



IIFH – Big Idea Ventures Innovator Fellowship

A unique opportunity to work with our innovation partners in an immersive, hands-on experience in a food and health investment environment gaining real-world business and entrepreneurial skills while evaluating ag, food and health startups.

- **Financial support:** 6 month stipend*, travel, tuition, accommodation, research and conference expenses (capped at \$50k by [IIFH](#))
- **Timeline:** Summer through Fall 2024 (Ideally mid-June start, but date is flexible)
- **Eligibility:** UC Davis post-doctoral fellows, or PhD candidates who have passed their QE
- **Part-time Learning and Exposure to Venture Capital (VC) Group:** During the first half of the fellowship (months 1-3), fellows will begin work remotely, part-time with VC and will be exposed to methods, practices, culture and systems of how VCs identify investable ventures, evaluate startups in the food arena, and more. The fellow will engage in regular virtual (and occasionally in-person) meetings with the VC host. This happens simultaneously while continuing fellow's on-campus research commitments. This time allows the fellow to become oriented with the VC landscape, role responsibilities, and be poised to begin full-time immersion with their VC host during the second half of the Fellowship (months 4-6), which is also remote.
- **Experiential Learning with Venture Capital Group:** During the second half of the fellowship (months 4-6), the fellow transitions to full-time work with the VC host to evaluate startups in relevant industries. The full-time element should involve regular travel to various locations around the country (funds for travel, accommodation and conference allowance provided).
- **DEADLINE March 10, 2024 – OR UNTIL FILLED:** [Click here to apply.](#)

About Big Idea Ventures

[Big Idea Ventures](#) is solving the World's Biggest Challenges by supporting the World's Best Entrepreneurs, Scientists and Engineers. Big Idea Ventures has 4 funds, one of them being the Generation Food Rural Partners Fund (size USD\$124M).



[The Generation Food Rural Partners fund](#) (GFRP) commercializes university-developed intellectual property focused on food, protein, and agriculture innovation. We launch new companies, recruit seasoned management teams, and provide support from inception alongside our university and strategic partners. Our mission is to support economic development in rural communities and drive innovation in university ecosystems across the United States.

Candidates with coursework or experience related to one or more of the following areas (or similar) are strongly desired: Food Technology, Agriculture Technology or Protein Technology. Areas of expertise may include, but are not limited to:

Proteins Technology - Plant Based, Insect Based, Lab Culture, Media/Ingredients into alternative proteins, Structure Material, Replacement of Antibiotic and other feed additives.

Food Technology - Natural Ingredients (Reduction of Sugar, Reduction of Salt), Packaging, Processing, Food Safety, Water usage and reclamation

Agriculture Technology - Pheromone Based Pesticides, Soil Microbiome, Plant Microbiome, Plant waste to pulp and plastics, Hydroponic ingredients, Trait Technology – increase protein/vitamin/oil, Water usage and reclamation

About the Innovation Institute for Food and Health (IIFH)

The IIFH works to catalyze innovation across food, agriculture, and health. Founded on a unique academic-industry partnership and interfacing with both entrepreneurial and research sectors, the institute facilitates development and delivery of commercial products that bring metabolic health to food products and services. We envision this leading to a world where easily attainable metabolic health leads to happier, healthier, longer lives for everyone.

Program Description

Phase 1 (3 months): Begin part-time engagement with Big Idea Ventures, splitting time between research and virtual engagement with BIV

- Start date flexible, ideally April 3: following selection, anticipate joining BIV remotely for three months.
- At UC Davis: learn to support BIV's efforts in evaluating startups and selecting investable ventures that address selected challenges in food and health.
- The fellow will work closely with BIV's staff through virtual means. Support is provided for regular in-person meetings and conferences, as needed.
- Part-time will allow the fellow an orientation to the startup world, familiarize them with the necessary skills and processes, and begin building a framework for constructive engagement.



- Engage in IIFH Fellowship activities and check-ins, and plan one-day Twitter Takeover
- Support from monthly face-to-face meetings with IIFH (virtual or in-person), as needed.

Phase 2 (3 months): Immersive Experiential learning with BIV (onsite or remote, as needed)

- Fully immerse with BIV remotely while working in various locations around the country (including up to \$12K travel, accommodation and conference allowance).
- Explore BIV's strategic ecosystem and extensive network of assets in evaluating and vetting competitive investment opportunities.
- Learn how investors evaluate investment opportunities and what it takes to commercialize a product
- Perform technical due diligence and market research for new investment opportunities, and prepare written reports summarizing work and report findings at regular teleconferences
- Participate in frequent videoconferences with founders, faculty, investors, academic and commercial partners, and subject matter experts
- Participate in the formation of GFRP NewCo's post IC. Assist with designing and executing a development plan, budget, and timeline; liaising with research partners; reviewing technology; analyzing data; and writing reports
- Attend at least one in-person Food/Ag/Protein industry-related conference
- Develop and expand a broad-based network of contacts within the Ag and Food vertical.
- Engage in IIFH Fellowship activities and check-ins, and draft blog post about experience.
- In conclusion: provide a brief report on the results and impact of the fellowship, with the potential to present at IIFH's annual event or equivalent.

Application Requirements

- 1) Completed application form on IIFH website. [Click here to apply.](#)
- 2) Resume or CV (PDF)
- 3) Letter of interest detailing current research focus, why the program is of interest to you, and how your career goals align therewith (max. 2 pages, PDF format)
- 4) Letter of support from PI approving the applicant's graduation. (max. 1 page, PDF format)

Please combine items 2-4 above (in the order they are listed) into one single PDF for submission.

- **PhD-status Fellows must have an active GSR appointment in their department or be able to acquire one with their PI. The fellowship covers 100% your existing 50% GSR appointment at its current step for the six months of the program, regardless of where you are in your VC commitment.*
- *75% of postdocs salary and benefits are covered by the program.*