Director of Field Operations

Location: Remote, with many calls in Pacific Time.

   Preference for candidates based in the US who are eligible for a security clearance

Travel: likely ~15% travel

Salary range: $140-200k/yr + benefits

Key Summary

Atlas Computing is looking for a Director of Field Operations to lead, coordinate, and materially accelerate the work of our Field Strategist team. This role exists to ensure that our Field Strategists are consistently making real progress toward identifying and unblocking bottlenecks to defense-dominant technological equilibria, while effectively leveraging our network of experts.

Advances in AI create both extraordinary opportunities and serious risks. Atlas is a nonprofit focused on closing the gap between think tanks and incubators by systematically creating new organizations where none yet exist — organizations designed to secure society against the most severe risks posed by advanced AI. Field Strategists are at the center of that effort. The Director of Field Operations ensures that their work compounds rather than fragments.

This is not a traditional people-management role focused on process enforcement or metrics dashboards. Instead, it is a high-context, judgment-heavy leadership role that blends strategic oversight, hands-on partnership, light-weight project management, and close partnership with the CEO.

As a Director of Field Operations, success in the first 6 months looks like:

- Field Strategists are shipping clearer, more decision-ready work, faster. Strengths of individual field strategists benefit all, and weaknesses are supported.
- External expert engagement is tighter, more intentional, and higher leverage. Experts are excited by our work and happy to speak with our field strategists because of how well-organized our effort is.
- The CEO spends less time unblocking, refocusing, or re-synthesizing Field Strategist work — without losing visibility.
- You and the CEO have iterated on and are executing on a clear path from "promising ideas" to "vetted solutions" to address society-scale bottlenecks for addressing the hardest problems.
- The Field Strategist (FS) function feels cohesive, aligned, and increasingly scalable.

Note that we expect this first cohort to focus primarily on starting new efforts in the United States that could scale globally, rather than creating efforts starting outside the US.

What you'll do in this role…

Drive Progress and Accountability
- Ensure Field Strategists (FSs) are consistently making tangible progress toward well-defined organizational outcomes (e.g., validated org concepts, identified funders, founder pipelines).
- Identify when work is stalled, unfocused, or overly speculative, and course-correct early.

Ensure High-Leverage Use of Expert Time
- Review and shape plans for engaging external experts, advisors, and stakeholders.
- (Co-)Design and own a system for coordinating outreach between FSs to prevent multiple threads of questions getting posed to the same expert.
- Help FSs synthesize expert input into sharable learnings (rather than letting conversations accumulate without payoff).

Operate as a Force Multiplier for the CEO
- Take ownership of operational oversight that would otherwise bottleneck on the CEO's attention.
- Step in to handle or coordinate CEO-adjacent tasks when relevant (e.g., follow-ups, synthesis, prep, or delegation).
- Serve as a trusted thought partner in evaluating new ideas, prioritizing initiatives, and assessing where Atlas should lean in or deprioritize.

Build Light-Weight Operating Structure
- Establish simple, low-bureaucracy rhythms for updates, reviews, and decision-making.
- Improve how progress is communicated without adding unnecessary process.
- Identify patterns across FS work that could be incorporated into future FS cohorts (assuming we will run this multiple times).

Source, Coach, and Develop Field Strategists
- Work with the CEO to source, interview, and hire FSs.
- Provide high-quality feedback on judgment, prioritization, and strategic thinking.
- Create conditions where senior FSs can operate with high autonomy while staying aligned; help level-up more junior FSs.
- Possibly run a mid- and end-of-cohort feedback and review session.

You may be a fit for this role if you have...

- Experience leading or coordinating highly autonomous, senior individual contributors in ambiguous environments.
- Strong judgment about prioritization, leverage, and when to push vs. let people run.
- Comfort reviewing and critiquing early-stage strategic work without imposing heavy process.
- Experience operating close to a founder or CEO in a fast-moving, low-structure organization.
- A track record of turning complex, exploratory work into concrete outcomes.
- The ability to context-switch between strategy, people leadership, and hands-on execution.
- Strong generalist flexibility: able to quickly understand nuances in a variety of topics, ranging from ML architecture, export control laws, and ideological differences within the AI community.
- A strong ability to speak with experts as peers and synthesize across domains.
- Comfort forming and revising hypotheses quickly.
- Strong creative problem-solving skills, including a deep love for finding pareto improvements to the obvious options.
- A capability to reason about AI trajectory, safety, and future-state technologies.
- Meaningful experience in at least one of these areas:
  - Software security, vulnerability analysis (or related).
  - Hardware security or hardware supply chain security (or related).
  - Identity & authentication systems (or related).

- Privacy engineering or privacy threat modeling (or related).
- Cybersecurity (including Red Team, threat intel, or policy).
- Cyber-defense strategy or coordination (e.g., IC).
- DARPA / IARPA / HSARPA / ARPA-E PM, SETA, or program support roles.
- Technology roadmapping or multi-year strategic planning.
- Risk analysis in highly complex environments.
- Another area you can convincingly argue is relatively similar to these.

At Atlas, we also expect everyone to have...

- a practice of reviewing the state-of-the-art after having an idea, coupled with an urge to prototype, test, and iterate.
- a founder mindset, with a high degree of ownership over outcomes (not process) and the ability to personally make and externally drive progress with little oversight.
- experience coordinating and aligning stakeholders to work toward a common goal.
- strong analytical, problem-solving, and communication skills.
- comfort with uncertainty and interest in shaping our culture, as we're still a very small organization.

Bonus points if you...

- Have acted as a "COO-type" integrator across research, strategy, and execution.
- Thrive in high-trust, low-ego environments where authority comes from accountability rather than tenure.
- Care deeply about how advanced technology reshapes society — and want to help steer that trajectory responsibly.
- Know how to solve problems with money, but also know how to operate on a tight budget.
- Are deeply committed to improving the human condition with technology...
  - and understanding how different people might differently define "improving", "human", "condition", and "technology" in that sentence.
- Have work authorization to work in the US (and ideally also would be eligible to hold a US security clearance)

Here's a supplemental living document if you have more questions: 📄 More information for potential hires
Our recent blog posts also contain helpful context: https://blog.atlascomputing.org/

Instructions to apply can be found at atlascomputing.org/jobs