



## Director of Strategic Partnerships

The Foundation for Food and Agriculture Research (FFAR) invites applications and nominations for a highly motivated and dynamic individual to join its team as a Director of Strategic Partnerships. The Director will leverage FFAR's existing funding and relationships and will work proactively with its Scientific Program Directors to increase funding for FFAR's collaborative scientific research projects. The Director will also participate in general fundraising efforts for FFAR. Successful experience working with scientists and building collaborative research projects is key, and familiarity with the food, agriculture, and research environments will be a plus factor. Working with FFAR's Scientific Programs staff, the Director will proactively cultivate, solicit, and steward prospect and donor relations to support project-specific funding.

### **FFAR as a Unique, Audacious, and already Accomplished Organization**

FFAR was established by bipartisan Congressional support in the 2014 Farm Bill as an independent 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization to build public-private partnerships to support pioneering and actionable science addressing today's food and agriculture challenges. FFAR leverages public-private partnerships to increase the research critical to enhancing sustainable production of nutritious food for a growing global population. FFAR catalyzes innovative research to solve pressing food and agriculture challenges.

FFAR was funded in the 2014 Farm Bill with \$200 million, with the requirement that every federal dollar FFAR spends on research be matched with at least one non-federal dollar. FFAR was allocated an additional \$185 million in the 2018 Farm Bill with the same matching requirement. FFAR has already matched and committed \$200 million in initial research projects, and it has ambitious plans for more research consortia, awards, and programs going forward. Furthermore, in response to the 2018 Farm Bill, FFAR recently developed a Strategic and Sustainability Plan that articulates potential pathways toward greater financial diversification and sustainability.

FFAR receives federal funding to:

- Enhance the viability of farms and our food supply;
- Increase environmental resilience and ensure the conscientious stewardship of natural resources; and
- Improve human health and well-being through food and agriculture.

FFAR is located in Washington, DC. FFAR builds public-private partnerships to fund research that fills knowledge gaps, advances science, and provides results directly to the food and agriculture system. FFAR works with academic, industry, governmental, and nonprofit partners to identify pressing food and agriculture issues, where increased research investment can propel science into application. FFAR complements and advances the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) mission and builds programs that are of mutual interest to USDA, FFAR, and the agricultural community.

FFAR is guided by a highly accomplished and engaged board of directors, of academic, industry and government leaders. Internally, FFAR's visionary and extremely effective Executive Director leads a talented and active 24-person staff focused on advancing its mission and vision, based on its values:

**Mission:** FFAR builds unique partnerships to support innovative science addressing today's food and agriculture challenges.

**Vision:** FFAR envisions a world in which ever-innovating and collaborative science provides every person access to affordable, nutritious food grown on thriving farms.



**Values:**

**AUDACITY**

FFAR is an audacious organization that builds bold partnerships to fund pioneering research.

**COLLABORATION**

FFAR is committed to building public-private partnerships that provide an open, collaborative space to fund research that achieves a common goal.

**RIGOR**

FFAR employs a rigorous scientific review process that produces credible results benefitting the public and private sectors.

**PIONEER**

FFAR is pioneering scientific exploration, expanding the frontiers of food and agriculture research to develop solutions that benefit farmers and consumers.

**AGILITY**

FFAR agilely approaches research and partnerships from multiple perspectives to identify connections across disciplines and opportunities for results that benefit multiple stakeholders.

For more information about FFAR, see: <https://foundationfar.org/>.

**The Director of Strategic Partnerships Opportunity**

FFAR's scientific work is currently organized around six challenge areas:

- Soil Health
- Sustainable Water Management
- Advanced Animal Systems
- Next Generation Crops
- Health Agriculture Nexus
- Urban Agriculture

An existing Director of Strategic Partnerships currently conducts partnership and development functions to support scientists in all these challenge areas, with the support of a research and development officer. After selection and appointment of the new Director, another research and development officer will be hired, and this Director will have supervisory responsibilities for that writer/researcher. Each team of two will then be focused primarily on three of the challenge areas.

In addition, the six Scientific Program Directors are very involved in raising matching funds for their research initiatives. Thus, coordination of fundraising with the Science Team will be a key part of this role. This position will report to FFAR's Chief Development Officer and will closely coordinate with the other Director of Strategic Partnerships and other development staff for prospect cultivation, solicitation, stewardship, and execution of goals and strategic objectives.

**Specific Responsibilities**

- Work with a portfolio of research partners, donors and prospects through the partnership and giving cycle from research and identification through engagement, solicitation, closure of support and stewardship on restricted or project-specific support
- Support the creation of customized solicitation packages and project materials

- Work directly with the Chief Development Officer and Scientific Program Directors to identify and prioritize program and initiative needs, opportunities, and program defined donor value and ROI
- Conduct thorough and appropriate introductions or follow-up with contacts at conferences and FFAR convening events
- Plan and execute personal face-to-face visits to fulfill project team solicitation strategies, goals, and metric targets
- Collaborate and coordinate with FFAR Communications, Program, Operational and Development staff on events and related activities
- Contribute to FFAR's overall strategic goals and operating plans by assisting development operations and related duties as required

**Desired Experience and Attributes**

- Bachelor's degree required; advanced degree preferred
- A record of progressively responsible development or collaborative scientific funding experience
- Experience at a research or non-profit organization desired, or a proven track record in collaborative scientific project funding and development in a government or commercial setting
- Demonstrated success in soliciting and closing restricted or project-specific institutional gifts or establishing and closing successful joint venture arrangements
- Proven track record in building successful donor and key stakeholder relationships
- Demonstrated ability to effectively work independently and as part of a dynamic team
- A high tolerance for ambiguity and complexity, as well as experience and skillsets in working with diverse personalities and distilling and synthesizing highly technical program information
- A creative, proactive, organized and detail-oriented work style
- Demonstrated time management skills and ability to multi-task, troubleshoot, and follow through in a fast-paced environment
- Superior interpersonal, listening, oral, and written communication skills
- Experience working at national-level organizations
- Experience working at a science-related organization or possessing a degree in food and agriculture fields, environmental science or sustainability, biological sciences, or other related fields
- High intelligence; low expressed ego
- Willingness to travel

**Application and Nomination Process**

FFAR has retained Academic Search to assist with this search. Applications, nominations, and expressions of interest can be submitted electronically, and in confidence, to [FFARDirector@academicsearch.org](mailto:FFARDirector@academicsearch.org). Applications will be actively reviewed on a rolling basis as submitted and will be received until an appointment is made. Applications should consist of a substantive cover letter, resume, and a list of five professional references with full contact information. No references will be contacted without the explicit permission of the candidate. Confidential discussions about this position may be arranged by contacting Senior Consultants William Howard at [bill.howard@academicsearch.org](mailto:bill.howard@academicsearch.org) or Maria Thompson at [maria.thompson@academicsearch.org](mailto:maria.thompson@academicsearch.org).

*FFAR is an equal opportunity employer. Applicants are considered for positions without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, physical or mental disability, genetic information or any other category protected by applicable federal, state or local laws, and applications are encouraged from individuals who may fall into any such groups, as well as from veterans and uniformed service members.*