



State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations  
Council on Postsecondary Education  
**OFFICE OF THE POSTSECONDARY COMMISSIONER**

560 Jefferson Boulevard, Suite 100  
Warwick, Rhode Island 02886-1304

**VACANCY NOTICE**  
**Chief Financial Officer**  
**Hiring Range \$100,000 - \$150,000**

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**Who We Are:**

Great momentum exists in Rhode Island in transforming public higher education to meet the needs of a changing student demographic and the economy of the future. With the introduction of the RI Promise Scholarship for two years of community college education, the success of the RI dual and concurrent enrollment program, and the drive to reach 70% postsecondary attainment by 2025, Rhode Island has made great strides to make a college education more accessible and relevant for students. As many other states have come to realize, transforming postsecondary education requires more than small improvements or pilot programs. This is a time for bold, strategic, and systemic change.

Commissioner Brenda Dann-Messier has developed six key priorities that will inform the work of the Rhode Island Office of the Postsecondary Commissioner (OPC) for the next three years. These priorities focus on increasing attainment, closing equity gaps, enhancing financial aid policies, expanding workforce development efforts, introducing innovative system-wide approaches, and aligning work across the system and throughout the state. OPC needs an excellent leadership team that can work together and with both internal and external partners on a range of issues and initiatives. The leadership team is responsible for setting agency goals and, working with all staff, with leading policy development and implementation.

Specifically, the Chief Financial Officer will play a critical role in the successful implementation of OPC's strategic plan. Working closely with the Commissioner, the Council on Postsecondary Education, the senior leadership team, the staff, and the leadership teams at our public institutions, the Chief Financial Officer will contribute to the vision, strategy and leadership to ensure that postsecondary students in Rhode Island achieve successful outcomes. Additionally, the professional in this role will serve as a senior advisor to the Commissioner and the leadership team on matters of strategic financial planning and management.

**Who You Are:**

You have a strong record of achievement, are goal-oriented, and are dedicated to our mission of building a system of higher education where Rhode Islanders have access to high-quality public education that they can afford, where they have the supports they need to succeed, and

where they graduate with the skills employers want in today's complex and changing economy. You have a strong commitment to closing equity gaps in education. You are familiar with the challenges facing higher education and have applied analytical and creative problem-solving skills to address them or similar challenges. You enjoy working individually and as part of a team and are able to quickly and effectively build strong relationships and influence others with your ideas. Your resourcefulness and communications skills are matched only by your strong project management skills that allow you to develop and implement complex financial projects involving multiple stakeholders, tight deadlines, and high standards. You are able to take ideas and solutions from brainstorming to fruition, while engaging and incorporating the perspectives of others. Big ideas and even bigger challenges excite you. You thrive in a rapidly-evolving environment, you make time to reflect on your work in order to continually improve your effectiveness, and you know how to self-advocate in order to get the support that you need.

**The Office of the Postsecondary Commissioner is dedicated to the goal of building a culturally diverse and pluralistic team committed to working in a multicultural environment and strongly encourages applications from minorities and women.**

**Reasonable accommodations for individuals with disabilities can be arranged in order to perform the essential functions of the job.**

Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis, so interested candidates are encouraged to apply as soon as possible.

AN AFFIRMATIVE ACTION/EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

**RHODE ISLAND OFFICE OF THE POSTSECONDARY COMMISSIONER**  
**NON-CLASSIFIED, NON-UNION JOB DESCRIPTION**

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**TITLE:** Chief Financial Officer  
**AGENCY:** Rhode Island Office of the Postsecondary Commissioner  
**REPORTS TO:** Commissioner of Postsecondary Education  
**SUPERVISION OF:** Professional and administrative staff  
**Pay Grade:** 16

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**BASIC FUNCTION:**

To advise the Postsecondary Commissioner and oversee all phases of the financial administration of the Office of the Postsecondary Commissioner including budgeting, expenditure control, strategic financial planning, and program evaluation, and to do related work as required.

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**ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLES OF SPECIFIC DUTIES:**

**Strategy, Vision and Leadership**

- In partnership with our public institutions of higher education, develops and implements a comprehensive funding plan for postsecondary system, as directed by the Council on Postsecondary Education (CPE).
- With the Commissioner, administers the fiscal and fiduciary policies adopted by the Board of Education and the Council of Postsecondary Education, including asset protection, auxiliary enterprises- self-sufficiency, real estate transactions, capital development, fiscal accountability, and tuition and fee policies.
- Advises the commissioner and other key members of senior management on financial planning, budgeting, compliance, and policy matters.
- Evaluates existing programs and develops plans for their expansion, modification or elimination in view of changing needs and the availability of state, federal, and/or philanthropic funds.
- Provides research and financial modeling related to system fiscal policy.
- Contributes to the development of the system Office's strategic goals and objectives, as well as the overall management of the organization.
- Supports the three institutions in their missions of teaching, research, and outreach by seeking new opportunities for collaboration and innovation, making administrative operations more effective, and maintaining the financial integrity of all RI public postsecondary system operations.

### **System, Board, Council and State-Related Responsibilities:**

- In collaboration with our public institutions of higher education, prepares and submits the annual state budget and the 5-year capital improvement plan for the postsecondary system, as approved by the Council on Postsecondary Education and the Board of Education.
- Serves as the fiscal staff to the Board, Council, and Finance and Facilities committee; effectively communicates and presents critical financial matters regularly at Council, Board, and committee meetings.
- Serves on various system committees, such as NEASC self-study committees and strategic planning teams at the individual institutions.
- Provides analysis, oversight, and technical assistance to public institutions of higher education related to policy and procedure development for the planning, preparation, and monitoring of system budgets to ensure uniformity.
- Assists the Commissioner with presenting and providing testimony on the annual budget and capital improvement plan to the executive branch and legislative committees.

### **Team Development and Team Leadership:**

- Oversees, directs, and organizes the work of the Office's finance team which includes the following functions: budget; capital improvement plan; compliance and reporting; finance and debt management; grant accounting; purchasing; and risk management to continue to achieve operational effectiveness in the system of higher education.
- Promotes a culture of high performance and continuous improvement that values learning and a commitment to quality.
- Ensures that staff members receive timely and appropriate training and development.
- Establishes and monitors staff performance and development of goals, assigns accountabilities, sets objectives, establishes priorities, conducts annual performance appraisals, and monitors and evaluates results.
- Mentors and develops staff using a supportive and collaborative approach.
- Provides support to OPC education centers including procurement, accounting, and control support and advise in the establishment of business processes.

### **Operations**

- Oversees all phases of financial administration, including budgeting, expenditure controls, and financial planning.
- Provides analytical support to the Commissioner, including the development of the system budget and internal management reporting.
- Oversees compliance, liability claims, trust indenture expenditures, budget analysis, and investments for the system.
- Improves administrative and operational accounting services such as grants management, accounts receivable, accounts payable, and purchasing for both unrestricted and restricted sources of funds.

- Establishes and implements financial information systems and policies to ensure accountability and accurate reporting, as well as to provide key state and local stakeholders with adequate and predictable information.
- Advises on revenue bond issuances related to the institutions' auxiliary enterprises, as well as the Education and General fund through the Rhode Island Health and Education Building Corporation.
- Directs and oversees the continuing disclosures related to the various bond issuances, assuring that all legal notices and reporting are in compliance.
- Perform other duties as assigned by the Commissioner of Postsecondary Education.

**REQUIREMENTS:**

Education: Bachelor's Degree in finance, accounting, or related field required; Master's degree or C.P.A. preferred. Knowledge of public finance, accounting and auditing systems and management information systems required.

Experience: Five or more years of progressive experience in directing a complex financial and/or administrative activity is required as a demonstrated expertness in effective integration of financial and administrative management components. Demonstrated familiarity with capital development and revenue bonding requirements, planning, programming and budgeting systems, evaluation systems, management information systems, and computer technology is required.

Experience in higher education administration and/or governmental accounting is required.

**KNOWLEDGE AND SPECIAL SKILLS:**

- Knowledge of applicable Federal, State, and local laws, rules, and regulation
- Knowledge of strategic planning, policy development, and resource allocation principles and practices.
- Knowledge of accounting and automated financial systems principles and practices.
- Skilled in administering large, complex governmental accounting systems.
- Skilled in solving complex problems.
- Skilled in multi-tasking and working under pressure to produce output in response to both internal and external deadlines.
- Skilled in analyzing and interpreting Federal and State statutes and policies, rules and regulations.
- Skilled in facilitation of work groups.

- Skilled in managing and supervising staff.
- Skilled in communicating and interpersonal exchanges as applied to interaction with coworkers, supervisor, the general public, etc. sufficient to exchange or convey information and to receive work direction.
- Ability to work collaboratively.
- Able to multi-task and bring a high level of energy and enthusiasm to the work.
- Ability to gather and analyze data to answer questions.
- Strong written and oral communication skills.

**SALARY:**

The hiring range for this position will be \$100,000 to \$150,000.