



F3 Innovate

Position Title: Chief Technology Officer (CTO)

Location: Fresno, CA

Status: Full-time, Exempt

About F3 Innovate

Farms-Food-Future Innovate (F3 Innovate) is the nation's hub for climate-smart agrifood technology and engineering.

California's Central Valley is a food-producing powerhouse with 13,650 farming enterprises generating 350 commodities annually valued at \$70B. However, the region has populations and communities which are persistently impoverished and environmentally burdened. Systemic barriers to innovation and investment prevent the region from benefiting from its human talent and globally recognized food system assets.

Headquartered in California's Central Valley, F3 Innovate drives inclusive innovation through the development, commercialization and adoption of agrifood technology solutions for the food systems value chain, resulting in 1) a diversified Central Valley economy with high-quality jobs and economic mobility for its residents; 2) net-new U.S. export capabilities; 3) sustainable local and regional food systems within the Central Valley; and 4) solutions for global agricultural production, processing and transport.

To accelerate regional economic opportunity and to enable global innovation in climate resilience, F3 Innovate collaborates with industry leaders, research institutions, engineers, technologists and small and large farmers. F3 Innovate drives agrifood technology research and development, innovation, commercialization and business acceleration by:

- serving as an innovation network and support system to help entrepreneurs scale and accelerate solutions locally to solve global challenges.
- connecting entrepreneurs to public and private sector resources, building collaborations and providing technical assistance.
- supporting climate smart technology startups and engaging entrepreneurs to enable more rapid and scalable technology commercialization.

We are a 501(c3) nonprofit, initially funded with over \$9M in federal and state funding and anchored by University of California, Merced; California State University, Fresno; University of California Agriculture and Natural Resources (UCANR); Central Valley Community Foundation; and the Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development (GO-Biz). F3 Innovate collaborates with the broader F3 Initiative, comprised of three major project areas focused on workforce development



(AgTEC), small business development (Local Farm and Food Innovation) and research-to-commercialization and business acceleration (F3 Innovate).

For more information, please visit our website at <https://www.f3innovate.org/>.

The Opportunity

We are actively seeking a visionary and strategic leader to serve as Chief Technology Officer (CTO) of F3 Innovate. As the CTO, you will lead the research, development and commercialization functions of a new, mission-driven nonprofit organization. The ideal candidate will have significant experience successfully bringing ideas from concept to commercialization, leading a collaborative cross-sector innovation ecosystem and managing emerging technologies. This is a unique opportunity for an entrepreneurial leader to make a significant impact on the economic vitality of the Central Valley and the field of climate-smart agrifood technology and engineering.

Position Description

Responsibilities

- **Technology Innovation Leadership and Strategy**
 - Partner with leadership to develop, articulate and implement a comprehensive vision for research, development and commercialization, technology strategy and roadmap that supports [F3 Innovate's mission and values](#).
 - Guide the development and growth of an innovation pipeline and portfolio of industry- and university-driven development projects and partnerships. Targeted technologies may include: digitalization and data science (e.g., predictive analytics, artificial intelligence, edge computing, information science systems); mechatronics (e.g., cyberphysical systems, automation, drones, robots, digital twins); equipment and manufacturing (e.g., agrivoltaics, energy-water systems, biomass processing); and systems integration and implementation (e.g., test beds and validation; small and mid-size producer problem-solving; online marketing platforms); climate change adaptation tools. Applications may address any component of the agricultural value and supply chains.
 - Evaluate the feasibility and soundness of new technologies proposed by startups or innovators.



- Support commercialization by assisting in the development of technology roadmaps and strategies for startups within the organization's ecosystem.
- Prioritize inclusive innovation, designing with adaptation and access for a range of farming and food producers from small, underserved producers to medium- and large-scale operators.
- Support leadership to pursue strategic fundraising and earned revenue opportunities for research, development and commercialization projects and initiatives.
- Stay abreast of industry trends, emerging technologies, patents/copyright tracking and key developments in the climate smart agrifood tech and engineering landscape.
- **Technology Operations**
 - Work with UC Merced, Fresno State and others to harness the creativity of researchers and innovators.
 - Lead the development of an industry CRM and inventory database of industry-university partnerships.
 - Develop robust systems, policies and procedures to manage and support the agrifood technology industry cluster's research, development and commercialization.
 - Track and manage legal compliance and regulations related to agrifood technology.
 - Bring and build expertise in the key areas of agricultural technology for the region, including automation, data systems, remote sensing, manufacturing, precision agriculture and small-scale farm and food tech across the agricultural value chain.
- **Opportunity Assessment & Partner Support**
 - Quickly evaluate and discern promising concepts and opportunities for support and investment.
 - Make data-driven recommendations to F3 Innovate leadership for potential projects and initiatives.
 - Coordinate support to entrepreneurs to move effective solutions from concept to commercialization and scale.
 - Coordinate with a variety of testing facilities and innovation partners to support commercialization.
 - Communicate effectively with internal and external stakeholders, including startups, investors and technology partners.



- Foster connection and collaboration across researchers, investors, policymakers, community and other stakeholders, building shared vision and an innovation ecosystem for sustainable food production.
- Represent F3 Innovate at industry conferences and events.
- **Equity and Inclusive Economic Growth**
 - Promote organizational commitment to inclusive innovation and equitable economic development as a core part of the organization's mission.
 - Ensure small, underserved and/or socially disadvantaged farmers, food producers, innovators and workers are actively engaged in and benefit from F3 Innovate's activities. Create and maintain a strong and diverse network of community and industry partners that is representative of Central Valley communities.
 - Foster an organizational culture that encourages open discourse and reflections about all aspects of the agrifood industry in the Central Valley.

Desired Qualifications

The ideal CTO will thrive in a start-up environment with a lean team. They will have a proven track record of strategic leadership and hands-on experience in agrifood tech and engineering research, development and commercialization or related fields, with fluency in tech and innovation trends and demonstrated results in moving effective solutions from concept to commercialization. They will be entrepreneurial builders, exceptional at balancing experimentation and risk management as they assess opportunities, solve problems and build an innovation pipeline and portfolio. They will also work comfortably with diverse stakeholders across the design and development lifecycle, on both the producer and consumer side.

Specifically, we are seeking individuals who have:

- At least 10 years of experience as CTO or equivalent technology innovation leadership role:
 - Proven track record of successfully managing technology research, development and commercialization in entrepreneurial environments, such as a fast-paced and rapidly growing nonprofit, social enterprise, corporation or start-up venture.
 - Proven track record in bringing products or services from concept to commercialization.

- Collaborative research experience, either bench or applied, preferably in agrifood tech engineering and manufacturing.
- Familiarity with patents and intellectual property.
- Experience with incubators and/or accelerators preferred.
- Demonstrated strategic and sound judgment in operating in ambiguity and managing risk.
- Experience developing and managing lean teams.
- Experience working with and building partnerships with diverse stakeholders:
 - Demonstrated success in facilitating strategic partnerships, cross-sector collaborations and coalitions, particularly with public-private partnerships.
 - Experience navigating competing interests and building common ground among stakeholders.
 - Experience working with senior leaders and boards.
 - Excellent written oral and public speaking skills, with the ability to translate complex technical topics to a wide range of stakeholders.
 - Experience advising entrepreneurs, innovators and researchers working to patent and commercialize products.
 - Demonstrated knowledge of and networks with relevant industry clusters, public institutions, academia, business, industry and community preferred.
- Experience raising significant capital and managing the triple bottom line (profit, people, planet):
 - Solid financial acumen, with experience managing budgets, securing funding and ensuring the financial viability of innovation projects.
- Demonstrated awareness and promotion of equity, inclusion and justice:
 - Capability to work effectively and authentically across cultures and diverse constituencies.
 - Appreciation of diverse viewpoints, communication styles and experiences.
 - Demonstrated understanding of principles and practices of inclusive innovation, including racial and gender equity as an organizational operating principle.
 - Commitment to continued learning on issues related to race, gender, equity, diversity and inclusion.
- Relevant sector experience:
 - A commitment to inclusive and innovative agrifood technology, sustainable food production and economic development aligned with [F3 Innovate's mission and values](#).



- Advanced degree (Ph.D. or equivalent) in a relevant field (e.g., technology, engineering, biotech, computer science, data science) preferred.
- Industry knowledge across the food systems value chain preferred, including in research and development, innovation, technology, product, manufacturing, intellectual property and/or commercialization.
- Experience in high-risk investment, venture capital and/or patient capital preferred.
- Knowledge of the Central Valley communities preferred.
- Knowledge of the national and global climate-smart agrifood tech and engineering landscape preferred.

Salary & Benefits

Compensation: \$160,000 – 190,000

Benefits: Benefits will include health insurance; holiday, sick and vacation leave; and other benefits.

F3 Innovate is an equal opportunity employer. We encourage individuals from diverse backgrounds to apply.

Application Process

To apply, submit your application at the [link here](#).

Your application should include:

- Resume
- Cover Letter: In 200 words or less per prompt, describe the following:
 1. Why are you uniquely positioned to lead as CTO of F3 Innovate?
 2. A specific experience when you brought a technology solution from concept to commercialization. What was the product or service, what challenges did you encounter and what were the outcomes?
 3. A time when you facilitated organized or led a research collaborative. How did you facilitate alignment, what challenges did you encounter and what were the outcomes?



4. Describe your knowledge and expertise related to climate and/or agrifood technology and how you will apply that to advance F3 Innovate's technology commercialization mission.
 - Three professional references
 - Name, relationship to you, email address and phone number
 - A relevant writing sample of no more than 3 pages

We will review applications on a rolling basis, with the first set of screenings beginning the week of April 1.

For questions, please contact f3innovatejobs@gmail.com.