



# **Position Specification**

Foundation for Food and Agriculture Research

Chief Development Officer

Private and Confidential

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# Position Specification

Ref: Chief Development Officer  
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## Our Client

### Background

The Foundation for Food and Agriculture Research (FFAR) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization located in Washington, DC. FFAR builds private-public 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 was established by the 2014 Farm Bill to bring greater private investment to public food and agriculture research. The 2014 law allocated \$200 million to FFAR and required that every federal dollar be matched with a non-federal dollar.

One of the most powerful aspects of FFAR's model has been its ability to bring private funding to match its public funds. This is powerful, not just because of the added investment, but also because FFAR is able to create research partnerships and collaborations outside of the traditional agriculture funding relationships (e.g., NIFA, land grant universities, etc.). For example, FFAR has co-funded projects with foundations (e.g., the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Open Philanthropy Project), commodities groups (e.g., the National Pork Board), food manufacturers (e.g., General Mills), food service and retailers (e.g., McDonald's and Kroger), and venture capital funds (e.g., Acre Venture Partners). Furthermore, FFAR's Congressional funding allows it to bring partners to the table and serve as an independent, neutral third party. This enables FFAR to credibly convene and build partnerships and provides legitimacy to the research that it facilitates.

Currently, FFAR is leveraging \$1.25 dollars in private investment for every tax dollar allocated, multiplying the initial investment by hundreds of millions of dollars to complement US Department of Agriculture (USDA) research investments and help US agriculture thrive.

Owing to these successes, the Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018 appropriated an additional \$185 million to FFAR, with the same matching requirement. In response to the 2018 Farm Bill, FFAR developed a Strategic and Sustainability Plan that articulates potential pathways toward greater financial diversification and sustainability.

While an independent non-profit, 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.

Mission: We build unique partnerships to support innovative science addressing today's food and agriculture challenges.

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

### Office of Development

The Chief Development Officer will be the sixth person on the development team and will have supervisory responsibilities for the existing positions. Other development staff include the Director of Development, the Director of Scientific Partnerships, two Development Officers and a Development Associate. In addition to the development team, the six Scientific Program Directors are very involved in raising matching funds for their research initiatives.

In creating and supporting the Chief Development Officer position, the FFAR leadership would like to strengthen and diversify its co-funding partners and raise philanthropic funding to contribute to its own corpus. This effort would build on the relationships with more than 400 distinct funding partners FFAR has established since its creation in 2014. Matching funds have been raised on average of \$40M annually, and the sources of FFAR's matching funds (outside of federal support) to date include foundations, industry, state, local and foreign governments, non-profits and trade associations. Academia provides matching funding as well, but typically only for their own research projects.

The expansion of FFAR's funding, which may be restricted or unrestricted, would be used as matching funds to the Congressionally appropriated corpus to provide grants in support of FFAR's mission, challenge areas and/or Earthshot 2030.

### **Earthshot 2030**

Climate change is the greatest threat to humanity. Climate changes imperil agriculture, threatening the global food supply and farmers' livelihoods. While agriculture contributes 13 percent of greenhouse gas emissions, it also presents an elegant and effective solution to eliminate emissions. Soils and plants store carbon, thereby absorbing emissions. Nothing is more powerful than a plant in soil for removing carbon from the atmosphere.

Thus, FFAR and its partners recently proposed "Earthshot 2030 – a living solution to reverse climate change." Earthshot 2030 will mobilize farmers, scientists, partner organizations and financial resources to develop and implement emissions-reducing innovations at scales and rates previously unimagined. Earthshot 2030 is a \$200 million effort over ten years to mobilize farmers toward climate solutions.

A campaign feasibility study is underway and the CDO will be the point person for this exciting effort. She or he will work with the consulting group doing the feasibility study to determine the best path forward. The campaign feasibility study started in February.

### **The Role**

FFAR has created a new role, the Chief Development Officer, to lead the Development Department during an exciting time in the organization's history. The CDO position will develop strategies for implementing FFAR's 2019 strategic plan, build cross-sector partnerships, and secure funds to meet the Foundation's financial goals. Additionally, this position will spearhead a major fundraising campaign to generate significant support for FFAR's mission and its newly formed initiative to reverse climate change through agriculture, Earthshot 2030.

FFAR is committed to providing significant funding to the Earthshot 2030 campaign, which requires funding commitments from multiple sectors. The FFAR CDO is responsible for building, deploying and achieving a campaign that generates \$100 million or more in the next five years in unrestricted or targeted funds.

Central to the success of this position is the ability to discover and cultivate relationships with partners and donors from sectors and organizations yet untapped, generally those currently not funding agriculture-related projects or that are looking to move into the food and agriculture space.

FFAR values audaciousness and believes it can attack global challenges. With this in mind, the CDO must be a passionate individual who embraces the unique FFAR mission and generates the same passion for the mission with donors and partners. As FFAR is looking to this individual to broaden its potential donor base, the CDO will cultivate support from philanthropic and corporate organizations as well as high-net-worth individuals.

The CDO reports to the FFAR Executive Director and oversees and manages the Development Department.

**Key Responsibilities**

- Develop strategies to implement the 2019 Strategic Plan, with a particular focus on diversifying FFAR's partners and donor base.
- Secure funding to meet the Foundation's financial goals, as articulated in the Strategic Plan.
- Lead the FFAR Development team to effectively fundraise for all activities.
- Manage the Development Department; supervise, coach and mentor staff in the department.
- Coordinate effectively with teams across FFAR, including the Science team, to facilitate fundraising for activities.
- Identify and new untapped prospects and cultivate relationships with those individuals/organizations.
- Work closely with the Executive Director and the FFAR Board to create fundraising strategy that is implemented at the highest level of FFAR leadership.
- Provide leadership for an outsourced consultant to do a feasibility study to explore the possibility of a fundraising campaign.
- Lead FFAR's Earthshot 2030 Campaign, which will include developing the campaign's Case for Support, leading the campaign effort, and developing and tracking against an ambitious, yet realistic timeline for the campaign.

**Candidate Profile**

The successful candidate will bring recognized fundraising skills and a track record of significant and strategic leadership in nonprofit environments, and demonstrate an ability to advocate, inspire, and lead development efforts on behalf of the mission of FFAR. The ideal candidate will have experience building financial support for agriculture, research, science, nutrition, climate, or the environment. Furthermore, previous experience leading a significant campaign is highly desired.

FFAR is looking for an exceptional revenue generator and creative mind: someone with a proven history of meeting aggressive development goals and proposing original and sustainable resource-generating ideas; an innovative thinker with an understanding of how to leverage research and technology to enhance development results and team performance in an increasingly competitive market.

The successful candidate will be a warm, collaborative individual with the ability to quickly gain a true understanding of FFAR's public-private partnership model and its potential for impact. A proven ability to take a front-facing role as lead fundraiser for the integrated goals of FFAR, and to be a key partner to the Executive Director in cultivation activities, will be key to the success of this role.

In addition, this individual will possess the experience and leadership skills necessary to establish a culture of collaboration with other leaders, particularly with scientists and researchers, and will respond to changing circumstances in an evolving and competitive fundraising environment. A proven capacity to recruit, lead, and galvanize the talents of a diverse staff and successfully network with colleagues is integral to this role. Above all, this individual will have unquestioned judgment and ethical standards, and a demonstrated commitment to diversity and inclusion.

In terms of the performance and personal competencies required for the position, we would highlight the following:

**Setting Strategy**

- Quickly grasps the opportunities and challenges of FFAR and the role and understands how to work effectively to develop innovative and creative fundraising plans.
- Has strong analytical mindset and uses data to support thinking and decision-making.
- Has the flexibility to create nuanced plans and objectives that adapt to the situation and/or partners at hand, while bringing to life an inspirational future for the organization.
- Has experience diversifying donor pools and evolving a fundraising program for a nonprofit organization.

**Executing for Results**

- Ability to work thoughtfully yet decisively in an organizational structure and with an advisory board, toward building diverse internal and external constituencies.
- Capacity to set priorities and achieve goals, individually and for teams. Balances financial wisdom and prudence with innovation and calculated risk-taking.
- Can build genuine, productive relationships and to use them strategically to further the goals of FFAR.
- Proven ability to be both tactful and candid with internal leadership in managing development efforts.
- Can facilitate the learning and skills-building of internal colleagues, within and outside of the Development team, in support of development activities.
- Empowers and inspires others to think originally about opportunities.
- Experience with public-private partnerships is a plus.

**Leading Teams**

- Has the ability to provide leadership that will challenge, inspire, and motivate the range of people involved in and with FFAR.
- Has a demonstrated ability to recruit, mentor, lead, and develop a diverse staff and a history of building high-performing and loyal teams.
- A flexible, inclusive approach to leadership, which adjusts to different audiences and gives focus to colleagues' work.
- The personal inclination and professional ability to be a positive and unifying figure who can lead by influence and example in order to create an integrated development culture across the organization.
- A commitment to transparency in the service of building trust and confidence in the fundraising operation among a wide group of colleagues around the organization.

**Relationships and Influence**

- A strong understanding of the current and future donor base for the agriculture, research, science, nutrition, climate, or environmental arenas.
- Is highly articulate and makes arguments in a compelling, logical, to-the-point manner. Communicates with passion, energy, intensity and enthusiasm.

- Displays executive presence and confidence, gained in part through experience in a relationship-based position where effective communication skills influenced outcomes.
- Excellent communication and presentation skills. S/he will be an effective, inspiring communicator who can consistently articulate the organization's mission in a clear and compelling manner and is able to adapt communication styles to a broad, diverse audience.
- Has demonstrably and consistently influenced others with their perspective, builds and preserves trust and agreement, as well as confidence and respect, among various constituencies. S/he has an unquestionable track record of working with multiple stakeholders and donors.

**Personal Competencies**

- Personal drive and integrity; exemplary levels of professionalism, probity, and resilience.
- Someone who leads by example and has excellent judgment of people and situations.
- Possesses genuine and infectious enthusiasm and humor for being around people, talking and building relationships; someone who others leave wanting to spend more time with.
- Demonstrates intercultural and international sensitivity and understanding.
- Demonstrates flexibility in adapting to short-term and long-term challenges, both within FFAR and external to FFAR.
- A healthy, balanced ego and the confidence to recognize their own strengths and weaknesses.

**Contact**

Russell Reynolds Associates has been exclusively retained for this search and prospective candidates are invited to contact Russell Reynolds Associates directly. All inquiries and discussions will be considered strictly confidential.

Kimberly Archer  
Russell Reynolds Associates  
1700 New York Avenue, 4th Floor  
Washington, DC 20006  
Tel: +1.202.654.7800  
[kimberly.archer@russellreynolds.com](mailto:kimberly.archer@russellreynolds.com)

Michael Singleton  
Russell Reynolds Associates  
1700 New York Avenue, 4th Floor  
Washington, DC 20006  
Tel: +1.202.654.7800  
[michael.singleton@russellreynolds.com](mailto:michael.singleton@russellreynolds.com)