Job Title: Founding Chief Executive Officer (CEO)
Airawat Research Foundation – Building India's AI Platform for Sustainable Cities

Experience: 15+ Years

Location: Kanpur/Hybrid

About Airawat Research Foundation

Airawat Research Foundation (ARF) is a Section 8 company established to advance a national mission: leveraging artificial intelligence to enable sustainable urban and regional transformation.

ARF serves as the institutional vehicle for the AI Centre of Excellence for Sustainable Cities, led by IIT Kanpur under a national consortium selected by the Government of India (Ministry of Education).
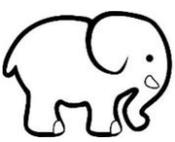
ARF operates at the intersection of advanced AI research, digital infrastructure, and real world deployment, translating cutting edge research into scalable platforms, products, and decision systems that can be adopted by governments, enterprises, infrastructure operators, and communities to address challenges across energy systems, waste management, mobility, climate resilience and governance services.

About the Role: ARF seeks a visionary Chief Executive Officer to establish and lead the organization as a National Centre for AI-enabled sustainable urban systems, providing strong technology and AI leadership. The CEO will define ARF's long-term technology and innovation strategy and translate cutting-edge AI and data research into deployable platforms, products, and scalable solutions addressing real-world urban sustainability challenges.

This role requires a technology-driven platform builder and ecosystem leader capable of operating across AI innovation, digital platforms, institutional leadership, and public systems transformation. The CEO will provide strategic technology leadership, drive the development of large-scale AI-enabled platforms, build strong innovation ecosystems, and position ARF as a leader in applied AI for sustainable urban systems.

Working closely with the Board of Directors, Project Directors, consortium partners, academia, industry, and government stakeholders, the CEO will enable collaboration and provide thought leadership in technology and AI adoption to translate research and innovation into scalable public solutions.

The CEO will also lead strategic partnerships, institutional growth, and technology-led initiatives, strengthening ARF's role as a national hub for AI-driven urban innovation and public system transformation.

Key Responsibilities

Strategic and Technology Leadership

Define ARF's long-term vision and institutional strategy, positioning the organization as a leading centre for AI-enabled sustainable urban systems. Provide technology leadership to guide the development of AI, data, and digital platforms that enable scalable innovation and real-world urban solutions.

Platform Development and Research Translation

Lead the development of shared AI and data infrastructure and enable the translation of research into deployable platforms, AI-enabled systems, and scalable products with measurable real-world impact.

Technology Adoption and Large-Scale Implementation

Drive the adoption of AI-enabled technologies within government systems and lead large-scale implementation of digital platforms and solutions across cities and public institutions.

Ecosystem, Partnerships, and Government Engagement

Build a strong national and international innovation ecosystem involving academia, startups, technology companies, and public institutions. Engage with central ministries, state governments, and urban bodies to support the adoption of AI-driven solutions aligned with national priorities.

Organizational Leadership, Sustainability, and Governance

Lead multidisciplinary teams of researchers, engineers, and domain experts while mobilizing strategic partnerships, funding, and collaborations to ensure long-term institutional sustainability, strong governance, and compliance consistent with Section 8 company requirements.

Strategic Priorities for the First 12-18 Months

In the first 12-18 months, the CEO will focus on establishing the institutional and technological foundations necessary for ARF to operate as a high impact innovation platform.

1. **Establish the Institutional Foundations of ARF**

   Build the organizational, governance, and operational structures required to run ARF as a high performing mission driven technology institution.
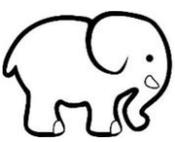
   Key priorities include:
   - Aligning consortium partners and stakeholders
   - Building institutional credibility with government, academia, and industry
   - Institutionalizing operating processes and governance systems

2. **Define and Launch the ARF AI Platform**

   Lead the design and initial deployment of ARF's shared AI and data platform to support research translation and real world deployment.

   This includes:
   - Defining the architecture of shared data and AI infrastructure
   - Establishing digital twin and urban data frameworks

- Creating interoperable systems that allow innovators and partners to build on ARF platforms

The goal is to position ARF as a national innovation platform for sustainable urban systems.

3. **Translate Research into Early Deployable Solutions**

Create structured pathways to convert consortium research outputs into deployable AI enabled systems and products.

Initial focus areas may include:
- Energy and infrastructure optimization
- Urban flooding, water systems and conservation
- Climate risk and resilience systems
- Mobility and logistics optimization
- Waste and circular economy systems
- Intelligent governance systems

The emphasis will be on demonstration deployments that show measurable impact.

4. **Build the ARF Innovation Ecosystem**

Develop a national ecosystem of innovators, startups, industry partners, and academic institutions building solutions on ARF platform.

The includes:
- Forming strategic industry partnerships
- Engaging startups and innovators
- Enabling academic collaboration
- Establishing international research and technology partnerships

The objective is to position ARF as a hub for AI innovation in Sustainable Cities.

5. **Secure Strategic Partnerships and Funding**

Mobilize strategic partnerships and financial support necessary to accelerate ARF's growth and long term sustainability.
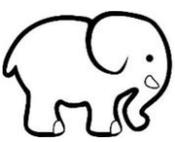
This includes:
- Industry partnerships
- Philanthropic and CSR collaborations
- International partnerships
- Mission aligned revenue opportunities

6. **Deliver Early Flagship Demonstrations**

Identify and launch a small set of high visibility pilot deployments demonstrating the real world value of ARF's technology platforms.

These deployments should establish:

- Credibility with policymakers and industry
- Proof of concept for scalable solutions
- A foundation for broader adoption and replication

Leadership Profile

The ideal candidate will bring 15+ years of leadership experience and a track record of building and scaling technology platforms, institutions, or innovation ecosystems. We are seeking a builder who is energized by creating institutions and platforms from the ground up, rather managing mature organizations.

Candidates with a Bachelors' degree and distinguished leadership experience in technology, public systems, institution building, or urban transformation shall be eligible. Candidates who have built and scaled institutions, companies or platform-based ventures from inception will be viewed favorably. Experience in SaaS, digital platforms, AI-enabled products, or digital public infrastructure, particularly in contexts requiring multi-stakeholder adoption and long-term sustainability, will be an added advantage.

The CEO should demonstrate:
- Strategic vision and institution building capability
- Strong technology and systems thinking
- Ability to operate across academia, industry, and government
- Ecosystem leadership and partnership building skills
- Commitment to public purpose and societal impact

Compensation

Compensation will be commensurate with qualifications, experience, and market benchmarks for leadership roles in mission driven technology institutions.