

10.9.23

EDA University Center Cohort Visioning Session

University Center Attendees:

- University of Tennessee
- University of Arizona
- University of Nevada, Reno
- University of Alaska
- University of West Florida
- Virginia Tech/Virginia State University
- University of North Dakota
- Southern Utah University/Utah Tech
- Lehigh University
- University of Kentucky
- University of South Carolina
- Southern University
- University of Oregon
- University of Southern California
- Georgia Southern University
- University of Minnesota
- Tennessee Tech
- Georgia Tech

Not UCs:

- University of Houston
- Weber State University
- University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Notes

What is the common message for UCs? What advocacy is needed?

- Important to maximize and leverage the university for economic prosperity
- Equity component to this funding because of community colleges, HBCUs, etc. being involved, not like other funding sources to include them
 - Many are also addressing the urban/rural split
- Advocacy depends on geography of state, there are public land grant universities while some really must advocate for their centers
 - Starts with an understanding of the state and how the university can serve their interests, spread the resources of the university

- EDA has large pots of money, UCs may be more valuable because they have that connection to EDA, leverage that and further increase funding to play larger roles in the ecosystem
- UCs are valuable and are a catalyst to building partnerships. They are flexible and call to the local demands of the region
- The lack of an increase in funding for the program has been a challenge. To have long lasting impact there needs to be an increase in funding. Not pigeonholing your center into one agency as well if you can build partnerships with others, broader funding levels
- UCs are about meeting communities where they are. Best practices around how they do that, do customer discovery to meet the community and hear how others are doing it
- This isn't linear; how do we take all the things universities do including patents, startups, and communicate that out? Changing language to be more understandable
- There is a lot of grace and diversity in centers, which is a good model for flexibility
- Advocacy is difficult, and it is needed for these discussions. Where is the place to keep having conversations with other UCs?
- UCs are convenors!
 - Centers are sources of trusted analysis. There is someone at the center thinking about economic development every day
 - The UC program could be used as a door to get more out of universities
- There is always a need to build groups, hopeful for another in-person opportunity to continue the conversation
- One idea for additional funding – create supplemental funding surrounding the four activity focuses on the map (talent, innovation, place, capacity) for UCs to apply for