



American Lightweight Materials
Manufacturing Innovation Institute

Position: Director, Business Development
Department: Technology
Reporting To: VP of Business Development
Job Location:

LIFT ALMMII Headquarters
1400 Rosa Parks Blvd
Detroit, MI 48216

SCOPE OF WORK & PURPOSE:

The Director of Business Development serves as a key member of the LIFT BD team, responsible for executing strategies that drive organizational growth across defense, industrial, and mobility sectors. This role requires a significant, foundational career in engineering to effectively translate complex technical requirements and manufacturing processes into strategic partnerships and customer relationships.

This position leads the tactical development of new business opportunities and customer engagements that advance LIFT's mission to strengthen U.S. manufacturing capability through applied research, innovation, and education. The Director will work closely with government agencies, OEMs, suppliers, and technology partners to expand LIFT's impact, secure project-based funding, and accelerate the commercialization of advanced materials.

The Director will provide support and assistance in other business development activities, including but not limited to, meetings with government partners and proposal writing.

Responsibilities to include:

- **Seek, develop, and sustain relationships that drive project-based business to LIFT**, with a strict focus on securing complex engineering services and applied R&D contracts (explicitly avoiding the sale of manufactured parts or widgets).
- **Ability to review technical challenges with potential customers to address their needs**, leveraging a significant, foundational career in engineering to establish deep technical credibility and trust with clients.
- **Ability to match LIFT's technical disciplines with industry problems to produce a solution**, acting as the critical bridge between external customer requirements and internal engineering teams.
- **Ability to manage all technical sales aspects for commercial and government customers, including proposal writing**, project scoping, and pipeline management, operating under the strategic guidance of the VP of Business Development.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

Strategic Planning & Market Development

- Execute business development strategies aligned with LIFT's mission, technology roadmap, and growth objectives as an Engineering Services supplier.
- Identify and pursue new markets, programs, and funding sources across federal, defense, and commercial sectors.

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- Build and sustain strong relationships with customers, government sponsors (DoW, etc.), and industry members.
- Represent LIFT in external forums, conferences, and stakeholder engagements to promote our capabilities in advanced manufacturing and materials innovation.
- Support key customer meetings to strengthen relationships, ensure alignment on program objectives, and capture the voice of the customer.

Opportunity Capture & Revenue Generation

- Serve as the primary owner and customer point of contact for selling complex engineering services and applied R&D projects (explicitly not selling manufactured parts, components, or widgets). Also to answer inquiries, provide pre-sale and post-sales support and introduces new offerings.
- Balance a focused approach between “hunting” new customers and “farming” existing customers to maximize revenue growth.
- Lead opportunity identification, qualification, and capture planning for major technical service initiatives.
- Responsible for proposal strategy, writing, and submission processes, ensuring high-quality, competitive, and technically accurate responses.
- Manage the business development pipeline autonomously using Salesforce (SFDC), ensuring accuracy in forecasting and reporting.

Cross-Functional Collaboration

- Partner directly with engineering, program management, and technology teams to develop compelling technical and commercial solutions informed by customer needs.
- Collaborate internally to ensure proposed solutions match LIFT's technical disciplines and operational capacities.
- Track and analyze industry developments to provide actionable market intelligence back to the VP of Business Development and technical teams.

Organization

- Works to establish LIFT as a key national asset for manufacturing innovation and a go-to source for material and manufacturing industry challenges.
- Attends trade shows, conferences, networking events and meetings to promote LIFT's product offerings.
- Cultivates and maintains relationships with commercial members and customers to further organization success.

REQUIRED QUALIFICATIONS

Applicant must be a US citizen with the following:

- **Education:** Bachelor's degree in Engineering or Applied Sciences is required. An MBA or advanced technical degree is preferred.
- **Engineering Foundation:** Must have a substantial foundational career working directly as an engineer before transitioning to business development, ensuring deep technical credibility with clients.

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- **Sales Experience:** Must have a proven track record of consistently meeting or exceeding sales targets by exclusively selling complex engineering services and R&D projects.
- **Industry Knowledge:** Strong understanding of technology transition, materials science, manufacturing processes, and public-private partnership models. Familiarity with DoW acquisition processes is preferred, but can be learned.
- **Execution:** Demonstrated ability to multi-task, work autonomously, and manage a complex sales pipeline under substantial schedule pressure.

KEY COMPETENCIES & PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES

- **Technical Acumen:** Deep understanding of applied engineering, making it possible to match LIFT's capabilities to customer problems.
- **Customer Focus:** Demonstrated ability to engage directly with customers, understand their technical challenges, and integrate their feedback into business strategies.
- **Relationship Management:** Skilled at building and maintaining partnerships across industry and government ecosystems.
- **Communication:** Excellent communication, negotiation, and presentation skills; high integrity and professionalism aligned with LIFT's mission.
- **Multi-task:** ability to work autonomously in a dynamic start-up environment while under substantial schedule pressure. Able to build and sustain business relationships for sales generation.
- **Team Work:** Flexible and able to adapt based on project/customer need under constantly evolving priority environment.

Position Objectives – First 12 Months Within the first year, the Director of Business Development is expected to:

- **Pipeline Growth:** Establish and maintain a qualified opportunity pipeline valued at approximately 3x the annual target, capturing both new customer pursuits and growth within existing accounts.
- **Revenue:** Deliver measurable growth in secured project funding and active proposal opportunities to meet the Year 1 Order Intake (OI) goal.
- **Partnership Expansion:** Strengthen engagement with key federal agencies and establish new strategic partnerships with OEMs or tier suppliers.
- **Process Adherence:** Consistently utilize SFDC to log leads, track pipeline progress, and support regular financial forecasting.

About LIFT:

LIFT, operated by the American Lightweight Materials Manufacturing Innovation Institute (ALMMII), is a nonprofit, public-private partnership, national advanced manufacturing innovation institute. As the national advanced materials manufacturing innovation institute, LIFT is an accelerator convening and connecting government, industry and academia in the fields of advanced materials, manufacturing processes, systems engineering and talent development to enhance America's manufacturing competitiveness, national economy and national security.