Offer #2026-10462

Responsable Agronomie & Business Development

Contract type : Fixed-term contract

Level of qualifications required : Graduate degree or equivalent

Fonction : Temporary scientific engineer

Level of experience : From 3 to 5 years

About the research centre or Inria department

The Inria Center at the University of Rennes is one of Inria's eight research centers and is home to more than thirty research teams. The center is a major and internationally recognized player in the field of digital sciences. It is at the heart of a rich R&D and innovation ecosystem, bringing together highly innovative SMEs, large industrial groups, competitiveness clusters, research and higher education institutions, laboratories of excellence, and a technological research institute.

Context

This position as Agronomy & Business Development Manager is available as part of the Inria Startup Studio program at the Inria center at the University of Rennes (location: Nantes).

Context:

Irrigation remains largely a matter of experience, time, and vigilance: long hours, constant vigilance, little room for delegation, a continuous mental load during the growing season—and, despite all this, lost yields. This issue isn't going away: seasons are no longer predictable, water is becoming scarcer, restrictions are multiplying, and soon everyone will be asked to justify their water use. Producing more with less is becoming essential to staying in business.

It's not for lack of tools. There are sensors, controllers, and advisory solutions. But what's missing is the system that connects them and takes action on behalf of the already overwhelmed farmer. That's where we're focusing our efforts at the startup SPICA, with a smart control solution that leverages existing equipment to get the most out of it.

The project is moving forward: the need has been validated in the field, the essential building blocks are under development, and growers are ready to open

their fields to us. It’s time to shift into high gear. Starting in late 2026, the project will be supported for 12 months by the Inria Startup Studio, the deep tech incubation program of the National Institute for Research in Computer Science. The technical side is led by a research engineer with 15 years of experience in industrial R&D, who also has training in the plant sciences. We’re missing the agronomic and marketing expertise—the person who will drive the other half of this venture: could that be you?

Assignment

Your Responsibilities

- **Market analysis and sales strategy:** Map out the value chain and decision-making processes, test pricing assumptions, and identify the best channels for accessing farms and priority partnerships.
- **Network development and funding:** Represent the project to the agricultural sector, advisory bodies, research institutions, and government agencies. Build partnerships and prepare funding proposals (BPI, regional governments, EU).
- **Strategic development:** You won’t be joining a pre-established strategy—you’ll help shape it. Positioning, priorities, market selection—key strategic decisions will be made in consultation with you.
- **Contribution to the product:** Bring agronomic expertise to the design of the solution and maintain the connection with users: interviews, user feedback, and adjustments. You are the farmer’s voice in product decision-making.
- **Field trials:** Design and conduct trials on farmers’ farms, define protocols, measure and document results, and showcase them.

These twelve months are about learning to work together and shaping the future. We don’t hire someone for just one year—we’re looking for someone who will help lead the company alongside us going forward. Your role will take shape as the project progresses, and we’ll discuss it openly.

Main activities

Your responsibilities will include:

- Building a structured stakeholder map: identifying and qualifying relevant stakeholders and potential customers, and defining their operational challenges, integration constraints and barriers to adoption.
- Understanding the purchasing and decision-making processes of prospective customers, including decision criteria, procurement processes and the roles of the various departments involved.
- Initiating discussions with prospects and partners, including initial outreach, exploratory meetings, follow-up activities and opportunity summaries.
- Structuring the customer acquisition roadmap: identifying target customers and partners, qualifying key contacts, assessing their level of maturity and defining the steps required to initiate a relationship, test their interest,

develop a pilot project and, where applicable, obtain a letter of intent.
- Contributing to the preparation of business materials, including value propositions, target-specific messaging, market summaries, pitch materials, qualification matrices and meeting materials.

Skills

Technical Skills and Required Qualifications:

- Advanced degree (Bac +5): engineering school, business school, dual degree in engineering and business, degree in agronomy or innovation (with a strong interest in water management issues), or equivalent background.
- Approximately 2 years of post-graduate experience, ideally in consulting, market analysis, innovation, agronomy, partnerships, or technological project development.
- Experience or exposure to environments such as consulting firms, market research, strategy, innovation, digital transformation, or industrial development is a plus.
- A desire to build rather than merely execute: autonomy, resourcefulness, and a knack for building relationships
- Comfortable with data and technical matters, enough to understand what sets a solution apart
- Field experience: trials, consulting, experimental stations, or farm operations. You speak to producers in their language, and they listen to you
- A network within the industry—in vegetable farming or fruit growing—is a real plus
- Ability to produce clear, concise, and decision-relevant analyses: benchmarking, mapping, segmentation, qualification, and recommendations.

Interpersonal skills:

- Excellent ability to listen, ask questions, and rephrase.
- Comfortable interacting with a variety of stakeholders: technical, business, institutional, and industrial.
- Team player with a strong sense of partnership.
- Ability to present work effectively.

Language:

- Fluency in English is required, both written and spoken.
- Professional-level French is required.

We are not looking for a technical candidate. We are looking for someone who believes we can do significantly better for these farms and who is eager to dedicate the next few years to this cause.

Benefits package

- Subsidized meals
- Partial reimbursement of public transport costs

- Leave: 7 weeks of annual leave + 10 extra days off due to RTT (statutory reduction in working hours) + possibility of exceptional leave (sick children, moving home, etc.)
- Possibility of teleworking (after 6 months of employment) and flexible organization of working hours
- Professional equipment available (videoconferencing, loan of computer equipment, etc.)
- Social, cultural and sports events and activities
- Access to vocational training
- Social security coverage

Remuneration

monthly gross salary from 2695 euros according to diploma and experience

General Information

- **Town/city :** Rennes
- **Inria Center :** Centre Inria de l'Université de Rennes
- **Starting date :** 2027-01-01
- **Duration of contract :** 12 months
- **Deadline to apply :** 2026-12-31

Contacts

- **Inria Team :** STIP-RBA (DGD-I)
- **Recruiter :**
  Heulot Justine / justine.bonnot@inria.fr

About Inria

Inria, the French national institute for research in digital science and technology, supports the French government in national research and innovation strategies in the digital field, acting as Digital Programs Agency. Inria leads over 300 research and innovation projects with its 3,500 scientists, engineers, and support staff, in partnership with universities and the digital ecosystem (businesses, entrepreneurs, and public stakeholders). Together, we explore strategic fields such as artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, quantum computing, cloud technologies, digital transformation in healthcare, digital twins, and digital technologies for defence. We develop practical solutions such as software, tech startups, partnerships with national companies, and cutting-edge training programmes. Our goal is to drive scientific, technological, and industrial excellence to ensure France’s digital sovereignty.

Warning : you must enter your e-mail address in order to save your application to Inria. Applications must be submitted online on the Inria website. Processing of applications sent from other channels is not guaranteed.

Instruction to apply

Please submit your CV, cover letter, and any recommandations online

Defence Security :
This position is likely to be situated in a restricted area (ZRR), as defined in Decree No. 2011-1425 relating to the protection of national scientific and technical potential (PPST).Authorisation to enter an area is granted by the director of the unit, following a favourable Ministerial decision, as defined in the decree of 3 July 2012 relating to the PPST. An unfavourable Ministerial decision in respect of a position situated in a ZRR would result in the cancellation of the appointment.

Recruitment Policy :
As part of its diversity policy, all Inria positions are accessible to people with disabilities.