

Grants Resource Center
American Association of State Colleges and Universities

**Economic and Community Development
Task Force**



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Today's Objectives

- Identify task force members
- Provide update on work to-date
- Seek feedback on hypotheses and next steps

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Campus Members

Tim Atkinson, University of Central Arkansas
Bill Brah, University of Massachusetts Boston
David Earwicker, Sacramento State University
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David Stone, Northern Illinois University
Ted Turkle, Buffalo State College
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Recent Activity

- **Task force statement revised**
- **Three project tracks identified**
- **Action steps established**

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Outreach

- At AASCU annual meeting, U.S. undersecretary Martha Kanter called the work of the taskforce "critically important" and emphasized the concern about achieving short-term gains at the expense of long-term value.
- GRC director has been appointed to the executive committee of the APLU Commission on Innovation, Competitiveness, and Economic Prosperity, which is developing innovation and economic development assessment tools that will be available to all GRC members.

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Community Development Hypothesis 1

All colleges and universities have multiple ties to the communities and regions in which they are located. Many of the most vital relationships do not involve technology transfer or business development. Instead, the community connections involve healthcare, education, and a host of other social services. Even though these activities are critical to the health of the local communities, these community relationships tend to be decentralized (dependent on departmental or individual faculty member initiatives), informal, and not based on organizational planning or strategic targeting. Through the development of a best practice database and training in planning approaches to community engagement, the number of formal relationships will increase and the impact of the university on the local environment will expand. Specifically, the training will be based on an analysis of best practices, and address institutional organization and management of external relations, the selection of community partners, and project management approaches.

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Community Development Hypothesis 2

One resource available to most GRC member institutions is the region's community foundation. Community foundations are often intimately involved with issues related to community development and often provide funding to programs based at local colleges and universities. However, in many cases, these foundations run on very tight administrative budgets, small staffs, and limited resources. To strengthen relationships among our institutions and our local community foundations, it is proposed that offices of sponsored projects (and possibly also human subjects and technology transfer offices) offer technical assistance on issues like RFP design, grant agreements, evaluation design, human subjects issues, overhead rates, copyrights, mechanisms for proposal scoring, etc. The intention is to foster our relationships with these local partners, help them improve their functioning, and find more ways for our institutions can work together on issues of community development.

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Community Development Hypothesis 3

The University of Illinois at Chicago Neighborhoods Initiative received federal funding from HHS in 2009 to provide leadership development, organizational development, program development, and community engagement support to community-based organizations in Chicago. Such a program could be linked with other university-based or federally-funded offices to provide cost-effective and time-efficient training and development support for community organizations throughout the U.S. Existing web conference, other distance learning technologies, and regional training clusters would be used. The outcomes would include improved contractual, service, and business relationships among higher education and community groups, and more effective delivery of community services, with or without higher education's direct involvement in the service.

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Community Development Question

What types of resources and training would help regional comprehensive universities prepare students to go into service with community-based organizations?

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Economic/Workforce Development Hypothesis 1

Recently, due to reductions in federal grant funding and state budget shortfalls, many foundations have begun investing heavily in economic development to create fiscally healthy communities that foster workforce growth and development. Monitoring and applying for these new opportunities can be difficult due to the variety of private foundations, the complexity of their funding mechanisms, and the challenge of establishing meaningful connections with community partners. A series of web conferences will be conducted to help institutions take advantage of economic development funding opportunities and increase their success rates among private foundations.

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Economic/Workforce Development Hypothesis 2

Faculty at institutions within the AASCU framework are not as well-versed in technology transfer and intellectual property as their colleagues at research intensive and extensive universities or medical research centers. More tools are needed to train, inform, and expand tech transfer knowledge on AASCU GRC campuses.

Response: Develop database of successful technology transfer, and workforce development models within the AASCU GRC community and make this resource available through GRC.

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Economic/Workforce Development Hypothesis 3

Colleges and universities provide important intellectual assets that contribute to regional economic and workforce development. However, from a regional perspective, economic development efforts made by academic institutions individually are inefficient because the regional capabilities, needs, and opportunities are not known, coordinated, or leveraged by those institutions. A database of successful economic/workforce development pipeline programs (curriculum development, job creation, and retention) will be developed and made available to the AASCU GRC institutions, and a series of web conferences will be conducted to 1) allow institutions to share best practices, lessons learned, and successful regional strategies for economic/workforce development; 2) provide a platform for defining existing levels and types of economic/workforce development engagement and the associated resource requirements; and 3) provide opportunity for institutions to develop and benchmark commonly accepted measurements for success.

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Compliance/Intellectual Property Hypothesis 1

Despite AASCU institutions' recognized contributions to the field of translational research, the campus culture is not supportive of the protection of IP or the seeking of patents. Two factors account for this: 1) faculty at comprehensive regional universities perceive that best practices in IP are structured for researchers at research-intensive institutions; and 2) signatories perceive that the costs associated with patent applications do not pay adequate returns. Both factors limit innovation activity and force a case-by-case approach to intellectual property protection that is inefficient. Regional networks of low-cost legal service providers will be established to reduce the financial burden and increase the protection of institutional researchers pursuing market-based partnerships. An annual series of training activities convened by the provost and the director of research will increase the average submission of patent applications and the submission of translational research/SBIR/STTR grant applications.

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Compliance/Intellectual Property Hypothesis 2

AASCU institutions' contributions to innovation and economic development are not adequately captured by standard metrics used at research-intensive institutions. New metrics such as paid industry internships, industry equipment donations, visiting scientists, sponsored research, SBIR grants, etc. should be used to capture regional comprehensive universities' contributions to the innovation process and research and development workforce. Research and sponsored programs officers and technology transfer officers should assist faculty, staff, and students to see the value of innovation and entrepreneurial activities, train them on the fundamentals of IP development (rather than the intricacies of IP commercialization), champion minor accomplishments early in the process, and strengthen connections between the university and the region's industry sectors. This approach builds momentum and attracts investment. After initially focusing on engagement, training, and participation, the focus can shift to the innovation pipeline and early wins, then to the end goals of revenue from licenses and successful new programs.

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Compliance/Intellectual Property Hypothesis 3

While AASCU institutions' ability to comprehensively partner with industry on research and development is more limited than research-intensive institutions, there is still an opportunity to identify and strengthen connections in signature areas that match university strengths in research, talent generation, and service activities to meet the demands of specific sectors. A three-step process underpins a rigorous and detailed approach. First identify and assess existing research activity focus areas found at the university (research funding, publications, graduate education, and service activities). Then consider the broader regional context (analysis of occupational demand, technology industry presence, industry patent analysis, and input from interviews with industry). Finally, advance multi-disciplinary and multi-institutional partnerships in selected areas of research.

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Two IP Hypotheses

Whether your institution has a technology transfer office or a proposal developer watching compliance with IP, two hypotheses might help. Proposals should be read for IP potential to avoid surprises after submission by keeping two things in mind:

- The return on investment and innovation must be measured; and
- IP between the university and the region's industry sectors need to be identified and strengthened.

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Hypothesis 1: Measure the Return on Investment and Innovation

- Regional universities do little IP but successes can be measured to call attention to what is being done in IP and thus in compliance.
 - IP being developed, disclosed, licensed, and implied in proposals?
 - IP contacts and working relationships with industry. Patents by industry that might nurture collaborations with faculty.
 - Are collaborations growing between departments and colleges on projects that might nurture IP.
 - Are there any paid industry internships?

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Hypothesis 1: Measure the Return on Investment and Innovation

- Keep track of how many proposals were submitted with IP potential?
- How many coordination sessions occurred between IP persons and OSP persons even if the meeting was a chance to sit and talk between folks who don't usually have the opportunity.
- Are the number of contacts to the TT/OSP improving as an outcome of training and new emphasis?

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Hypothesis 2: Identify and strengthen connections with industry

- What does the research in this proposal supply?
- How might the IP in the proposal, or the proposal itself help to develop the workforce to enhance the community and the regional university?
- Proposal awareness training of faculty, staff, and students in the essentials of IP.

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Hypothesis 2: Con'd

- Who should do the training?
 - TTO or OSP training coordinator or person in research administration most knowledgeable about relationship between IP and compliance
 - Faculty member from a department that produces or is interested in IP and understands compliance: physics, biology, chemistry, etc.
 - IP/compliance savvy entrepreneurial/workforce development person if you have one.

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Hypothesis 2: Con'd

- Training should feature:
 - Early wins
 - How to obtain investments
 - How to procure industry equipment donations
 - Possibilities for help from visiting scientists, industry experts about IP who are cognizant of compliance requirements of IP and proposal development
 - SBIR grants

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Hypothesis 2: Con'd

- As knowledge of IP and compliance matures, emphasize training about licensing and champion successful new programs.
- Have your experts join AUTM to participate in its listserv and attend regional and national meetings; return and add to the substance of training.
- Obtain a licensing contract template to assist training.

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Wrap up

- Celebrate successes in proposals with IP, improved compliance pertaining to IP, and how it has affected the RCR program in general.
- Put the word out that industry and workforce development contacts are growing and reward faculty and administrators that contributed.
- Give awards for these feats at your research recognition events. Include such information in your newsletters and institutional websites.

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Wrap Up (Con'd)

- Advance multi-disciplinary and multi-institutional partnerships in selected areas of research.
- Identify and assess existing research activity focus areas found at your university (research funding, publications, graduate education, and service activities).
- Consider the broader regional context (analysis of occupational demand, technology industry presence, industry patent analysis, and input from interviews with industry).

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