

Arkansas Research Alliance: Executive Career Opportunity

Position Description: Program Director, Arkansas Research Alliance

Location: Little Rock, AR

Reports to: President and CEO

Position Type: Full-time, Exempt

Overview:

The Arkansas Research Alliance (ARA) seeks a dynamic Program Director, capable of driving both strategy and execution, to lead and manage key initiatives that support scientific and engineering research, innovation, and economic development across the state of Arkansas. This role requires a savvy executive with strengths and expertise in stakeholder engagement, coalition building, project and team management, and grant writing/proposal development.

Key Responsibilities:

- **Project Leadership:** Direct high-impact initiatives, such as ARA's impact report, the update of Arkansas' core research focus areas, and incoming federal award(s). Ensure timely execution, deliverables, and alignment with organizational goals.
- **Grant Management:** Lead the application and management of federal, state, private, and foundation grants. Oversee the full lifecycle of grant processes, from writing and submission to reporting and compliance.
- **Stakeholder Engagement:** Build and maintain relationships with state, academic, and industry stakeholders. Represent ARA on initiatives such as BIOArkansas, collaborating with cross-sector partners to advance research and innovation.
- **Strategic Decision-Making:** Collaborate with executive leadership to define and execute the strategic direction of the organization, including identifying and pursuing new opportunities for growth and development.
- **Program Development:** Lead the development and scaling of programs like the Arkansas Core Facilities Exchange (CFE), fostering collaboration among academic institutions and researchers.
- **Entrepreneurial Coaching:** Provide early-stage entrepreneurial coaching and support to researchers and startups, leveraging your experience in business development and innovation.
- **Public Speaking & Facilitation:** Represent ARA at conferences, workshops, and public forums. Facilitate meetings and discussions with stakeholders, presenting complex information clearly and effectively.

Required Qualifications:

- Bachelor's degree in business, public administration, STEM, or a related field.
- 8-10 years of experience in program management, stakeholder engagement, or a related field.
- Proven track record in leading successful grant applications and managing grants (federal, state, private, or foundation) and large teams.
- Demonstrated experience in coalition building, strategic partnerships, and connecting individuals to networks.
- Strong project management skills.

- Experience in early-stage entrepreneurial coaching, business development, or innovation.
- Financial acumen, including experience with financial modeling, budgeting, and reporting.
- Excellent public speaking, facilitation, and communication skills.

Preferred Qualifications:

- Master's degree in business, public administration, science, or a related field.
- Project Management Professional (PMP)[®], Certified Associate in Project Management (CAPM)[®], or equivalent.
- Knowledge of scientific research, technology commercialization, or innovation ecosystems.

Arkansas Research Alliance:

The Arkansas Research Alliance (ARA) advances the state's economic prosperity through the recruitment, recognition, and retention of strategic research leaders at its universities and federal labs. Founded in 2008 and operating as a 501(c)(3) public-private partnership, ARA invests in research talent and activities that stimulate innovation, encourage collaboration, and strengthen economic opportunity.

Please direct letters of interest and qualifications to:

Bryan J. Barnhouse
President & CEO
Arkansas Research Alliance
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