



START ATTRACTOR

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JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Title: Scientific Developer

Location: Pisa, Italy (hybrid – on-site and remote)

Contract type: Fixed-term, full-time

Reports to: President

Scope

The Scientific Developer – Paper & Tissue Technologies acts as a bridge between academic research and industrial applications in the paper-making industry (with a focus on tissue, hygiene products and related processes).

The role supports Start Attractor in:

- a. translating industrial needs (from partners and clients) into R&D and innovation projects;
- b. identifying and adapting scientific and technological solutions relevant to pulp and paper and tissue production;
- c. supporting the design, modeling, execution, and validation of experiments, pilot trials, and prototype development;
- d. contributing to open innovation and venture-building initiatives in the paper-making field.

This is a technical and applied role: part researcher, part technologist, part “translator” between lab and mill.

Key Responsibilities

Technical & Scientific Development: analyze industrial challenges and needs from paper and tissue manufacturers (e.g. process efficiency, product performance, digitalization, sustainability, decarbonization, circularity, complex flows); identify and assess scientific and technological solutions (e.g. equipments, processes, materials, sensors, automation) that can address those needs; support the design of R&D and innovation projects, including: definition of objectives and hypotheses; experimental plans and testing protocols; development and implementation of physics-based and data-driven models (including digital/AI models); technical milestones and KPIs. Contribute to pilot trials and experimental campaigns in collaboration with industrial partners and research labs (design of tests, data collection, first-level analysis); draft technical notes, reports and presentations summarizing results, risks and next steps.

Interface with Industry and Research: act as a technical interface between: corporate R&D / process engineers in the paper/tissue sector; academic researchers (University of Pisa and other institutions); startups and technology providers in relevant domains (materials, process control, AI, sustainability). Help translate industrial language into research questions, and research outcomes into practical industrial implications. Participate in technical meetings with partners, explaining concepts clearly to both technical and non-technical stakeholders.

Support to Open Innovation and Venture Building: provide technical input to open innovation projects in the paper sector (e.g. scouting calls, challenge definitions, evaluation of proposed solutions); collaborate with the venture-building team to assess the technical feasibility and scalability of startup projects related to paper-making, tissue, packaging, and adjacent fields; help define technical roadmaps for promising projects (e.g. steps to validate, scale-up and industrialize technologies or products).

Technology and Market Intelligence: monitor scientific literature, patents, and technology trends in: paper and tissue-making technologies; bio-based and recycled fibers; wet-end and dry-end chemistry; energy and water efficiency; digitalization and AI in process control and quality monitoring. Map centers of excellence, labs, startups and solution providers that could be relevant for Start Attractor projects; prepare brief technical memos and internal knowledge materials (e.g. technology landscape summaries) to support decision-making.

Project Support and Documentation: support the preparation of project proposals (technical sections) for industry-funded projects, public funding (where applicable) and joint initiatives; contribute to the definition and monitoring of technical KPIs within projects coordinated by Start Attractor; ensure smooth running and deliverables of project coordinated by Start Attractor; ensure that technical documentation is properly archived, in line with internal procedures and confidentiality requirements.

Required Qualifications and Experience

- a. Master's degree (or PhD preferred) in Engineering or STEM disciplines, including but not limited to Aerospace Engineering, Chemical Engineering, Mechanical Engineering, Paper Engineering, Industrial Chemistry, Materials Science, Chemistry, Physics, Biology, or related fields. ;
- b. 2–5 years of experience in R&D or process engineering experience in industrial or research-driven environments, in at least one of the following: complex engineering flows, process efficiency, sustainability, decarbonization, circularity, digitalization. Experience in pulp and paper tissue-making or related process industries is considered a plus.
- c. experience in collaborative projects involving industry and research institutions is a strong plus;
- d. international experience is a plus.
- e. Peer-reviewed publications relevant to the topic and scientific awards are a plus.

Key Skills and Competencies

Technical Skills: ability to design, develop and implement models and to interpret and translate results into practical actionable recommendations; proficiency in the analysis of experimental and collected data, as well as comfortable working with data-processing and numerical simulation tools (e.g. computational fluid dynamics, basic statistics; knowledge of Python/R or similar is a plus); familiarity with

sustainability and environmental aspects (energy, water, emissions, circularity) is highly appreciated.

Soft Skills: strong analytical thinking and problem-solving attitude; ability to explain complex technical concepts in a clear and accessible way to non-specialists; collaborative, with a team-oriented approach in multidisciplinary environments; proactive, curious and open to explore new technologies and cross-sector solutions; high standards of integrity, confidentiality and professional ethics.

Language and Communication: very good written and spoken English (for international partners, documentation, and presentations); good working knowledge of Italian, or willingness to reach it in a reasonable time.

What we offer

- f. The opportunity to work at the intersection of industry, research and startups in one of Italy's most important sectors, collaborating closely with major industrial partners and the University of Pisa;
- g. involvement in high-impact innovation projects, from early concept through pilots and industrial scaling;
- h. a dynamic, flexible environment where scientific and technical skills are central to the mission;
- i. employment contract in line with the Italian National Collective Agreement for the Commerce sector (CCNL Commercio);
- j. compensation consistent with skills and experience;
- k. professional development opportunities in innovation, project management and technology transfer, in addition to technical specialization.

Contact

For any additional information check the web site www.startattractor.eu or send an email at info@startattractor.eu

Start Attractor is an equal opportunity employer and considers qualified applicants for employment without regard to race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, age.