IEI NEWSLETTER

Launching InnovateNC

For more than a year, through the February 2015 Emerging Issues Forum and beyond, I’ve been emphasizing that North Carolina’s economic future depends on its strength in innovation. I’ve emphasized, too, that our state won’t meaningfully grow its strength if only 3 counties account for more than two-thirds of all the high tech innovation in the state. As such, I am thrilled to announce that leading organizations in innovation in NC ("the Partners") are teaming up to launch InnovateNC, a new collaboration that will help more North Carolina cities to become top-tier innovation centers.

InnovateNC’s focus on cities as innovation centers reflects evidence confirming that innovative activity thrives best in places that have brought critical ingredients together. By increasing the number of innovation centers across our state, we will help position North Carolina to excel in a competitive global economy that increasingly rewards innovative capacity.

InnovateNC will expand North Carolina’s innovation circle beyond the current nucleus of Wake, Durham, and Mecklenburg Counties. The two-year program targets cities in other counties seeking to boost their innovation capacity. The Partners will select up to five such cities and towns, then guide a local “Innovation Council” team from each through an intensive two-year assessment, visioning, and collaborative learning process designed to support a specific innovation effort. The Partners will also help participating cities to ensure that their innovation efforts are broadly inclusive.

To ensure InnovateNC’s success, IEI has assembled a dream team of powerful Partners: Forward Impact, the UNC System, Duke University, RTI International, UNC-Chapel Hill’s Kenan Institute for Private Enterprise, UNC-
TV, the Council for Entrepreneurial Development, the Research Triangle Foundation, and the NC Board of Science, Technology & Innovation.

**High-Tech employment by NC Counties, 2012:**

Interested in seeing your community shift into innovation’s fast lane? Mark your calendars for this Monday, July 13, 2015 at noon, when we’ll release the InnovateNC RFP. Sign up [here](http://app.bronto.com/public/?q=preview_message&fn=Link&id=0uq45xmsf0zqjd9krbgr9sej3aict&ssid=4267&t=3) to receive the RFP by email, or [visit our website](http://www.iei.northcarolina.edu/) to download a copy beginning Monday. Completed proposals are due August 17, 2015. We’ll announce selections on September 4.

Note: I’ll be discussing InnovateNC on UNC-TV this Monday, July 13, at 7:30pm. Please tune in to learn more!

InnovateNC is just one part of IEI’s ambitious post-Forum program of work through which we put consensus Forum priorities into action. Read more about IEI’s other exciting pro-innovation work [here](http://app.bronto.com/public/?q=preview_message&fn=Link&id=0uq45xmsf0zqjd9krbgr9sej3aict&ssid=4267&t=3).

Warmly, Anita

Director, Institute for Emerging Issues

North Carolina State University