November 2014

Last month, I announced that our 30th Annual Emerging Issues Forum, “Innovation Reconstructed,” will focus on how our companies and communities will compete in a future of accelerating *everything*. I suspected we had the right topic, and your record-breaking early registrations have proven me right. I’m thrilled that so many plan to join us on February 9-10, 2015, at the Raleigh Convention Center.

We have heard from dozens of you about exciting “spaces for innovation” across North Carolina. These spaces take many forms – they’re urban and rural, encompass many acres or just one small building (or no building), and have private, public, and nonprofit sponsors. They reflect different models, different goals, and various stages of development. They include accelerators, science parks, social entrepreneurship incubators, corporate “intrapreneurship” ventures, fully virtual collaborations, and lots more.

Help us shine a spotlight during the 2015 Forum on our state’s vibrant, growing mix of spaces for innovation. I invite you to take the “North Carolina Spaces for Innovation” Challenge.

By taking part, you’ll help us answer an important question: *What is North Carolina’s most exciting space for innovation?*
Here’s a quick summary of how the Challenge works and why it matters. Do you have a favorite North Carolina space for innovation? Share the story! By December 8, 2014, send us a short (no more than 400 words) description. Tell us about the model, key stakeholders, stage of development -- and why more than one thousand Forum participants and a worldwide livestream audience need to know more.

Our 2015 Forum Working Group will review nominations and select up to five finalists. Each gets a free ticket to the Forum. More important, each will be invited to submit a short video, and the public will choose a winner via an open, online vote in January. We’ll invite a representative of the winning space for innovation to take the stage and tell the story at the 30th Annual Emerging Issues Forum! We want to inspire innovation efforts by sharing this powerful example.

The Challenge is one of many ways your insights are helping shape the agenda for 30th Forum. I can’t wait to see what emerges. The tradition of lifting up the best of North Carolina continues.

Warmly, Anita