive number of Canada research chairs – testimony to the scope, depth and importance of the research taking place at Trent. Trent alumni and faculty are recognized all over the world and include two Nobel Prize winners: James Orbinski '80 was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for his work with Doctors Without Borders and Professor Chris Furgal was a co-recipient of the Nobel Prize for raising awareness of global climate change. In addition, five Trent graduates have the distinction of being renowned Rhodes Scholars, having received the Rhodes International Postgraduate Award, which is widely considered to be one of the world's most prestigious scholarships.

Trent's loyal alumni represent a growing global network of over 66,000 graduates residing across Ontario, Canada, the USA and countries worldwide.

Momentous Campaign

In 2023, Trent University launched its most ambitious philanthropic endeavour to date – the \$100 million *Campaign for Momentous Change*, based on the notion that new perspectives, technological innovation, and broader connections are impacting us individually, communally, and globally like never before. Momentous change is happening now at Trent University, and we are driven to **understand**, **activate**, and **steer** these momentous changes for good.



The *Momentous Campaign* will ensure the people, places, and initiatives of Trent University are limitless in their abilities to reach further, think more deeply, and bring truly momentous change to our world through:

- **Discovery** - Enabling the Trent University community to discover and impact the world without limitation through research, experiential learning, and meaningful debate.
- **Empowerment** - Empowering students to reach their academic and personal potential.
- **Our Places, Lands and Heritage** - Supporting the purposeful stewardship of Trent's established places, and enabling the creation of state-of-the-art destinations.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

[Trent University Website](#)
[About Trent University](#)
[Alumni at Trent University](#)
[Alumni Strategic Plan 2024 - 2027](#)
[Campaign for Momentous Change](#)
[Momentous Change – Case for Support](#)

[Momentous Change – Impact Report](#)
[Campaign Leaders](#)
[Governance](#)
[Financials](#)
[News & Events](#)
[Alumni News](#)

KEY DUTIES & RESPONSIBILITIES

Strategic Leadership: Develop and Implement an Institutional Philanthropic Plan

- Leads the development, implementation and evaluation of a strategic and comprehensive annual and long-term institutional philanthropic plan to maximize donor engagement and achieve fundraising targets for all University stakeholder groups through annual, major, transformational and legacy gifts, giving days, campaigns, and novel fundraising approaches.
- Maintains an in-depth knowledge of the University's programs and strategic priorities. Plays a lead role and works with the President, VP, the University senior executive team and Deans in identifying, refining and building cases for support for compelling philanthropic gift opportunities to connect donor interest with University priority needs.
- Proactively manages a personal portfolio of principal and major gift donors and prospects and acts as a lead or co-solicitor with volunteers or staff as appropriate.
- Seeks to inspire giving and create a culture of philanthropy within and outside the University.
- Sets, tracks and reports on key performance indicators and fundraising results.
- Ensures a strategic and coordinated moves management approach that includes prospect identification, cultivation, solicitation, recognition and stewardship activities.
- Provides leadership and coaching to the President, VPs, Board members, Philanthropic Advisory Council, volunteers and staff to engage them in fundraising activities.
- Identifies, engages, recruits, and supports the success of senior-level volunteers
- Maintains expertise and understanding of the latest trends in advancement structures and best practices; develops strategies to evolve Trent's advancement plans in response to results, external and internal forces.

Lead Donor Communications & Stewardship

- Directs development of fundraising and campaign materials, including websites, newsletters and social media, to maintain a high profile for philanthropy, to market the campaign, and support gift asks.
- Ensures effective stewardship of donors and volunteers and oversees the development and updating of policies, a stewardship matrix, and naming opportunities to ensure equitable and relevant recognition opportunities for all donors.
- Directs the production and distribution of annual reports on our endowment and expendable donor funds to provide accurate and useful information to donors in a timely fashion.
- Ensures appropriate utilization of donated funds to respect designations, maximize disbursements and, where necessary, work with donors to increase flexibility of purpose.

Advance Alumni Engagement, Communications and Services

- Oversees and ensures robust and effective alumni programming that is relevant to all alumni and encourages lifelong alumni engagement with the university. Activities include relationship management, chapter relations, awards, Homecoming and reunions.
- Builds and nurtures relationships with key alumni, including the co-chair of the Trent University Alumni Advisory Committee, and supports the Director, Alumni Engagement and Services in developing effective alumni volunteer structures.
- Ensures a robust, strategic and segmented communications plan that informs, engages and celebrates alumni
- Participates in alumni engagement activities locally, nationally and internationally.
- Promotes the importance and value of engaging alumni in Trent's mission.

Ensure effective Advancement Services.

- Ensures a well-resourced and effective Advancement Services operation, information, communication and data management systems to sustain engagement, outreach, and solicitation, and to provide reports for all aspects of donor and alumni activity that informs strategic decision making and relationship building.
- Provides regular reports to the Board of Governors and appropriate management reports to monitor fundraising effectiveness, Campaign team activity and overall Campaign progress, and alumni engagement.
- Ensures processes are in place to adhere to CRA regulations, privacy legislation, and CASL/ contact permissions.

Managerial, Administrative, and Staff Leadership Responsibilities

- Hires, supervises, develops and evaluates the performance of direct reports, including the Campaign Director, Director Philanthropic Operations and Digital Philanthropy, Director Alumni Engagement and Services, and Senior Integrated Engagement Manager.
- Develops the annual operating plan and budget for the portfolio and ensures the resources necessary to implement plans and achieve goals.
- Sets and monitors high standards for customer service, accuracy and confidentiality.
- Develops, implements and monitors policies, procedures and systems for gift acceptance, philanthropic naming, and other processes according to sound Advancement practices.
- Maintains an active understanding of trends and best practices in fundraising, alumni engagement and donor relations. Liaises regularly with other universities and non-profit sector organizations to exchange information about best practices, policies, procedures and processes
- Builds strong, collaborative relationships with peers in units across the University to assist in achieving portfolio and institutional goals.

QUALIFICATIONS, KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE

- A University degree is required for this role.
- Substantial and progressive experience in advancement, development and related disciplines, including 5+ years in a leadership role with direct reports, within a complex, multi-stakeholder environment
- Experience in higher education fundraising is desirable.
- Demonstrated leadership and performance success in revenue generation and with major institutional fundraising campaigns, including building superb relationships with and securing principal and major gifts from individuals, corporations, and foundations.
- Experience with alumni or other stakeholder engagement activities and programs is required.
- Demonstrated knowledge and experience in overseeing research and data management operations to effectively support fundraising, stakeholder engagement and related disciplines.
- Superior interpersonal, written and verbal communication skills, including strong presentation, storytelling and persuasion abilities.
- Demonstrated ability to collaborate and interact comfortably, professionally and effectively with a wide range of internal and external constituencies and stakeholders, including volunteers, donors, alumni, faculty and staff, and community members.
- Proven team leadership experience with success in empowering staff to achieve goals, developing and retaining talent, as well as fostering a collaborative and positive work environment.
- Demonstrated ability to lead and motivate volunteers; previous experience working with senior volunteers and committees is essential.
- Demonstrated practices and results that recognize and promote equity, diversity, and inclusion.
- From a foundation of integrity, able to employ diplomacy, discretion, and sound judgment while navigating sensitive or confidential issues as well as conflict resolution.
- Strong strategic and analytical skills with demonstrated experience in establishing goals and integrating vision, strategy, tactics, and activities to move from strategy through to execution.
- Excellent organizational, planning and time management skills, with demonstrated ability to manage multiple tasks and flexibility in meeting shifting demands and priorities.
- Proficiency with MS Office and Raiser's Edge or other CRM database.
- Local, regional and occasional national and international travel is required for this role, as is a valid driver's license.
- Must obtain a criminal reference check.

LIVING IN PETERBOROUGH

Nestled in the heart of the Kawarthas and just 90 minutes northeast of Toronto, Peterborough offers a rare blend of small-town charm, cultural vibrancy, and access to urban amenities. Known for its scenic landscapes and welcoming community, Peterborough is an ideal place to live, work, and explore, especially for those who value meaningful community connections and a strong quality of life.

Home to both Trent University and Fleming College, the city has a lively academic presence that fosters innovation, engagement, and a spirit of collaboration. Peterborough also supports a thriving nonprofit sector and a wide range of cultural and philanthropic initiatives.

Residents can enjoy a rich array of experiences: navigate the Peterborough Lift Lock on the historic Trent-Severn Waterway, take in a performance at Showplace or Market Hall Performance Centres, or explore the world-class Canadian Canoe Museum. The downtown core offers local boutiques, galleries, cafés, and a growing culinary scene, while the Peterborough Farmers' Market brings together producers and artisans each weekend.

Outdoor enthusiasts will appreciate easy access to the 32km of nature trails on the campus, access to the Trans Canada Trail, kayaking along the Otonabee River, or spending weekends at nearby Kawartha Lakes. The city also features excellent cycling routes, waterfront parks, and community events like Peterborough Musicfest and Ribfest.

Short commutes and a welcoming, community-focused atmosphere, Peterborough is a great place to build a rewarding career and have a fulfilling lifestyle.



LIVING IN DURHAM REGION



Just east of Toronto, Durham Region—home to communities like Oshawa, Whitby, and Ajax—offers a vibrant mix of urban convenience, natural beauty, and a strong sense of community. It's one of Ontario's fastest-growing areas, known for its affordability, diversity, and high quality of life.

Oshawa is a regional hub for education and innovation, anchored by Ontario Tech University, Durham College, and the Trent University Durham GTA campus, supporting a thriving environment for philanthropy and community partnerships.

The region features a lively arts and culture scene, with attractions like the Regent Theatre, Robert McLaughlin Gallery, and seasonal events such as the Peony Festival and Whitby Harbour Day. Downtowns are walkable and welcoming, offering cafés, restaurants, and local shops.

Outdoor opportunities abound, from the Waterfront Trail along Lake Ontario to Lynde Shores and Heber Down Conservation Area. With GO Transit, Highway 401, and upcoming transit expansions, Durham is well-connected while offering shorter commutes and a more relaxed pace than the GTA.

BIOGRAPHIES

Cathy Bruce – President & Vice Chancellor



Dr. Bruce is a renowned educator, researcher, and administrator. Since she joined Trent University in 2003, Cathy has served as a professor, director of graduate programs, founder of the [Centre for Teaching and Learning](#), dean of Trent's [School of Education](#), and, most recently, as vice-president of [Research and Innovation](#). Cathy was appointed as Trent's 9th President in 2024 and outlined an ambitious vision based on optimism and resiliency.

Cathy is committed to being a philanthropic champion and supporting the work of the Advancement and Alumni teams. In her first year as President, she has prioritized visiting with alumni chapters across the country and around the world, and meeting with donors and friends of the University. With her long tenure at Trent, her ability to speak about the various initiatives underway and the strength of the faculty and staff at the University is an asset to the work of the External Relations portfolio.

Dr. Bruce holds a Ph.D. and M.A. from the University of Toronto, as well as a B.A. and B.Ed. from York University.

Julie Davis, CFRE – Vice-President, External Relations & Development

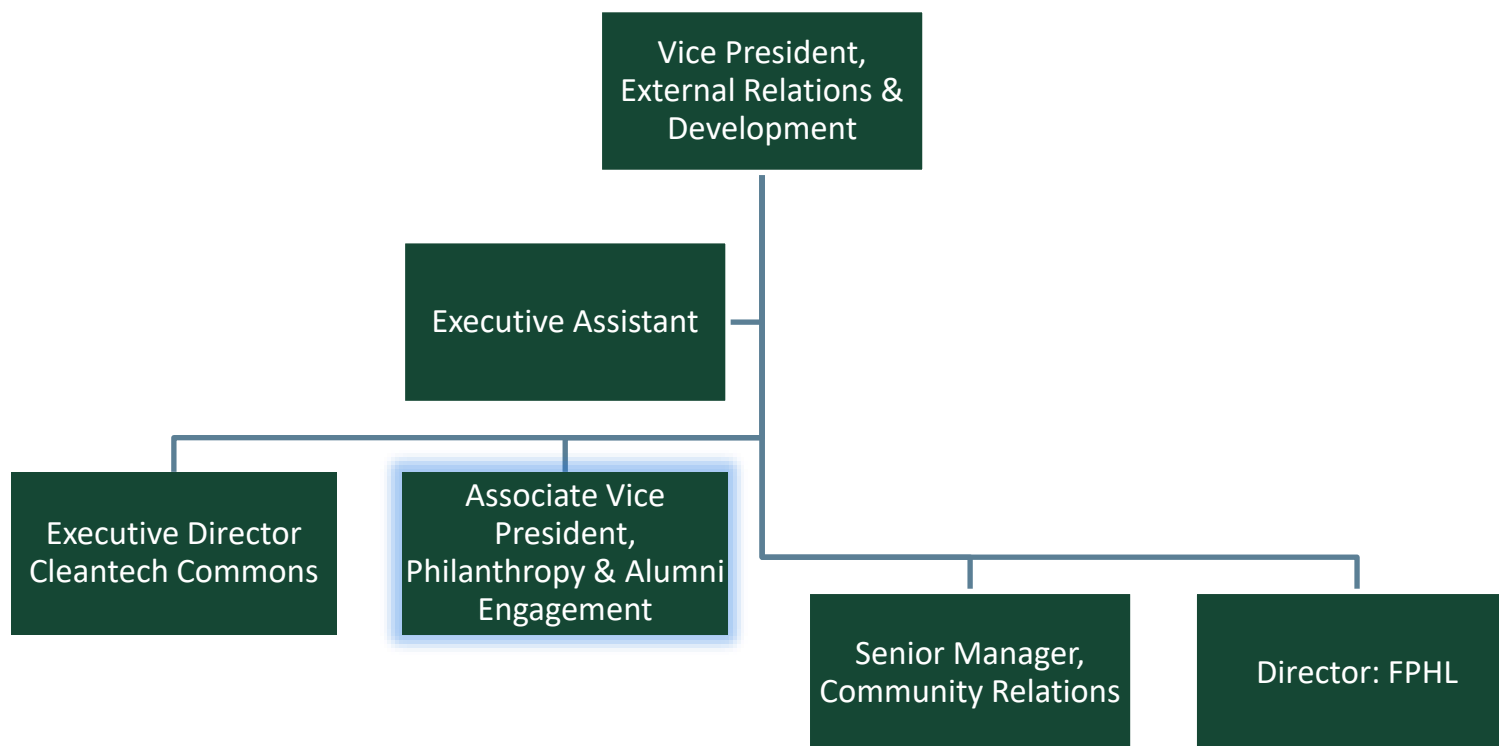


Ms. Davis is the Vice-President of External Relations & Development at Trent University, where she is responsible for institutional Indigenous relations, community and government relations, alumni engagement, philanthropy, and advancing plans for an Innovation Park and Seniors Village on the Trent campus in Peterborough. In her 14+ years at Trent, she has helped grow Trent's reputation, attracted new donors and partners, and led important initiatives such as the Trent Lands and Nature Areas Plan, which has received awards for Indigenous engagement and environmental values.

Prior to Trent, she served the Peterborough Regional Health Centre Foundation as President and CEO, leading two highly successful capital campaigns and creating best practice donor stewardship programs. The first part of her career was spent in marketing and senior management with two international consumer packaged goods companies - Quaker Oats and Unilever - responsible for award-winning advertising, brand positioning, consumer research, strategic planning and new product development.

Julie is a dedicated volunteer and community leader, currently serving as past-Chair of the Board for CCAE and Chair of the Board for the Five Counties Children's Centre, and was on the founding board of the Community Foundation of Greater Peterborough. She has a Bachelor's degree in business from the University of Technology, Sydney, and a Master's in Leadership, and speaks on a variety of topics including working with Indigenous peoples, building an inclusive workplace, and helping leaders cope with public scrutiny.

TRENT UNIVERSITY – ORGANIZATIONAL CHART: EXTERNAL RELATIONS & DEVELOPMENT



TRENT UNIVERSITY – PHILANTHROPY & ALUMNI ENGAGEMENT

