Linking equity, strategic partnerships, and economic development at Portland State University

Jonathan Fink
Vice President for Research and Strategic Partnerships
Portland State University
How do urban universities help create jobs in ways that increase prosperity and equity?
Assumptions

- Urban serving universities use innovative partnerships to advance economic development
- USUs draw first generation/underserved students
- Industry partners seek more diverse workforce

*How can these elements be combined?*
• Portland economy strong in electronics, software, manufacturing, healthcare, and clean-tech

• Many job openings now require import of talent

• State has ambitious education attainment goal

• Portland population increasingly Hispanic and Asian

• PSU ~30% under-represented and 1st generation
Oregon’s “40-40-20” higher education goal

- Hallmark of Governor’s education agenda

- By 2025:
  - All Oregon adults have high school diploma or equivalent
  - 40% have an associates degree or equivalent
  - 40% have a bachelor or higher degree*

* Requires more inclusive pipeline
PSU approach

• Expose young adults to hands-on STEM then show them innovation-based career pathways

• Work with local stakeholders on common agenda

• Collective impact approach for STEM pipeline

• Implementing national STEM programs for under-represented groups:
  – Math, Engineering, Science Achievement (K-12)
  – Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation (UG)
Research & Strategic Partnerships (RSP) role

- Research combined with strategic partnerships
- Continuum of research-related partnerships: institutional, PI-PI collaborations, workforce training, and community-based learning
PSU Engagement - Partnership Spectrum

Provost and Deans
- Community Engagement
- Professional Development
- Community-based Teaching & Learning
- Student Employment & Professional Application
- Course-Based

Research and President
- Research & Sponsored Proj.
- State & Local Research and Service
- Institutional Priority Business & Civic Partners
- Contract-Based
- Work-Based
- Strategy-Based

Institutional Priority Business & Civic Partners
- Strategic Partnerships
Research & Strategic Partnerships (RSP) role

- Research combined with strategic partnerships

- Continuum of research-related partnerships: institutional, PI-PI collaborations, workforce training, and community-based learning

- PSU’s strategic partners seeking to diversify:
  - Intel (Electronics, Software)
  - OHSU (Healthcare)
  - City of Portland (Cleantech)

- Innovation and Entrepreneurship agenda
PSU Cleantech Challenge

• Build a prototype in 90 days for a chance at a $20K grand prize

• Seven semi-finalists get $2500 grants

• Linked to PSU’s Business Accelerator and Innovation and Entrepreneurship agenda

• Connects with sustainability institute

• Funded by Wells Fargo, PSU and Oregon BEST