

Our stories may be different, but our MS journey is shared.



**MS Canada**

**Senior Vice President, Community  
Position Profile**

*Fall 2023*

## Position Profile for the Senior Vice President, Community

---

Multiple sclerosis (MS) is a debilitating neurological disease affecting the central nervous system, causing symptoms like lack of coordination, weakness, cognitive impairment, and extreme fatigue. Its causes aren't fully understood and it has no cure. Canada holds one of the world's highest MS diagnosis rates, with an average of 12 Canadians diagnosed daily, mostly women aged 20-49. As annual health sector costs for MS are projected to hit \$2 billion by 2031, the commitment to changing lives affected by MS is more urgent than ever.

With over 90,000 people in Canada living with MS, Multiple Sclerosis Canada (MS Canada) is the national organization devoted to changing the trajectory of this disease. To realize its vision of a world free of MS, MS Canada's strategy is focused on advancing treatment and care, enhancing the well-being of people affected by MS, understanding and halting disease progression, and stopping MS before it starts. MS Canada offers community-based programs, influences government, deploys resources strategically, and ensures that no Canadian faces MS alone. The organization's crucial role extends internationally, fostering rigorous scientific advancement, establishing gold-standard processes, and funding significant prevention and treatment initiatives.

MS Canada is realizing its mission to connect and empower the MS community to create positive change, positioning people and innovation at the core of taking collective action. Led by President and Chief Executive Officer, Dr. Pamela Valentine, MS Canada is at an exciting time in its history, delivering collective action through nimble, dynamic and inclusive community engagement. Reporting directly to Dr. Valentine, the Senior Vice President, Community (SVP, Community) spearheads MS Canada's community engagement and community-based fundraising efforts to bring its mission to life. Guiding and overseeing all aspects of the Community portfolio, the SVP, Community fosters a collaborative, data-driven and integrated approach to portfolio planning and implementation, risk management, and achieving meaningful progress against MS Canada's strategic impact goals. An outstanding communicator and exceptional relationship builder, the influential SVP, Community builds and manages key relationships with a diverse community including community partners, leadership volunteers, MS event donors, and global partners.

As an integral part of a highly collaborative Executive Team, the SVP provides valuable community-related insights into organizational objectives and initiatives while also contributing beyond the Community portfolio to maximize impact for individuals living with and affected by MS. The SVP, Community provides senior leadership to the portfolio's teams by effectively collaborating to set clear and measurable goals, providing regular coaching, and managing both risks and budgets. By creating a culture that embraces inclusion, diversity, equality and accessibility, the SVP ensures all team members feel valued, understand their contribution to the strategy, and are encouraged to participate in the journey to improve the lives of those affected by MS.

The engaging SVP, Community brings a genuine passion for MS Canada's vision of a world free of MS. An innovative people leader with strong strategic and operational business acumen, the successful candidate will have at least 10+ years' senior leadership experience and a university degree. Experience working within not-for-profit and/or healthcare organizations along with exposure to peer-to-peer fundraising and national organizations are all valuable assets. This is an extraordinary opportunity for a strategic, collaborative, people-oriented leader to significantly contribute to MS Canada's growth and culture while providing exceptional experiences for community members, colleagues, volunteers and donors, now and for many years to come.

MS Canada of Canada is committed to ensuring that inclusion, diversity, equity, and accessibility are at the core of the organization – part of everything it does. MS Canada values an inclusive perspective and welcomes applications from candidates who could enrich the diversity of the organization and who are passionate about creating a world free of MS.



## About MS Canada

---

Multiple sclerosis is an unpredictable, often disabling disease of the central nervous system (the brain and spinal cord.) MS can cause symptoms such as lack of coordination, weakness, impaired sensation, cognitive impairment and extreme fatigue. There are two types of MS: relapsing-remitting and primary or secondary progressive MS. Canada has one of the highest rates of multiple sclerosis diagnoses in the world, with an average of 12 Canadians diagnosed with MS each day, the majority of whom are women and are between the ages of 20-49. In Canada, there is one organization with nationwide reach that can support people on their MS journey and tip the scales of MS research to change lives forever: MS Canada.

MS Canada plays an important leadership role at home and in the broader international community, with a focus on finding a cause and pathways to cures. MS Canada is rapidly changing the face of this neurological disease by accelerating research, communicating new findings, improving the quality of life for people and families with MS, and ultimately answering fundamental questions that will lead to pathways to cures. MS Canada provides exceptional community-based services, mobilizes volunteers for action, asserts influence on government, and deploys resources to the highest priorities nationally and locally to support those living with and affected by MS.

At its core, MS Canada is a collaborator and facilitator within the broader MS community. MS Canada is the only national voluntary organization in Canada that supports both MS through research and in community. MS Canada's thousands of volunteers offer community-based services, fundraising events, public awareness, and social action to over 90,000 individuals in Canada living with MS and their families and friends. Governed by a 14- member annually elected volunteer Board of Directors, MS Canada delivers on its mission in communities across Canada with the help of 1,500 leaderships volunteers. Funding is provided through the generosity of dedicated individuals, companies and foundations.

By 2031, total annual health sector costs for MS are expected to reach \$2 billion. For those living with and affected by MS, the urgency is now. MS is unpredictable, with physical, emotional and financial impact. Treatments continue to advance, but a cure has not yet been found. At the forefront of the global research agenda, MS Canada provides scientific leadership, facilitates rigorous international scientific advancement, establishes and informs on gold standard processes, and persistently sounds the alarm of insistence. MS Canada funds important prevention and treatment and helps to ensure that no Canadian will face MS alone.

Amalgamated with the Multiple Sclerosis Scientific Research Foundation ("MSSRF") in 2023, MS Canada is the largest funder of MS research in Canada. MS Canada supports innovative and transformative research in multiple sclerosis, including its focus on interdisciplinary research that fosters multi-site collaboration and accelerates fundamental advances in understanding and treating MS. Examples of such research are the identification of blood-based markers associated with disease progression, potential new MS therapeutics to enhance repair and regeneration, and collaboration with global partners to enhance the early detection and prevention of the disease.



## MS Canada Vision, Mission and Values

MS Canada’s vision is simple: a world free of multiple sclerosis. With a mission to connect and empower the MS community to create positive change, MS Canada is a leader in finding a cure for multiple sclerosis and enabling people affected by MS to enhance their quality of life.

MS Canada is guided by its core values:

- **Impact-driven.** We make a difference.
- **Collaborative.** We work together.
- **Compassionate.** We help.
- **Bold.** We think big.
- **Resilient.** We do not give up.

## Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Accessibility

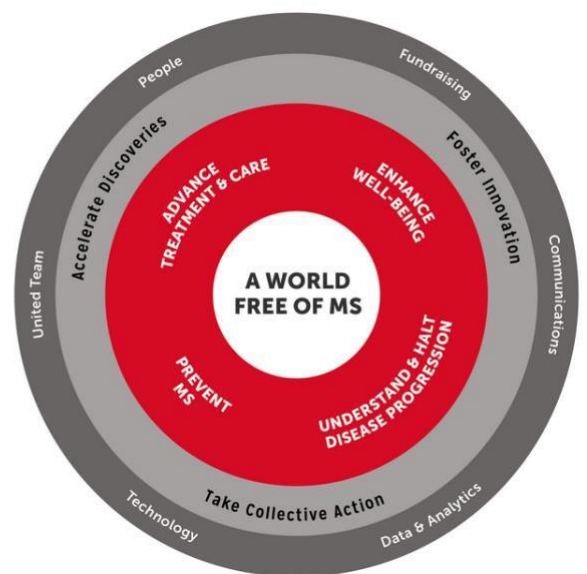
MS Canada is committed to ensuring that inclusion, diversity, equity, and accessibility (IDEA) are at the core of the organization and part of everything it does. Diverse perspectives allow MS Canada employees to see beyond what is right in front of them, inclusivity empowers a sense of belonging and connection in MS Canada’s community, and equity ensures that as society moves towards a world free of MS, no one is left behind.

IDEA is critical to driving innovation and improving health outcomes for people living with MS – strategic priorities for MS Canada. MS Canada believes that more can be done to be a truly inclusive MS community and it pledges to lead by example. Initiatives include removing barriers to an inclusive workplace, diversifying recruitment at all levels, engaging with the MS community, developing strategies to address underrepresentation in the MS community and ensuring those voices are heard, and tracking and reporting MS Canada’s progress with people affected by MS.

## MS Canada’s Strategic Framework: Discover. Innovate. Act.

In collaboration with hundreds of people from across the country, including people living with and affected by MS as well as members of the scientific community, volunteers, staff, and donors, in 2019 MS Canada unveiled a strategic framework that not only built up the work of the entire MS community since 1948, but also brought a new chapter to move forward MS Canada’s mission of connecting and empowering the MS community to create positive change that helps realize the vision of a world free of MS.

**STRATEGIC**  
PLAN



## MS Canada's Impact Goals

**Advance treatment and care.** Having a variety of effective treatment and care options for symptom management, wellness and self-care will help people on their unique MS journey.

**Enhance well-being.** Removing physical and social barriers within communities will ensure access to opportunities and supports for people affected by MS.

**Understand and halt disease progression.** Understanding the complexities of MS progression will stop MS in its tracks.

**Prevent MS.** Stopping MS before it starts will reduce the number of people who develop the disease.

## MS Canada's Approach

Leveraging people, fundraising, communications, data and analytics, technology and a united team, MS Canada has a three-pronged approach to realizing its strategic mandate. MS Canada will accelerate discoveries by investing in research, building capacity, and facilitating knowledge exchange. It will foster innovation by catalyzing conversations and encouraging the adoption of new ideas. MS Canada will draw upon the expertise and experience of the MS community, work with local and international communities, build partnerships, and inspire and mobilize people to take action and create greater awareness of the disease.

## Senior Vice President, Community Opportunity

---

The MS community in Canada is a diverse and resilient group dedicated to making a difference in the lives of those affected by MS. This community is both national in scope and local in its impact and includes people with MS, their families and friends. By working together, the MS community, in all its diversity, is making meaningful progress in achieving MS Canada's four impact goals of advancing treatment and care, enhancing well-being, understanding and halting disease progression, and preventing MS.

At the core of the community is the commitment to improving the quality of life for those living with MS and to advance scientific research for pathways to cures. Individuals in this community are actively engaged in a variety of initiatives, ranging from awareness raising to advocacy, fundraising events and providing meaningful volunteer-driven programming to those affected by MS. MS Canada also recognizes and values the diversity among those affected by MS. It understands that each MS journey is unique and so aims to offer broad, exciting, and meaningful programming and support services to cater to different needs. Furthermore, there is a recognized need to make inroads into other communities where MS is on the rise, such as Indigenous communities, by providing specific programming to cater to each group's unique needs.

Over time, MS Canada has evolved to a more flexible and inclusive community engagement approach that helps connect community members' interests and skills to opportunities. Connecting MS communities locally and across Canada has been realized through the introduction and development of virtual and in-person channels driven by community needs, known as community hubs. Community hubs are local connection points driven by volunteers that

provide a platform for program activities, fundraising, peer networking, wellness activities for people with MS and civic engagement. These hubs – which can be physical, virtual or hybrid, as determined by hub participants – allow the community to connect and collaborate more effectively, providing more significant and impactful opportunities for involvement.

To successfully operationalize and scale this transformative approach to growing and strengthening the collective MS community across the country, MS Canada is seeking an exceptional Senior Vice President, Community who will make a difference in the lives of people with MS by shaping the future of MS Canada’s community engagement efforts. Reporting to the President and Chief Executive Officer, the highly personable SVP, Community ensures MS Canada’s mission comes to life “on the ground” by developing the community strategy, effectively operationalizing the portfolio, growing the network of community hubs, fostering an environment that encourages collaboration and integration across various teams and stakeholders, and inspiring the community to take collective action.

Leading a team of approximately 45 people, the SVP, Community’s comprehensive mandate includes conceptualizing, developing, and implementing strategic initiatives that align with MS Canada’s broader mission and vision. The SVP oversees the community team’s efforts to mobilize volunteers and engage with the wider community in initiatives that support the organization’s goals. By understanding the objectives of each of MS Canada’s programs along with target communities’ needs and expectations, the SVP utilizes strong project management skills to identify and implement effective operational mechanisms, anticipate and mitigate risks, ensure appropriate resources are in place, develop KPIs and measure program effectiveness.

A significant part of the external-facing SVP’s mandate includes community engagement, fundraising and partnership development. Working closely with MS Canada’s fundraising teams and taking a “boots on the ground” approach, the SVP, Community builds relationships that support and elevate MS Canada’s peer-to-peer fundraising to new heights, whether through signature events or the implementation of programs. The SVP identifies and cultivates strategic partnerships, including MS event donors, global partners and those with potential for major gift donations. An outstanding relationship builder with the ability to see opportunities that others miss, the SVP continually looks to partner with others, negotiates mutually beneficial arrangements, and coaches team members and volunteers to spot and nurture their own partnerships to strengthen the impact of MS Canada’s efforts. The SVP, Community also contributes to MS Canada’s advocacy strategy by liaising with key stakeholders and representing the organization in relevant forums.



*MS Bike*

As a member of the Executive Team, the SVP, Community actively

participates in the development, execution and communication of MS Canada's strategic framework, providing community insights into organizational objectives and initiatives as well as contributing thought leadership to maximize MS Canada's impact beyond the Community portfolio. In partnership with senior and executive leadership, the SVP, Community upholds MS Canada's organizational culture, identifying and modeling the behaviours that reinforce resilience, compassion and bold thinking while celebrating inclusion, diversity, equity and accessibility.

The SVP, Community drives a data-driven culture of collaboration and innovation while ensuring all team members feel valued, understand how their contributions are connected to the strategy, and are encouraged to participate in the journey. The SVP mentors and coaches their teams, inspires purpose, builds credibility and elevates employee

engagement through transparency, clearly defined roles and responsibilities, and explicit and measurable objectives and deliverables.

## **Short and Long-Term Success Indicators for the Senior Vice President, Community Opportunity at MS Canada**

Among other key objectives, and with the highest integrity and ethics, the successful Senior Vice President, Community will have:

- Developed credibility, built trust and established strong, positive and productive relationships with all members of MS Canada's senior and executive leadership, especially the President and Chief Executive Officer, the MS Canada Board and related Committees, executive team colleagues, direct reports and all extended team members;
- Developed credibility, built trust and established strong, positive and productive relationships with members of the MS community, including leadership volunteers, top donors and community/global partners, to maximize community engagement and action;
- Contributed to annual enterprise planning, ensuring the community portfolio has ambitious goals to advance community action;
- Ensured strong data and analytics protocols are in place to measure objective key results and impact, including driving the strategic use of Salesforce to enhance measurement;
- Significantly advanced community connection through the implementation of community hubs across Canada;
- Met annual community fundraising revenue targets and drive growth in the peer-to-peer programs by ensuring best in class strategies and superior stewardship practices;
- Established relationships with MS Canada's partners and key vendors to enhance delivery;
- Advanced inclusion, diversity, equity and accessibility (IDEA) strategies within the portfolio to deepen reach and connectivity of those living with and affected by MS;
- Fostered a collaborative and integrated approach to planning, execution, risk, projects, and key results;
- Gained a full understanding of MS Canada and the MS community and provided insight into organizational objectives and initiatives and contributes beyond the Community portfolio to maximize impact for people living with and affected by MS; and
- Provided senior leadership to the portfolio's teams, including goal setting, coaching, and managing risk and budgets.

## Key Leadership Competencies of MS Canada's Senior Vice President, Community

With a genuine desire to create a world free of multiple sclerosis, the SVP, Community defines success through the eyes of the diverse MS communities across Canada and is driven to contribute to a culture of exceptional customer service. An outstanding relationship builder, the SVP, Community is an engaging and influential leader with the ability to foster excellent relationships. They build rapport well, easily engage others and put people at ease. They are approachable, authentic, and have the ability to exceptionally leverage existing and professional networks on behalf of MS Canada to enhance the organization's profile and open doors seamlessly. Consistent personally and professionally, this leader garners respect, quickly builds trust with a wide range of audiences, operates with high integrity and balances humility and confidence to get things done.

Applying an entrepreneurial, private sector mindset to the not-for-profit world, the agile SVP, Community brings fresh perspective to see the art of the possible in systems, places and people. They have a proven track record of success in the development and operationalization of strategic plans, integrating innovation while connecting the dots from long-term vision to day-to-day accountabilities and assessing risks in planning. The SVP appreciates both the bigger picture and the details, quickly grasps issues and concepts, assesses what is important and why, bases decisions on informed facts, effectively communicates where the risks and opportunities lie, and spends time on activities that add value. They create clarity on deliverables, standards in process, and bring a collegial team spirit to the organization, even remotely. Financially literate, the SVP demonstrates fiscal responsibility in the development and management of their budget.

The Senior Vice President, Community can tell a story in a compelling way that attracts others to their mission. By understanding the competitive nature of the non-profit marketplace and the drivers of effective fundraising, they know how to develop a culture of philanthropy, identify opportunities, and leverage digital channels to increase MS Canada's awareness, improve customer experience and insights, decrease costs, and stand out. The SVP follows trends and opportunities globally and is always on the lookout for the next breakthrough idea. At the same time, the SVP, Community strategically avoids crises and is able to effectively manage and protect reputational and legal risk with urgency, accountability and transparency.

The SVP, Community has the willingness and ability to ask strategic questions, is well researched and informed, and presents opinions and effectively frames issues in a way that contributes beyond their portfolio. With informed judgment and strong business acumen, the influential SVP knows how and when to move the conversations forward and effectively navigates between positions and parties to build understanding within MS Canada and the community. The SVP demonstrates organizational courage by making difficult decisions to do what must be done to ensure MS Canada's future success. Authentic and candid, they have an ability to really listen and challenge the popular view if they believe it is in the best interest of the company or organization. Patient and empathetic, the SVP, Community is able to manage difficult situations directly and find appropriate solutions. Influential and persuasive, they know how to motivate and empower others and will have experience leading change, including organizational direction, culture change and/or major systems and process changes. Tireless, enthusiastic and disciplined, the SVP, Community works to support the positive, bringing a serious, thoughtful but positive energy to the team.

Through actions, thoughts and words, the new SVP, Community builds rapport, models MS Canada's core values, and contributes to MS Canada's positive organizational culture. They thrive among high performers, have exceptional coaching and feedback-providing skills, and create a team-based environment that celebrates collaboration and team success. They have built top leadership teams capable of executing and delivering on ambitious strategic plans. This is an exciting time to help lead MS Canada's transformation through innovative community leadership. The SVP,



Community is a meaningful opportunity to help MS Canada grow and transform at a dynamic time in its journey while contributing significantly to improving MS communities and people's lives in 2023 and beyond.

## How to Apply

---

If you are interested in further exploring this exciting and meaningful Senior Vice President, Community opportunity with MS Canada, please provide **your resume and a detailed cover letter** that highlights your background and connects the dots between your business and leadership experience and the key competencies outlined in this Position Profile and let us know why serving as the Senior Vice President, Community at MS Canada resonates with you. Please address your cover letter to ***Lisa Heidman, LL.B, ICD.D, Founder and Chief Executive Officer, Arlington Partners International and the MS Canada Selection Committee*** and send your confidential materials directly to Lisa Heidman at [lisaheidman@arlingtonpartnersinc.com](mailto:lisaheidman@arlingtonpartnersinc.com).

MS Canada is committed to ensuring that inclusion, diversity, equity, and accessibility are at the core of MS Canada and everything it does. MS Canada values an inclusive perspective and welcomes applications from those who have demonstrated a commitment to the values of inclusion, diversity, equity, and accessibility while reflecting the community that MS Canada so proudly serves. Applications from members of groups that have been historically disadvantaged and marginalized, including First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples, Indigenous peoples of North America, racialized persons, persons with disabilities and/or 2SLGBTQ+, as well as from members of the MS community, are encouraged. MS Canada invite les applications en français.

We look forward to exploring your candidacy.