Proposed Model for an Innovation Network Supporting Oregon RAIN

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Final Report

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About the Community Planning Workshop
Community Planning Workshop (CPW) is one of the core programs of the University of Oregon’s Community Service Center (CSC) (csc.uoregon.edu). Established in 1977, CPW provides students the opportunity to address planning and public policy problems for clients throughout Oregon. Students work in teams under the direction of faculty and Graduate Teaching Fellows to develop proposals, conduct research, analyze and evaluate alternatives, and make recommendations for possible solutions to planning problems in rural Oregon communities.

About the EDAUC
The University of Oregon Economic Development Administration University Center is a partnership between the Community Service Center, the UO Department of Economics, the Oregon Small Business Development Center Network and UO faculty. The UO Center provides technical assistance to organizations throughout Oregon, with a focus on rural economic development. The UO Center seeks to align local strategies to community needs, specifically with regards to building understanding of the benefits of sustainable practices and providing technical training to capitalize on economic opportunities related to those practices. The EDC is partially funded through a grant from the U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration.
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents a framework for implementing a coordinated “innovation network” to support the proposed research commercialization accelerator linked to the University of Oregon. The framework is intended to provide detail on how business development services can be coordinated through the Oregon Regional Accelerator and Innovation Network. Note that while RAIN was funded through the 2013 Oregon Legislature, this report was largely prepared before the funding bills passed.

Overview

The Oregon Regional Accelerator and Innovation Network (RAIN) is a concept program designed to develop and support commercial applications of academic research. In January 2013, Governor Kitzhaber stated that Oregon must reinvent its economy.¹ The Governor’s economic agenda specifically targets the scientific research, high-tech manufacturing, and software development sectors.

The South Willamette Valley region is in a unique position to support economic growth through commercialization of research. According to testimony from Dr. Kimberly Espy and Dr. Rick Spinrad to the State Legislature, the UO and OSU collectively brought in nearly $400 million in research dollars last year that resulted in discovery, innovation, and economic activity for Oregonians. The strength of the RAIN model builds on community efforts to provide a full spectrum of services aiding in the development and growth of businesses within the region.

The Oregon RAIN model is comprised of two programmatic elements: (1) the accelerator, and (2) the innovation network. The accelerator is a physical space designed to produce and support thriving technology-based businesses that exit the accelerator program with a sustained business plan, financial stability, and self-sufficiency. The innovation network is the connective tissue linking targeted business assistance to both businesses growing out of the accelerator and to the region’s emerging entrepreneurial businesses. The primary role of the innovation network is to link the right type of assistance, to the right business need, at the right time. The innovation network not only supports the accelerator program but is also designed to stand alone as a regional economic development support tool.

¹ Eugene Register-Guard, “Kitzhaber touts approach to a new economy,” January 9, 2013.
A Vision for a Lane County Innovation Network

The framework proposed in this report focuses on building an innovation network linked to the accelerator at UO. Comprised of the region’s key business development stakeholders and the related business support programs and services they provide, the Eugene-Springfield innovation network will provide programmatic support to the accelerator and developing businesses within the community across all phases of business development.

As conceived, the accelerator would be managed as a partnership between the UO and the Eugene Chamber. The local RAIN Director, who in the current concept will be employed by the Eugene Chamber of Commerce, will coordinate the Innovation Network and manage the Business Accelerator. For the innovation network to be effective, it needs a coordinator to “champion” activities and convene actions.

The innovation network is comprised of 12 government and nonprofit partners in the community who provide entrepreneurial support through programs, services, or mentorship. The relationship between the elements and phases of business development is shown in Figure S-1. In short, the role of the innovation network is to provide a seamless spectrum of business development and support services across the phases.

Figure 4-1. Relationship of the Accelerator and Innovation Network to Phases of Business Development

![Diagram of the relationship between the accelerator, innovation network, and phases of business development.]

The innovation pipeline is permeable in the sense that startups from both the community and university can enter at any phase. As startups that stem from the university pass through the innovation pipeline, they move through the university to community continuum becoming independent from the university and establishing themselves in the community. Both community based startups and university based startups benefit from the
innovation network’s services throughout all three phases of business development.

**Key Components of the Innovation Network**

An assessment of best practices for business accelerators and regional innovation networks suggests **twelve Key Components** are necessary to create a robust support structure for startup businesses (the elements surrounding the innovation network circle on the left in Figure S-2).

**Figure S-2. Framework for Coordinating the Accelerator and Innovation Network**

With respect to the local innovation network, CPW identified **four Core Elements** that are especially critical to the vitality of a local innovation network. These core elements are services and activities that will be provided by partner organizations that may not have a physical presence in the accelerator. These include (1) capital assembly, (2) mentorship, (3) workforce development, and (4) communication and networking. **The coordination of these services is central to the success of both the accelerator and innovation network.** In this model, many of the remaining elements (e.g., leadership, services, physical infrastructure, assessment and evaluation, governance, innovation space, and community engagement) would be addressed through the accelerator. To the extent necessary, these additional elements could be coordinated through partner meetings or additional working groups.

CPW’s concept is for the accelerator director to facilitate coordination of the innovation network. As with any collaborative process, a central point of contact is necessary to ensure activities occur. Thus, we propose that the
accelerator be the space (both physical and virtual) that provides organization to the network. **CPW recommends that the 12 community partners meet periodically (at least monthly in the initial stages, potentially less frequently as the program matures) to coordinate activities.** Establishing the network will require a large, coordinated effort. That effort will require regular interaction among all of the partner organizations.

Moreover, coordination will need to be consistent with direction provided by the RAIN governing body (including the RAIN business plan and any related strategic plans) and the focus locally would be on implementation. With respect to the four core elements, **CPW recommends establishing four working groups with the specific purpose of implementing the innovation network and coordinating resource delivery.**

CPW recommends the establishment of the following working groups linked to the local accelerator:

- **Capital Assembly:** Most startup technology businesses need substantial funding from a variety of sources, which will vary as the firms move through the phases of development.

- **Mentorship:** Launching a new technology venture can be a complex process; emerging entrepreneurs benefit from the guidance of a mentor with experience in the process.

- **Communication and Networking:** Emerging entrepreneurs need to form connections with local service providers and with their peers to build social capital.

- **Workforce Development:** Startup technology companies need access to a local pool of workers with specialized skillsets; conversely, talented workers need access to stable, well-paid jobs in the region.

The four **Working Groups** should be comprised of representatives from regional stakeholder agencies that offer programs and services relevant to each group, and members should come together in regular meetings to coordinate their efforts. These **Working Groups** will form the connective strands that wire together all of the regional partnerships in the Innovation Network portion of RAIN.

**Capital Assembly**

Successful innovation networks facilitate access to capital, providing opportunities for researchers and entrepreneurs to finance entrepreneurial endeavors. With access to capital noted as the most significant challenge to starting a business, identifying accessible sources of funds is instrumental to company development and growth. The capital assembly working group, **comprised of the University of Oregon, City of Eugene, LCOG, Lane County Economic Development, and the Eugene and Springfield Chambers of Commerce** will address this challenge by serving the following roles:
• Work to make funding opportunities more accessible across all phases of the business development cycle

• Leverage federal, state, local, and institutional grant and loan programs to support entrepreneurial endeavors

• Identify funding opportunities that support both university and community based innovation

Key Issues and Recommendations

**Issue 1**: Capital available through loans and grants is difficult to access due to complicated application processes.

Recommendation 1.1: Provide mentorship and guidance throughout the grant and or loan application process.

**Issue 2**: Limited financial resources are available to early-stage and high-risk startups.

Recommendation 2.1: Identify and compile a diversified grant and loan portfolio capable of tolerating risk.

Recommendation 2.2: Establish specialized loan and grant programs targeted at phases of business development or specific industries.

**Issue 3**: Substantial capital is needed for businesses to enter Phase II or III of the business development cycle.

Recommendation 3.1: Pool resources together to create large scale funding opportunities for businesses within Phase II and III of the business development cycle.

**Issue 4**: Access to venture capital is limited within the region.

Recommendation 4.1: Host capital focused networking events, exposing promising entrepreneurs to venture capital networks.

Recommendation 4.2: Consider establishing an internal review process to monitor appropriate resource targeting.

**Mentorship**

The mentorship work group should draw on the intellectual and experiential resources within the regional business community. It should engage seasoned entrepreneurs who are willing to relay their business expertise to fledgling entrepreneurs. The mentorship workgroup will work towards developing methods for individual mentors to guide entrepreneurs through the entire commercialization process by linking them to appropriate services and offering guidance.
Key Issues and Recommendations

The mentorship work group must recruit and retain a strong network of experienced and skilled mentors to the accelerator. Accelerator programs cannot succeed without a pipeline of qualified, well-connected mentors. The Eugene-Springfield region has the potential to leverage key players in the local business community to enhance the mentorship component of the innovation network.

Issue 1: Recruit an Experienced Mentor Pool.

Recommendation 1.1: Identify business community leaders and recruit them to participate in the accelerator program.

Issue 2: Establish a Mentorship-Matchmaking Approach.

Recommendation 2.1: Combine needs assessments with a meticulous compatibility process.

Issue 3: Sustain Relationships with the Business Community.

Recommendation 3.1: Assess business start-ups goals to compliment their needs.

Issue 4: Develop Complimentary Educational Seminars.

Recommendation 4.1: Identify knowledgeable leaders in diverse fields of business development.

Communication and Networking

Networking and communication is integral in connecting emerging and growing companies to a larger business community, sources of capital, and a network of business support services provided by regional stakeholders. Company success is driven by strong support networks, which facilitate peer-to-peer learning, mutual support, potential collaboration, and camaraderie among the local business community. The networking working group, comprised of all 12 regional stakeholders, will develop a cohesive and unified networking structure serving the following roles:

- Facilitate communication, access to resources, and information sharing among local agencies and entrepreneurs
- Develop a robust culture of innovation surrounding emerging innovation based businesses
- Enhance social capital and experiential knowledge through the development of an intentional and structured networking strategy

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Key Issues and Recommendations

Currently the local community possesses a number of networking and communication opportunities proficient in connecting and engaging the local business community. These programs, including Smart Ups and CodeChops, develop both professional and personal connections for the region’s established entrepreneurs rendering a supportive business environment. An opportunity emerges to expand on these efforts and engage a broader set of regional stakeholders by linking the supportive network of local businesses to regional service providers and institutional R&D efforts.

**Issue 1:** Promote awareness of programs and services offered by regional partners.

Recommendation 1.1: Maintain an online directory listing member services and networking venues.

**Issue 2:** Enhance the transfer of knowledge between the region’s key stakeholders.

Recommendation 2.1: Bridge connections between academic, government, and industry stakeholders through structured and unstructured networking events.

Recommendation 2.1: Formalize an institutional communication structure between RAIN and the 12 partner organizations.

**Workforce Development**

Local workforce skills coupled with regional higher educational attainment have been shown to support and drive entrepreneurial success. Building on strengths forged by our local academic institutions (University of Oregon, Lane Community College, and K-12 facilities) the region has an opportunity to support and nurture talent and develop practical skill sets necessitated by emerging technology-based businesses. The workforce working group comprised of Lane Workforce Partnership, University of Oregon, Lane Community College, City of Eugene, and the Eugene and Springfield Chambers of Commerce will address challenges in:

- Supporting and strengthening the development of a skilled labor force in the Eugene-Springfield area
- Connecting developing technology-based businesses to that labor force
- Addressing workforce needs to generate steady employment and retain employment opportunities within the region

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• Expanding existing business relationships between workforce development partners and the business community

Key Issues and Recommendations

A strong regional labor pool is essential in supporting the development and growth of innovation-based businesses. Ensuring this workforce need is met is instrumental in retaining growing businesses and the subsequent high-wage jobs that these companies can provide.

**Issue 1:** Address the perceived disconnect between the theoretical knowledge of local graduates and the practical skill set mandated by the local business community.

  Recommendation 1.1: Discuss and analyze cluster-based workforce needs with existing clients of workforce development partners.

**Issue 2:** Increase the supply of skilled managers and executives.

  Recommendation 2.1: Create a system to recruit for innovation-based employment opportunities.

**Issue 3:** Increase regional engagement in technology-based educational opportunities.

  Recommendation 3.1: Utilize existing academic facilities to develop and publicize classes and skill development programs needed to be competitive in an innovation-based workforce.

**Issue 4:** Convene customized start-up teams instrumental in the development of a business.

  Recommendation 4.1: Expand on existing programs offered by the local chambers and the University of Oregon.
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

With the help of targeted business assistance, entrepreneurs are better prepared to turn business ideas into successful new ventures that have a greater-than-average chance of success.

*Incubating Success, 2010, U.S. Economic Development Administration*

This report presents a framework for implementing a coordinated “innovation network” to support a proposed research commercialization accelerator linked to the University of Oregon and the Eugene-Springfield community. The framework is intended to provide detail on how business development services can be coordinated through the Oregon Regional Accelerator and Innovation Network (Oregon RAIN). Note that while RAIN was funded through the 2013 Oregon Legislature, this report was largely prepared before the funding bills passed.

The Oregon RAIN model is comprised of two programmatic elements: (1) the accelerator, and (2) the innovation network. The accelerator is a physical space designed to produce and support thriving technology-based businesses that exit the accelerator program with a sustained business plan, financial stability, and self-sufficiency. The innovation network is the connective tissue linking targeted business assistance to both businesses growing out of the accelerator and to the region’s emerging entrepreneurial businesses. The primary role of the innovation network is to link the right type of assistance, to the right business need, at the right time in the business development process. The innovation network not only supports the accelerator program but is also designed to stand alone as a regional economic development support tool.

The extensive network of contacts and resources provided through a regional innovation network provide an array of options to assist new enterprises through the many challenges that face fledgling businesses. This report describes a framework and recommendations for harnessing a comprehensive and interconnected innovation network that successfully supports the desired outcomes of the greater Oregon RAIN project.

**Background**

The Oregon Regional Accelerator and Innovation Network (RAIN) is a concept program designed to develop and support commercial applications of academic research. In January 2013, Governor Kitzhaber stated that Oregon must reinvent its economy. The Governor’s economic agenda specifically targets the scientific research, high-tech manufacturing, and software development sectors.

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5 *Eugene Register-Guard,* “Kitzhaber touts approach to a new economy,” January 9, 2013.
The South Willamette Valley region is in a unique position to support economic growth through commercialization of research. According to testimony from Dr. Kimberly Espy and Dr. Rick Spinrad to the State Legislature, the UO and OSU collectively brought in nearly $400 million in research dollars last year that resulted in discovery, innovation, and economic activity for Oregonians. The strength of the RAIN model builds on community efforts to provide a full spectrum of services aiding in the development and growth of businesses within the region.

Oregon RAIN is comprised of two physical accelerators located in Corvallis and Eugene, and a linked network of business support programs and services. The RAIN concept is essential in supporting the commercialization of university research and aiding the development and growth of tech-based businesses within the region. Participating companies will have access to the assets and expertise they need to grow, connect with other companies and knowledge bases, and boost the regional economy. The long-term goal of Oregon RAIN is to foster the development and retention of startup technology businesses in the region. RAIN will provide robust support for a regional culture of entrepreneurship and a robustly interconnected network of technology firms and workers.

At a minimum the innovation network will link the accelerator to common business startup services such as help with business basics, networking activities, marketing assistance, accounting and financial management strategies, access to capital, and links to higher education and workforce resources. An innovation network operating a full capacity will link startups with strategic partners and will provide access to an integrated nest of services connecting academic, public, and private resources through formal and informal partnerships.

This report, prepared by the Community Planning Workshop at the University of Oregon, describes existing interconnections between the academic, government, and business spheres, and proposes a framework for how those links can be strengthened and missing links can be forged. It focuses on the innovation network in Eugene-Springfield region and explains how the network can specifically support the research accelerator linked to the University of Oregon.

**Purpose and Methods**

The purpose of this report is to present a vision for a local innovation network supporting the research accelerator that is linked to the University of Oregon. CPW’s research included the following elements:

- An inventory of existing business support programs in Lane County
- A description of potential partner organizations in a dialog about how their efforts could be linked to the research accelerator at the University of Oregon
- A conceptual framework for implementation of a local “innovation network.”

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To meet these objectives, CPW: (1) reviewed literature on business incubators and accelerators; (2) conducted case study research on university accelerators and their associated innovation networks; (3) interviewed representatives of partner organizations; (4) interviewed local business startups; and (5) facilitated three meetings with regional stakeholders.

**Organization of this Report**

The remainder of this report is organized as follows:

**Chapter 2: Oregon RAIN Concept and Analytical Framework** provides an overview of Oregon RAIN and the framework that CPW used to conduct this evaluation.

**Chapter 3: Summary of Community Assets for Business Innovation** summarizes organizations and programs that exist in the Eugene-Springfield region that provide a broad array of business development services.

**Chapter 4: Proposed Framework for Linking a Local Innovation Network to Oregon RAIN** presents CPW’s recommendations related to enhancing the existing innovation network and linking it to the accelerator at the University of Oregon.

**Appendix A: Partner and Program Summaries** presents one-page summaries of potential partners and programs that currently exist in the Eugene-Springfield region.
CHAPTER 2: OREGON RAIN Concept

This chapter provides an overview of the Oregon Regional Accelerator and Innovation Network (RAIN) concept as it presently exists (June 2013). At the time this report was prepared, funding for the RAIN concept was being pursued through the Oregon State Legislature. This analysis, however, is relevant even if RAIN does not receive state funding. Opportunities will still exist in the region to capitalize on university research and high tech entrepreneurship.

The Oregon RAIN Concept

Enhancing Oregon’s economic support of technology-based entrepreneurial innovation requires many champions. In particular, the South Willamette Valley is undergoing a sea change of economic development efforts aimed at capturing new solutions to replace declining timber revenues. Accordingly, the Governor’s South Valley Regional Solutions Team (RST) and the University of Oregon’s office for Research, Innovation, and Graduate Education (UO RIGE) primed an initial concept for the Oregon Regional Accelerator and Innovation Network (RAIN). The Oregon RAIN concept works to support and grow the region’s innovation-based strengths through the development of two interlinked programs: (1) a set of regional technology-based business accelerators, and (2) a comprehensive regional innovation network. Acting as a cohesive unit, Oregon RAIN is well suited to diagnose and resolve challenges associated with growing small businesses.

The Oregon RAIN model is both an entrepreneurial-based business support tool and a regional economic development instrument. These two functions are clearly outlined in a Legislative Concept Paper developed to articulate the role of Oregon RAIN to potential private and public funders. This report builds from the concept to prompt a deeper discussion into the roles, functions, and steps necessary to form a successful regional innovation network. Building an innovation network from a supported legislative framework is desirable as evidence concludes that supportive relationships between policies and services contribute most to the success of an accelerator program.7

Small businesses encounter many categorical problems associated with attempted growth.8 Accordingly, Oregon the South Willamette Valley Regional Solutions Team contracted with ECONorthwest to develop a business plan for the RAIN concept. The purpose of the business plan was to provide an outline of the market feasibility and potential benefits of developing an accelerator and innovation network program while proposing a general blueprint for the structure and function of the RAIN program.9 The RAIN Business Plan begins by stressing the importance of

7 EDA Incubating Success, 2010 p. 7
convening a consortium of partnerships across academic, public and private sector agencies dedicating to increasing the development and performance of technology-based enterprises in the South Willamette Valley.

Figure 2-1 provides an overview of key elements of the RAIN concept as presented in the Legislative Concept Paper. The linked accelerator programs of OSU and UO are RAIN’s primary assets. RAIN will facilitate collaboration between these programs and other key resources in the region (through the Innovation Network). RAIN will provide the following services: (1) strategic planning, (2) engaging and connecting resources, (3) facilitating access to capital, (4) marketing opportunities and successes, and (5) monitoring outcomes. A Board of Directors composed of key stakeholders will govern RAIN.

**Figure 2-1. Oregon RAIN Conceptual Model**

The draft RAIN business plan prepared by ECONorthwest presents the following mission statement:

RAIN is a consortium of government, higher education and the business community created to advance the formation, growth, and retention of tech-based startups in the South Willamette Valley. By enhancing partnerships between universities, community colleges, the private sector, and state and local governments, RAIN will help provide the resources necessary to efficiently transition from ideas to business startups to Oregon-based companies that create jobs and economic prosperity for the region and state.

According to the draft RAIN business plan, “the primary objective of RAIN is to triple the current rate of new tech business formation and job creation.” The
mission and objective statements are likely to evolve as formal implementation begins in 2013.

**Conceptual Elements of Accelerator/Innovation Networks**

Accelerators help entrepreneurs start and grow their businesses. Entrepreneurs are best prepared to develop their business ideas into successful companies with the help of targeted business assistance. A business accelerator’s main goal is to help develop successful, financially independent startups through direct mentorship, resources to access capital, access to business networks, and physical space in order to accelerate the business development process. Business incubators offer similar assistance and services. However, an accelerator provides business development services for businesses in the startup phase with the intention of compressing the timescale for startups to develop (or to quickly fail—which can also be a valuable outcome).

Business accelerators and participating entrepreneurs are successful when business support networks and services are guided by business development experts. The Oregon RAIN innovation network will help propel viable business ideas to market by connecting entrepreneurs with existing business development services in the community. Successful innovation networks include mentors that guide entrepreneurs through developing their business idea, assistance with business plan development, connections to market capital, and networking to create bonds of credibility.

Forming a strong innovation network impacts the community beyond the accelerator. A well-established innovation network in a community builds a culture of entrepreneurship. In addition to exposing entrepreneurs to mentors and business support services, innovation networks attract entrepreneurs from outside the community by demonstrating the community’s desire to enhance and sustain the resources necessary to support business development.

Establishing a robust culture of innovation influences economic development by attracting and developing businesses in the region. A guiding principle in the Eugene, Springfield, Lane County Regional Prosperity Plan is to “encourage a culture of entrepreneurship and re-investment into our local community.” The Eugene-Springfield region continually shares successes in encouraging government, businesses and the community to work together to strengthen the local economy. The Oregon RAIN program promises to further strengthen regional cooperation in economic development while providing a catalyst to drive the development of higher-wage innovation-based enterprises.

10 Senate Bill 255 (http://landru.leg.state.or.us/13reg/measures/sb0200.dir/sb0255.intro.html)

Framework for a Regional Accelerator and Innovation Network

Starting a business is a complex and convoluted process. An effort to conceptualize this practice is captured in the three-phase innovation pipeline model shown in Figure 2-2. The model outlines the process of company development, articulating the progression of an idea into a successful business venture. While the business development cycle is intricate at best, this model provides an understanding of the nature of company development, and provides a generalized way to visualize and understand the business development process. This innovation pipeline model informs the development of the innovation network, providing a framework to catalog existing business support programs and services within the region. Detailed descriptions of the three phases are listed below.

Figure 2-2. The Innovation Pipeline across Three Phases of Business Development

Source: Community Planning Workshop
Note: Figure 2-2 provides a conceptual model for the innovation pipeline that is not to scale – the rate of attrition between phase I and II of the pipeline will be much higher than the diagram suggestions. If the model is successful a high percentage of businesses that move into the incubator in phase II will survive through phase III.

Phase I: Proof of Concept

The proof of concept phase is comprised of entrepreneurs, professors, students, and community members who feel they have an idea capable of being developed into a successful business venture. Substantial support is needed to identify the commercial potential of product or idea. Issues surrounding intellectual property (IP) management, research and development financing, and market demand are pertinent to proving a technology and transition into phase II, business acceleration and incubation.

The role of the university is significant within Phase I (although RAIN does not limit services or space in the accelerator to university spinoffs). With substantial capital
and intellectual resources, the university serves as a hub of innovation. Ambitions to capitalize on research-based commercial endeavors have spawned a support structure capable of assisting companies with the commercialization process. Unlike programs and services that exist within the local community, the university is especially adept in aiding companies early in their development. With improved access to institutional, regional, state, and federal resources, the university enhances access to financial, physical, and programmatic assets.

**Phase II: Acceleration and Incubation**

In the acceleration and incubation phase entrepreneurs and researchers begin to develop and prove their business model. Often using the services provided by a physical space, start-ups begin to navigate the process of developing a business. Access to capital, mentorship, and legal guidance are pertinent to this process, assisting businesses transition into phase III, company growth.

The role of the university diminishes in phase II, as businesses with a refined model are poised to take advantage of resources available within the community. Local agencies are able to leverage local, regional, state, and federal resources to provide necessary assistance to developing companies. Recognizing the economic benefits associated spurring viable company development; the community is proactive in providing enhanced access to capital, mentorship, and assistance with workforce acquisition.

**Phase III: Company Growth**

As young companies begin to grow, the community’s role expands. Efforts to retain these growing businesses require support programs and services addressing challenges of workforce and physical space acquisition. These programs coupled with life style amenities help retain successful startups, instrumental in producing a clustering effect. As successful and growing businesses begin to settle in the community, companies and ideas within similar disciplines identify an area as supportive of their venture. The resulting cluster effect yields substantial community economic benefits including job creation and an expanded tax base.

**Importance of the Innovation Network Model**

This conceptual model of the business development cycle presents a framework to catalog business support programs and services present in the Eugene-Springfield area and interpret existing literature and case studies on accelerators, incubators, and innovation networks. Despite its seemingly rigid and straightforward approach, the model must be viewed as dynamic, receptive of businesses entering the model at any point in their development process. A general understanding and acceptance of this framework is needed to align the interests of academic, governmental, and community stakeholders in supporting business development and growth.

**Elements of an Innovation Network**

Throughout the nation, innovation is beginning to anchor regional economies, shifting the focus of economic development efforts in all sectors to seek innovative ways to increase profitability. This shift necessitates the development of strong
regional support networks capable of supporting innovation and subsequent economic growth. Coined “innovation networks,” the literature suggests that twelve key components are instrumental in facilitating the development of industries and deriving economic growth from innovation (Figure 2-3).\textsuperscript{12}

**Figure 2-3. Twelve Components of the Innovation Network Model**

![](image)

Source: Community Planning Workshop

When developed at a regional scale, innovation networks exploit regional strengths and opportunities, rendering them invaluable in facilitating the development of knowledge-based industries. Notable strength of the South Willamette Valley include the signature research institutions: the University of Oregon (UO) and Oregon State University (OSU). Together these institutions oversaw $400 million in research funding in 2012. The continual research coupled with an extensive company portfolio comprised of university spinouts presents an opportunity for the region to capitalize on research endeavors.\textsuperscript{13}

Figure 2-4 illustrates how a successful innovation network renders community benefit from institutional research. Typically, universities are viewed as knowledge hubs, centers of research and discovery that remains largely internal to the university. However, through the implementation of a successful innovation network, universities can act as a catalyst transforming an entire region into an innovation hub. Universities bear significant benefits for the region as articulated in the direct, indirect, and ultimate outcomes. As the network becomes more refined,


network strengths and outcomes are reinforced, further strengthening the model in its entirety.\textsuperscript{14}

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{Figure_2-4_Innovation_Network_Desired_Outcomes.png}
\caption{Innovation Network—Desired Outcomes}
\end{figure}

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\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{Figure_2-4_Innovation_Network_Desired_Outcomes.png}
\caption{Innovation Network—Desired Outcomes}
\end{figure}

CHAPTER 3: SUMMARY OF COMMUNITY ASSETS FOR BUSINESS INNOVATION

The Eugene-Springfield region’s distinct characteristics offer opportunities to boost entrepreneurial success. In order for the region to benefit from assets such as the University of Oregon and local business development services, they must be clearly delineated. This chapter describes local business development programs, services, and resources in the Southern Willamette Valley. For the purpose of this report, CPW defines community assets to include organizations and programs that provide business development services.

A more detailed summary of each asset is presented in Appendix A. An inventory of community assets attests to the atmosphere of entrepreneurial support in the region and serves as a tool for entrepreneurs to access key services. Ultimately, the inventory provides the foundation to link the existing network of business services to the accelerator portion of RAIN.

Table 2-1 identifies and describes regional and local level agency and organization attributes that may influence the structure and process of the innovation network.

The asset inventory underscores the broad array of services already available in the region. In some respects, it may beg the question of “why RAIN?” CPW’s assessment is that RAIN identified an opportunity to a gap that currently exists in the region. The extensive business development assets that exist suggest that much of the innovation network is already in place; the purpose of CPW’s work is to identify opportunities to link that network to RAIN.
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<tr>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Programs</th>
<th>Innovation Elements</th>
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<tr>
<td>Business Oregon</td>
<td>Business Oregon specializes in harnessing public-private partnerships that assist the development, growth and retention of Oregon’s Businesses. Business Oregon provides tools to access services needed in different stages of business development and networks with many organizations to help entrepreneurs find resources to start a business. The Business Support Resources database serves as a gateway to resources offered in the region. Specifically, Business Oregon connects emerging companies with business support service providers offering programmatic, consulting, technical assistance, and financial services. Services include a range of small business supports, access to industry associations, and innovation-technology supports. Furthermore, Business Oregon is part of the Oregon Business Development Commission, which influences policy towards an integrated approach to economic development. Business Oregon’s network of resources supports all three phases of business development.</td>
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<td>• Business Oregon’s business development, finance, and recruitment officers work to engage companies looking to relocate or expand in Oregon. • The Infrastructure Finance Authority’s (IFA) regional coordinators work on coordinating infrastructure development. • A global industry strategies team provides market research and economic data, and supports university-industry partnerships.</td>
<td>• Governance • Leadership • Mentorship • Capital Assembly • Services • Communication and Networks • Assessment and Evaluation • Culture of Innovation</td>
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<td>Oregon Small Business Development Center (OSBDC)</td>
<td>The OSBDC provides direct, no-cost advising services, resources, and assistance to Oregon’s small businesses across all stages of development. The OSBDC is part of a national network of business development centers connected with the U.S. Small Business Administration. The OSBDC’s staff of advisors assist in business plan development, employee management, marketing, financial analysis, technology education, and address other crucial startup needs. These one-on-one advising services are complemented by classroom courses, workshops, seminars, and online training courses. OSBDC also offers specialized programs for established businesses and those owned by Hispanic people and military veterans. The OSBDC informs the RAIN framework by offering emerging local entrepreneurs with direct mentorship, networking opportunities, and capital assembly resources.</td>
<td>• OSBDC’s core service is free and confidential advising for small-business owners and entrepreneurs. • OSBDC’s three-year Small Business Management program includes classroom sessions, individual coaching, and peer-to-peer networking with dedicated entrepreneurs. • The Global Trade program covers international logistics, trade finance, marketing, and legal issues. • OSBDC provides federal SBIR/STTR grant application assistance.</td>
<td>• Mentorship • Capital Assembly • Services • Communication and Networks • Workforce • Assessment and Evaluation • Culture of Innovation</td>
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| University of Oregon Research, Innovation, and Graduate Education (RIGE) | The University of Oregon’s RIGE office offers a variety of research services including research development, sponsored project, research compliance, and technology transfer services. These services help researchers find the services and potential collaborators they need to advance their research activities. Technology Transfer Services collaborates with innovators to connect them with the private sector and the community to leverage their positions as independent startups. By developing and maintaining relationships between UO researchers, industry, and the community, TTS supports the commercialization of research and contributes to economic development through the creation of startups and identification of services that UO can provide to industry, including startups in the SWV. TTS is particularly relevant to the development of an innovation network by identifying research that is fit for commercialization and encouraging UO innovators interested in participating in commercialization and economic development activities to become active in the network. Services include staff assistance in creating non-disclosure agreements, data use agreements, material transfer agreements, industry research agreements, intellectual property (IP) plans as well as IP management (acquisition of copyrights, patents, and trademarks). UO RIGE and TTS are specific to the UO community and innovation research stemming from UO. These services are also currently specific to first phase (proof-of-concept) of business development. | - The Innovation and Entrepreneurship Program (IEP) aids the creation and development of new university-related companies and human capital.  
- The Technology Entrepreneurship Program includes a market assessment program to evaluate technology for commercial potential.  
- The University Venture Development Fund supports proof-of-concept grants and venture launch grants.  
- The Center for Law and Entrepreneurship’s Small Business Clinic offers free legal services for small business owners.  
- Research Services Centers provide services to companies in materials science testing, genomics, and other fields. | - Governance  
- Leadership  
- Innovation Space  
- Mentorship  
- Capital Assembly  
- Services  
- Communication and Networks  
- Physical Infrastructure  
- Workforce  
- Assessment and Evaluation  
- Community Engagement and Reinvestment  
- Culture of Innovation |
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<tr>
<td>Lane Community College Small Business Development Center (LLC SBDC)</td>
<td>The LCC SBDC offers courses in advancing business development and business planning and serves as a starting point for all aspects of business management, finance, research, and marketing. The LCC SBDC’s work enhances regional economic development by offering programs that meet the needs of the region’s business community. The LCC SBDC offers business management programs designed for entrepreneurs to gain the necessary skills to achieve business success. Business and entrepreneurial services include assistance with personalized and confidential business advising. Business advising focuses on essential business skills and the information needed to pursue any business goal. LCC SBDC works closely with business service providers and government agencies to expose information and regulations that affect business development. The business and entrepreneurial services that LCC SBDC offers fits into phases one and two—proof-of-concept and development and growth—of business development.</td>
<td>• LCC SBDC’s Small Business Management Program is designed to help business owners increase profitability and reach goals through improved business management. • Business startup and early-stage development programs offer assistance with evaluating innovation ideas, training on writing a business plan, and financial management. • LCC SBDC offers financial management programs and workshops on attaining SBA loans. LCC SBDC is a portal to the state’s Capital Access Team (CAT) which provides expert guidance to businesses seeking access to capital and lenders.</td>
<td>• Leadership • Innovation Space • Mentorship • Capital Assembly • Services • Communication and Networks • Workforce • Assessment and Evaluation • Culture of Innovation</td>
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<td>Lane County Community and Economic Development</td>
<td>Lane County’s Economic Development Department engages in activities that promote vital and sustained economies that lead to job creation and opportunities. The agency’s exceptional resource connections and accessible capital renders the department an integral component of the region’s innovation network. Partnerships with key agencies throughout the region help the county guide businesses through the permitting, licensing, and financing hurdles associated with starting and growing a business. Guided by the Lane County Strategic Plan, investments made by the county are centered on preserving and increasing family wage jobs. The agency is attracted to financially supporting a growing technology sector, attesting to the industry’s ability to provide high wage jobs. Programs and services overseen by the agency primarily fit in Phase II and Phase III of the business development cycle, striving to establish, grow, and retain businesses within the county.</td>
<td>• The agency links services, information, and networking opportunities throughout the region. • Access to capital is provided through the Lane County Economic Development Strategic Investment Program. The program disperses several $50-$100K awards to recipients who yield job creation. • The agency is developing a revolving loan program in partnership with the Lane Council of Governments (LCOG) to provide increased access to capital for businesses.</td>
<td>• Governance • Leadership • Mentorship • Capital Assembly • Services • Communication and Networks • Assessment and Evaluation • Community Engagement and Reinvestment • Culture of Innovation</td>
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15 Retrieved 2013, from Lane County Oregon: http://www.lanecounty.org/Departments/CAO/EconDev/Pages/default.aspx
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<th>Organization</th>
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<th>Programs</th>
<th>Innovation Elements</th>
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| City of Eugene   | The City of Eugene’s Community Development Division works directly with businesses, developers, and entrepreneurs to facilitate the necessary conditions to create local jobs, support local economic growth and add vitality to the community. The City of Eugene has a direct role in energizing local businesses with incentives, loan programs and development strategies. Their interaction with local agencies and community partners renders them a key stakeholder in spurring regional economic development. With expertise in business incentives, job creation, and loan administration, the economic development division is a valuable resource for the local business community. The City of Eugene is also facilitating the development of a Broadband Strategic Plan aiming to create increased wireless connectivity throughout key corridors in Eugene. This plan could help retain large tech businesses in the downtown core by providing affordable access to broadband. The City of Eugene provides primary assistance to businesses throughout each phase of business development. Operating a full spectrum of economic development programs, this division offers enhanced access to capital to young and developing businesses. Unlike other resources in the region, the City’s assistance is suited to businesses within phase I and II of the business development cycle. | Emerging Business Loan Pool Program provides low-interest loans to start-up companies at low-interest rates. Business Development Fund (BDF) provides assistance to new and existing businesses with Community Development Block Grant funds. Established to create jobs and stimulate private sector investment. West Eugene Enterprise Zone permits property tax exemptions for eligible new businesses or businesses adding a new addition/equipment to their building within West Eugene for up to three years. Downtown Revitalization Loan Program provides flexible financing loans available to incentivize downtown development in Eugene. | Governance  
Leadership  
Innovation Space  
Mentorship  
Capital Assembly  
Services  
Communication and Networks  
Physical Infrastructure  
Workforce  
Assessment and Evaluation  
Community Engagement and Reinvestment  
Culture of Innovation |
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</table>
| City of Springfield | The City of Springfield’s Community Development Department emphasizes redevelopment, revitalization, diversification, and entrepreneurship in a shifting economic climate as Springfield transitions away from reliance on the timber and wood-products industry. These efforts are carried out with a particular focus on the creation and retention of jobs available to low- and moderate-income people in the community. Strategies include financial incentives, special enterprise and nodal development zones, referrals to local business support services, and encouragement of micro-enterprise development. The City of Springfield’s primary role in the RAIN framework is to serve as a gatekeeper and referral hub for emerging entrepreneurs. The Community Development Department can assess the potential viability of ideas and business plans, then direct promising new enterprises to the network of resources and service providers they need to develop. | • The City of Springfield works closely with the Neighborhood Economic Development Corporation (NEDCO).  
• NEDCO’s Downtown Springfield Business Incubator (DSBI) assists in the development of micro-entrepreneurial companies through an array of business support resources and services.  
• The City Manager’s Office also serves as a referral hub for emerging entrepreneurs. | • Governance  
• Leadership  
• Mentorship  
• Capital Assembly  
• Communication and Networks  
• Physical Infrastructure  
• Assessment and Evaluation  
• Community Engagement and Reinvestment  
• Culture of Innovation |
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<th>Organization</th>
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<th>Programs</th>
<th>Innovation Elements</th>
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| Eugene Chamber of Commerce   | The Eugene Chamber plays a key role in building a strong communication and investment network throughout the community. Their interaction with local agencies and community business owner’s renders them a key component in spurring professional and personal connections which are vital to building a vibrant business community. With expertise in business success, public policy, and community development, the Eugene Chamber is a valuable resource for public agencies and the local business community. The Chamber serves as the central hub for business owners to connect with one another and the larger Eugene community. Operating a full spectrum of investment and networking programs, the chamber offers enhanced access to venture capital and professional networking opportunities to budding, developing and growing businesses. With the large variety in programming, the Chamber’s assistance is suited to businesses within all three phases of the business development cycle. | • Smart-ups Academy and Day One provide networking, mentorship, and business plan development services while promoting networking opportunities between budding startups.  
• The Southern Willamette Angel Network (SWAN) is an angel investor network that reviews emerging business plans for investment potential.  
• The Willamette Angel Conference (WAC) provides seed and early stage investments to promising start-ups in the region. This network educates the investors and business owners within the community.  
• Connect For Lunch offers business owners up-close, personal, relationship-building opportunities, and connections with key community stakeholders. | • Governance  
• Leadership  
• Innovation Space  
• Mentorship  
• Capital Assembly  
• Services  
• Communication and Networks  
• Assessment and Evaluation  
• Community Engagement and Reinvestment  
• Culture of Innovation |
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</table>
| Lane Council of Governments (LCOG) | LCOG’s role in regional planning, coordination, program development, and service delivery succeeds through interaction with local agencies and community partners. LCOG is a key component in spurring regional economic development. With expertise in economic development, grant writing, and loan administration, LCOG is a valuable resource for public agencies and the local business community. LCOG serves as the primary assisted lending agency in the region. Operating a full spectrum of loan programs, LCOG offers enhanced access to capital for developing and growing businesses. LCOG’s assistance is suited to businesses within phase II and III of the business development cycle, requiring a refined business plan and adherence to regional economic goals outlined in the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). | • LCOG has approximately $500M available for lending through a variety of loan programs.  
• LCOG administers Small Business Administration loans 504 and 7A, EDA’s Revolving Loan Fund, and the City of Eugene’s Business Development Funds to support growing businesses.  
• LCOG’s robust GIS databases provide data on commercial and industrial sites. | • Governance  
• Leadership  
• Innovation Space  
• Mentorship  
• Capital Assembly  
• Services  
• Communication and Networks  
• Physical Infrastructure  
• Workforce  
• Assessment and Evaluation  
• Community Engagement and Reinvestment  
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<th>Programs</th>
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| Lane Workforce Partnership (LWP)  | Lane Workforce Partnership meets the workforce needs of employers and individuals through partnerships and innovations. Guided by the goals outlined in the Lane Workforce Partnership Strategic Plan, the agency strives to address the region’s workforce challenges surrounding unemployment, evolving industries, and skilled workforce development. The agency’s work is centered on promoting a robust local labor pool that meets the needs of current and future businesses. The agency’s interaction with the local businesses community, public agencies, and Lane Community College leads to a robust comprehension of the region’s workforce needs. An understanding of the region’s economic trends, workforce, and business community enables the agency to bridge gaps between economic development and education. The LWP partners with the Lane Community College SBDC to create specialized training programs that develop hirable employees. In addition, the agency prepares bi-annual State of the Workforce reports outlining trends in the region’s economy, clusters, and workforce challenges. These reports provide a foundation for a series of region-specific recommendations surrounding the agency’s workforce development efforts. With programs and services tailored toward workforce development and business growth, the agency primarily operates within phase II and III of the business development cycle. | • The On the Job Training Program (OJT), encourages employers to hire eligible job seekers by providing on-the-job training for specific skill sets.  
• Rapid Response for Layoffs and Closures provides assistance to businesses with challenges associated with layoffs and closures.  
• LWP administers the National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC), a program designed to ensure employees have the necessary literacy, numeracy, and problem-solving skills to be “job ready.”  
• The iMatchSkills system matches employees to job openings based on skill sets.                                                                                     | • Leadership  
• Mentorship  
• Services  
• Communication and Networks  
• Workforce  
• Assessment and Evaluation  
• Culture of Innovation |
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| **Springfield Chamber of Commerce** | The Springfield Chamber’s advocates for the Springfield business community and aims to build a strong and vital network of businesses, support services, and investment resources. The Chamber’s close ties with the City of Springfield and other regional governments facilitate its advocacy function, ensuring that the business community’s concerns and priorities are represented in the policymaking process. The Springfield Chamber can serve a vital role in the RAIN framework as a connection between entrepreneurs and the networking opportunities and mentorship resources in the Springfield business community. This role is a natural extension of the Chamber’s existing programs and strengths into the greater region. | • The Chamber facilitates networking among business owners and potential funding sources.  
• Chamber events offer business owners and emerging entrepreneurs an opportunity to form networking and mentorship connections with others in the Springfield business community.  
• The Chamber works with NEDCO’s “Hatch” downtown business incubator program offering business and financial courses for owners of local early-stage businesses. | • Mentorship  
• Capital Assembly  
• Services  
• Communication and Networks  
• Assessment and Evaluation  
• Community Engagement and Reinvestment  
• Culture of Innovation |
CHAPTER 4: PROPOSED FRAMEWORK FOR LINKING A LOCAL INNOVATION NETWORK TO OREGON RAIN

This chapter presents CPW’s proposed framework for a local innovation network. It builds upon the Regional Solutions Team concept and focuses on linking the proposed accelerator with existing organizations and programs in the Eugene-Springfield region.

A Regional Innovation Network

The South Willamette Regional Accelerator and Innovation Network (RAIN) builds on the strength of the two research universities. The foundation is development of two physical accelerators and a related network of business support services. The objective of RAIN is to “…support economic development by providing resources to startup companies focused on commercializing new innovative discoveries, including those fostered by university research.”

The framework proposed in this chapter focuses on building an innovation network linked to the accelerator at UO. Comprised of the region’s key business development stakeholders and the related business support programs and services they provide, the Eugene-Springfield innovation network will provide programmatic support to the accelerator and developing businesses within the community across all phases of business development.

The RAIN program includes two local components: (1) the accelerator, and (2) the innovation network. It is useful to point out that each component has the potential to function independently in the community. When the resources of the innovation network are linked to the accelerator, however, startup companies have a seamless spectrum of business development support services, which facilitate and accelerate the business development process.

According to the EDA’s Incubating Business how the accelerator is managed is central to success. CPW’s work did not focus on the overall governance of RAIN; a foundational assumption is that it will be managed effectively. Our focus is on the management of the Eugene-Springfield accelerator and innovation network. As presently conceived, the accelerator will be located in the Physician’s North building which is located on Hilyard Street and is part of the Peacehealth Downtown Medical Campus. The accelerator would be managed as a partnership between the UO and the Eugene Chamber. More specifically, the vision is for a Eugene Chamber staff member to oversee the accelerator and innovation network.


17 While this report did not evaluate the potential for establishing a similar Innovation Network linked to the accelerator at OSU, such a potential exists and many of the considerations identified in this report will apply to the accelerator at OSU.
This structure is central to CPW’s proposed implementation framework. The local RAIN Director, who will coordinate the Innovation Network and manage the Business Accelerator, will unite the accelerator and innovation network. In short, the local RAIN director will manage activities within the accelerator and coordinate the innovation network. For the innovation network to be effective, it needs a coordinator to “champion” activities and convene actions.

The innovation network is comprised of government and nonprofit partners in the community who provide entrepreneurial support through programs, services, or mentorship. The relationship between the elements and phases of business development is shown in Figure 4-1. The idea is that the innovation network is to link the right level and type of assistance, to the right business need, at the right time in the business development process. In short, the role of the innovation network is to provide a seamless spectrum of business development and support services across the phases.

The innovation network differs from the business accelerator in that it stretches across all three phases of business development. The innovation pipeline consists of the proof of concept phase in which startups conceive and work out their business idea, the acceleration and incubation phase in which their business concept is materialized by undertaking the necessary measures to bring the idea into existence, and finally the growth and retention phase in which businesses generate profit and establish themselves in the market and community.

By definition, the accelerator is conceived as linear. If a business in phase 1 has a sufficiently developed concept, then it is a candidate for the accelerator (phase I). The mission of the accelerator is to provide business development support that moves businesses in to phase III in a reasonably short period of time.

**Figure 4-1. Relationship of the Accelerator and Innovation Network to Phases of Business Development**
The innovation pipeline is permeable allowing startups from both the community and university to enter at various points. As startups pass through the innovation pipeline, they move through the university to community continuum becoming independent from the university and establishing themselves in the community. Both community based startups and university based startups benefit from the innovation network’s services throughout all three phases of business development.

**Key Components of the Innovation Network**

An assessment of best practices for business accelerators and regional innovation networks suggests twelve **Key Components** are necessary to create a robust support structure for startup businesses (the elements surrounding the innovation network circle on the left in Figure 4-2).

Several of these elements, such as “Physical Infrastructure” and “Assessment & Evaluation,” are primarily the function of the RAIN accelerator facility, and are not addressed in detail here. Those elements will need to be coordinated through the accelerator independent of the innovation network.

With respect to the local innovation network, CPW identified four **Core Elements** that are especially critical to the vitality of a local innovation network. These core elements are services and activities that will be provided by partner organizations that do not have a physical presence in the accelerator. These include (1) capital assembly, (2) mentorship, (3) workforce development, and (4) communication and networking.

Because the services related to the four core elements of the innovation network are provided by partner organizations, the coordination of these services is central to the success of both the accelerator and innovation network. Thus, the issue is identifying an effective coordination framework.

CPW’s concept is for the accelerator director lead coordination of the innovation network. As with any collaborative process, a central point of contact is necessary to ensure activities occur. CPW recognizes that resources are limited; unfortunately, meetings are a necessary element of successful coordination and collaboration.

Thus, we propose that the accelerator be the space (both physical and virtual) that provides organization to the network. CPW recommends that the 12 community partners meet periodically (at least semi-annually, probably more frequently in the initial phases of RAIN) to coordinate activities. This coordination will need to be consistent with direction provided by the RAIN governing body and the focus locally would be on implementation.

With respect to the four core elements, we recommend establishing four working groups with the specific purpose of implementing the innovation network and coordinating resource delivery. The next section expands on this concept.
Core Elements and Working Groups

Through a series of meetings with regional stakeholder agencies and interviews with startup business owners, common themes emerged that pointed to the four essential **Core Elements** of a strong Innovation Network. CPW recommends the establishment of the following working groups linked to the local accelerator:

- **Capital Assembly**: Most startup technology businesses need substantial funding from a variety of sources, which will vary as the firms move through the phases of development.

- **Mentorship**: Launching a new technology venture can be a complex and intimidating process, so emerging entrepreneurs need the guidance of a mentor with experience in the process.

- **Communication and Networking**: Emerging entrepreneurs need to form connections with local service providers and with their peers to build social capital.

- **Workforce Development**: Startup technology companies need access to a local pool of workers with specialized skillsets; conversely, talented workers need access to stable, well-paid jobs in the region.
The four Working Groups should be comprised of representatives from regional stakeholder agencies that offer programs and services relevant to each Element, and members should come together in regular meetings to coordinate their efforts. These Working Groups will form the connective strands that wire together all of the regional partnerships in the Innovation Network portion of RAIN.

Capital Assembly

Successful innovation networks facilitate access to capital, providing opportunities for researchers and entrepreneurs to finance entrepreneurial endeavors. With access to capital frequently noted as the most significant challenge to starting a business, identifying accessible sources of funds is instrumental to company development and growth. The capital assembly working group, comprised of the University of Oregon, City of Eugene, LCOG, Lane County Economic Development, and the Eugene and Springfield Chambers of Commerce will address this challenge by serving the following roles:

- Make funding opportunities more accessible across all phases of the business development cycle by compiling a list of potential sources
- Leverage federal, state, local, and institutional grant and loan programs to support entrepreneurial endeavors
- Identify funding opportunities that support both university and community based innovation

As an example, the Research Foundation for the State University of New York (RF) serves as a key example of how to financially support research and innovation based entrepreneurship. The agency actively recruits funding sources (grants, SUNY campuses, gifts, etc.) enabling them to support nearly $1 billion in research activity. 84% of the RF’s income ($826 million) is allocated to sponsored program administration, which supports research at SUNY campuses through a variety of research programs. The RF’s efforts serve as a testament to the supportive entrepreneurial culture existing throughout the state of New York.\(^{18}\)

Key Issues and Recommendations

Business acceleration and incubation is only part of a complex process. A need for complimentary policies and services is needed to financially support entrepreneurship and new ventures, ensuring RAIN is successful and demonstrates a positive return on investment. RAIN and its programmatic partners should work to provide the entrepreneurial services demonstrated to catalyze the success of emerging, developing, and growing businesses.\(^{19}\) Following is a list of regional specific issues and subsequent recommendations, informed from interviews with:

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key stakeholders and local businesses, and review of relevant literature and case studies.

**Issue 1: Capital available through loans and grants is difficult to access due to complicated application processes.** Navigating grant and loan applications can be challenging. With funding sources derived from a diverse set of stakeholders, each program has different requirements. These requirements coupled with inconsistent evaluation criteria create a challenge for independent researchers and entrepreneurs to acquire necessary capital.

**Recommendation 1: Provide mentorship and guidance throughout the grant and loan application process.** Providing mentorship through this process can help researchers and entrepreneur’s access and secure necessary investment capital. Mentors with experience in certain grant and loan programs (i.e. federal SBIR and STTR grant programs) can provide essential guidance in the application process, ensuring applicants have a greater success of qualifying for loans or becoming grant award recipients.

**Issue 2: Limited financial resources are available to early-stage and high-risk startups.** Ensuring capital is available to support early stage research and high-risk projects is instrumental in building a strong culture of entrepreneurship. This creates knowledge and new talent, supports pathways for technology translation, and catalyzes innovation ecosystems with universities at their core. Support of early stage research and company development renders significant regional benefits. It attracts talented researchers and entrepreneurs capable of developing innovation based businesses. This leads to clusters of skill talent that generates economic wealth (as seen with the growing EduTech cluster).

**Recommendation 2: Identify and compile a diversified grant and loan portfolio capable of tolerating risk.** Research is the foundation for the most groundbreaking innovations and inventors that can create new industries. Despite the inherent risk associated with investing in research based endeavors, it is crucial to ensure capital exists that can support these high-risk, large-scale, transformational projects. Identifying sources at the federal (i.e. National Science Foundation Accelerating Innovation Research, EDA i6 Program and Energy Regional Innovation Cluster initiative), local (i.e. City of Eugene Business Development Fund), and institutional (i.e. University of Oregon – University Development Fund) level can help support these riskier endeavors.

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Recommendation 2.1: Establish specialized loan and grant programs targeted at phases of business development or specific industries. Loan and grant programs should be specialized and focused towards a specific audience. For example, grants administered by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) are targeted on the stage of an investigator’s research. Ignition Grants are suited for idea development, providing essential capital needed to develop a proof-of-concept. As this idea becomes increasingly refined and demonstrates commercial potential, researchers can obtain an Innovation Grant. The Innovation Grant provides support needed to refine and enhance an innovation, systematically explore potential markets, and assess the commercial viability of specific applications. By contrast, grants administered by the University of Michigan are targeted at specific industries. Research based colleges at the University of Michigan (i.e. Medical School, College of Engineering, etc.) maintain research funds targeted at supporting translational research. This strategy builds on the familiarity that exists between the researcher and college of emphasis, assisting in the identification of promising research.

Issue 3: Substantial capital is needed for businesses enter Phase II or III of the business development cycle. As ideas and research transition into viable businesses, their demand for capital increases. This increased demand is met with increased accessibility of grant, loan (both commercial and subsidized), and venture capital financing options. Existing resources are suited to support businesses with proven concepts. Ensuring this capital remains available is essential in attracting and retaining innovation based businesses as they grow and expand.

Recommendation 3.1: Pool resources together to create large scale funding opportunities for businesses within Phase II and III of the business development cycle. Company growth and expansion often necessitates substantial capital infusion. Although a variety of grant and loan programs exist within the region, they are not suited to support larger scale projects. For example, innovation throughout the state of Washington centers largely on projects surrounding energy technology and biofuel development. In response to the substantial capital needed to support these growing technologies, the Innovate Washington initiative consolidated and decommissioned two state funding programs. This led to the development of a public-private partnership model designed to facilitate co-investment and tailor existing state resources to support substantial capital investments.

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Issue 4: Access to venture capital is limited within the region. With the accessibility and availability of venture capital noted as instrumental in attracting and retaining university spinouts, it is essential to connect researchers and entrepreneurs to these resources.\textsuperscript{29} Despite the local presence of the South Willamette Angel Network (SWAN) and the Willamette Angel Conference (WAC), entrepreneurs cite difficulties in accessing this pool of private investment. This issue is multifaceted and due to:

1. A disconnect between the types of the emerging local businesses and the suitability of venture capital financing
2. A lack of focused, capital-based networking events.

Recommendation 4.1: Host capital focused networking events, exposing promising entrepreneurs to venture capital networks. Capital focused networking events can serve as a connecting agent, bringing together venture capitalists and entrepreneurs. The Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), supported by its location within a prominent biotech cluster, hosts an annual “Bio-Bash” conference. The conference brings together students, entrepreneurs, established businesses, and venture capitalists within the biotech industry, exposing developing companies to pools of venture capital and an educated workforce.\textsuperscript{30} Similarly, the University of Michigan (UM) serves as a key sponsor of the annual Michigan Growth Capital Symposium. The event, while less specialized than MIT’s Bio-Bash, connects new businesses and emerging technologies to financers. With over 450 attendees expected for the 2013 conference, the event serves as a valuable opportunity for qualified entrepreneurs to interact with potential investors.\textsuperscript{31} Examples from MIT and UM serve as references for the creation of similar events within the region, connecting entrepreneurs from UO and OSU to the preexisting SWAN and WAC venture capitalist networks.

Recommendation 4.2: Consider establishing an internal review process to monitor appropriate resource targeting. Due to the scarcity of capital (both venture and grant), especially for research and early-stage company development, it is necessary to identify projects with the strongest potential for commercialization. Ideas will be vetted and sorted before businesses are hosted in the accelerator and this review process could be linked to startup funding. The challenge is that most funding sources are external and businesses do not have to work through the accelerator to apply for them. This recommendation relates to providing assistance for applying for funds at any stage of business development recognizing that limited staff resources will be available to help with grant and other funding applications.


Establishing a review or identification process can provide private investors and grant and loan program administrators more confidence that target ventures most likely to succeed. Although this process currently exists to some extent within the University through the Tech Transfer Office and Lundquist Center for Entrepreneurship (Technology Entrepreneurship Program and Strategic Planning Projects), a need to expand on these efforts to include community-based innovation is needed. Establishing an institutionalized process will maximize the use of already limited resources.

**Mentorship**

As cited in the literature best practices, successful business accelerators throughout the nation emphasize a robust mentorship presence as a key programmatic component and the foundation for prosperous company turnout. The proactive relationships between a mentor and mentee addresses a common theme heard throughout our interviews with community-based businesses—providing context for the many decisions that are required during business development. While the Eugene Chamber provides mentorship through its SCORE program, opportunities exist to expand and enhance the local mentor network.

The mentorship work group should draw on the intellectual and experiential resources within the existing business community. It should engage existing entrepreneurs who are willing to relay their business expertise to fledgling entrepreneurs. The mentorship workgroup will work towards developing methods for individual mentors to guide entrepreneurs through the entire commercialization process by linking them to appropriate services and offering guidance. In particular the mentorship workgroup will develop approaches for mentors to assist entrepreneurs with some of the most significant challenges such as business plan development and capital assembly. Additionally, the mentorship work group will develop prospects for educational seminars to compliment the mentorship service to establish a comprehensive learning environment within the accelerator.

**Key Issues and Recommendations**

The mentorship work group must recruit and retain a strong network of experienced and skilled mentors to the accelerator. Accelerator programs cannot succeed without a pipeline of qualified, well-connected mentors. The Eugene-Springfield region has the potential to leverage key players in the local business community to enhance the mentorship component of the innovation network.

**Issue 1: Recruit an Experienced Mentor Pool.** A primary goal of the mentorship workgroup will be to identify a qualified pool of experienced business community leaders who are willing to dedicate their efforts to advancing developing entrepreneurs. According to TechStars founder David G. Cohen, one of the primary strengths of TechStars is that TechStars as well as their mentors simply care about improving their community. Therefore, it is critical for the mentorship workgroup

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to identify mentors who have a personal interest in enhancing the Eugene-Springfield business community. Mentors should also value their participation in the accelerator and regional network beyond immediate financial rewards. Mentors who gain personal gratification from their participation in the program stay connected with the program and with the ventures. That said, providing some form of compensation may be necessary to attracting top quality mentors.

**Recommendation 1.1: Identify business community leaders and recruit them to participate in the accelerator program.** The mentorship workgroup should be comprised of a small network of highly networked magnetic individuals. Successful programs such as TechStars or the Northwest Pivotal Leaders (which focuses on clean tech) cite that program managers should be leaders in the business community to attract and recruit mentors from their personal network of contacts. The mentorship workgroup should gauge the personal interest of those recruited, as mentioned above, as well as stress dynamic and reciprocal nature of the relationship.

The mentorship workgroup should promote the value of participating in the accelerator beyond financial compensation such as, opportunities to network with ventures and other leaders in the business community, potential investment opportunities in the new companies, potential management opportunities within a company, and benefits to giving back to the local community. Mentorship participations should also be open to anyone from the business community who wishes to participate and offer emerging entrepreneurs the guidance they need to succeed.

**Issue 2: Establish a Mentorship-Matchmaking Approach.** The type of guidance a startup calls for varies depending on a company’s needs. Needs vary from industry to industry as well as from the backgrounds of founding entrepreneurs. Therefore, having an approach to defining company needs is critical to determine which mentors are best suited for particular startups. For example, if the startup team has strong technical skills but lacks marketing skills, a marketing savvy mentor or mentor who has connections to the marketing workforce would be beneficial. Furthermore, since mentorship is long-term and requires high levels of interaction, a broad perspective of an entrepreneur’s personal characteristics must be considered. Mentors and mentees should enjoy working together to foster a relationship that will facilitate the transfer of knowledge.

**Recommendation 2.1: Combine needs assessment with a meticulous compatibility process.** The mentorship workgroup should establish parameters for determining a startup needs in order to recommend appropriate mentors. The mentorship workgroup should focus mentors

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34 [http://pivotal-leaders.com/](http://pivotal-leaders.com/)

with specific industry experience and relevance to specific company needs. However, the mentorship work group should consider a bottom-up approach in the mentorship-matchmaking process rather than simply assigning a mentor to a startup. Mentors and mentees should have an opportunity to determine the value each player will bring to the table. One potential starting point is with a mentor (or team of mentors) that knows how to start and run a business, and as the company matures, bringing in more specialized mentors.

**Issue 3: Sustain Relationships with the Business Community.** The innovation network, comprised of public and private business support providers and the existing business community, is an integral component to the function and success of the regional accelerator. The innovation network stakeholders are the gears that drive startups within the accelerator program. Therefore, sustaining working relationships with the stakeholders that comprise the innovation network is critical for streamlining the support services needed to advance a startup. In addition to sustaining relationships with the existing business community, accelerator programs benefit from maintaining relationships with startups that have graduated from the program. Program graduates can offer accelerators a pool of experienced entrepreneurs willing to engage as mentors in the program as a way of giving back to the business community. Grads also have an intimate understanding of the programmatic process within the accelerator. Moreover, maintaining relationships with startups that have graduated from the program builds the culture of innovation, which attracts new entrepreneurs and investors to the program.

**Recommendation 3.1: Assess business start-ups goals to complement their needs.** The mentorship workgroup can act as the gatekeeper to the innovation network resources. First the mentorship workgroup should assess and inventory the current relationships the constituents of the workgroup have with the business community, governmental organizations and academic partners to identify the strengths and opportunities within their networks as well as any functions that may be missing.

The mentorship group should set approaches for cultivating and maintaining those relationships and fostering new ones, particularly with graduating companies. This can be achieved by understanding stakeholder needs in order to offer reciprocal assistance and value to the stakeholder’s particular agenda. Periodic evaluations of startups that have graduated from the program can work towards cultivating relationships with graduates. Periodic evaluations can also be used for statistical purposes of internal program evaluation. The mentorship workgroup must actively seek opportunities to engage and interact with stakeholders and graduates such as the networking events mentioned throughout this report.

**Issue 4: Developing Complimentary Educational Seminars.** Business development is a multifaceted, intricate process. Although mentors provide guidance and advice, entrepreneurs benefit greatly from supplemental educational experiences to gain a

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deep understanding of the different components of business development such as the prospects of competition, financial planning and business location upon graduation. While programs such as Day One and SmartUps provide services, opportunities exist to expand and enhance these services through RAIN.

With sound information, entrepreneurs are able to make better-informed decisions on business development issues. According to MIT’s Venture Mentoring Service, entrepreneur education develops entrepreneurial leader rather than solely developing the enterprise. Therefore, the programmatic experience is enhanced through a diversity of business development coverage from presenters including investors, legal experts, and marketing professionals.

**Recommendation 4.1: Identify knowledgeable leaders in diverse fields of business development.** The mentorship workgroup should leverage the accelerators connection with the University of Oregon and Lane Community College to develop short courses or educational seminars covering different themes pertaining to entrepreneurship and innovation leadership. Entrepreneurs should be given time to interact with their mentors following the educational sessions to determine where the information presented is applicable in their business model. The mentorship workgroup should identify knowledgeable leaders in the different fields that pertain to business development both in the community and in the greater region. Pulling resources from the Portland metro area to participate in educational seminars can expand the accelerator’s network as well as that of the entrepreneur. Complimentary educational seminars are a valuable to introduce diverse actors to the accelerator program.

**Communication and Networking**

Networking and communication is integral in connecting emerging and growing companies to a larger business community, sources of capital, and a network of business support services provided by regional stakeholders. Company success is enhanced through strong support networks that facilitate peer-to-peer learning, mutual support, potential collaboration, and camaraderie among the local business community. A cohesive network forged by partnerships between local business leaders, government entities, academic institutions, and nonprofits is pertinent in driving early company development and generating regional economic benefits. The networking working group, comprised of all regional stakeholders, will develop a cohesive and unified networking structure serving the following roles:

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• Facilitate communication, access to resources, and information sharing among local agencies and entrepreneurs

• Develop a robust culture of innovation surrounding emerging innovation based businesses

• Enhance social capital and experiential knowledge through the development of an intentional and structured networking strategy

For example, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) recognizes the importance of building a strong, regional support structure. Through the institution’s Entrepreneurship Center, MIT is adept in connecting research and development (R&D) efforts to the larger Boston community. The center hosts and sponsors a number of conferences that offer networking opportunities between students, entrepreneurs, and venture capitalists. These events forge frequent interaction between the university and community stakeholders, bridging the gap between academia and the local business environment. This generates both opportunities for researchers to access the support needed to translate their research and persistent interest and intrigue in MIT R&D efforts.  

Key Issues and Recommendations

Currently the local community possesses a number of networking and communication opportunities that connect and engage the local business community. These programs and organizations, Smart Ups and CodeChops to name two, develop both professional and personal connections for the region’s established entrepreneurs rendering a supportive business environment. The opportunity exists to expand on these efforts and engage a broader set of regional stakeholders, linking the supportive network of local businesses to regional service providers and institutional R&D efforts. The following set of issues and recommendations provide guidance to this working group on ways to expand upon the aforementioned roles.

Issue 1.1: Promote awareness of programs and services offered by regional partners. Despite a variety of networking programs within the region, local entrepreneurs cite a limited understanding of program procedures. A need to further market and articulate current program concepts and benefits is instrumental in generating increased involvement and participation in these networking events.

Issue 1.2: Incorporate traditional and neo-traditional networking approaches. Strong professional and personal networking opportunities are forged by programs at the University of Oregon and the region’s chambers of commerce. These traditional programs coupled with the emergence of spaces like CodeChops provides a comprehensive set of structured and unstructured networking opportunities. However, these unstructured approaches are not advertised or recognized as an obvious networking venue in the community. An opportunity

emerges to link these differentiating approaches, further promoting the transfer of knowledge in formal and informal settings.

**Recommendation 1.1: Maintain an online directory listing member services and networking venues.** The RAIN coordinator should oversee a directory of available services within the region. An online portal provides a central location for service providers to advertise their programs and entrepreneurs to gain exposure to the existing services within the region. Service providers can provide insight to the workings of their programs, attesting to:

- Who provides the program
- When is the program offered
- Where is the program located
- Who the program is tailored for
- What are the prerequisites for participating in the program
- What is the benefit of the program

**Issue 2: Enhance the transfer of knowledge between the region’s key stakeholders.** With the University of Oregon research enterprise, a growing knowledge-based economy, and willing and adept public officials, the Eugene-Springfield region is poised to provide both the necessary support services and entrepreneurial knowledge required to develop viable businesses. However, this robust pool of knowledge is spread throughout these differentiating mediums, making it difficult for emerging businesses to gain exposure to key knowledge.

**Recommendation 2.1: Bridge connections between academic, government, and industry stakeholders through structured and unstructured networking events.** Expanding on both the structured (i.e. SmartUps) and unstructured (i.e. CodeChops) networking opportunities within the region will further cultivate the strong support network that exists between the region’s key stakeholders. Building on these opportunities forges frequent encounters among stakeholders instrumental in supporting emerging businesses, developing a strong regional culture of innovation, and building social capital. The exchange of experiential knowledge provides informal support to emerging businesses, assisting them in their development process. Additionally the exchange of knowledge can create a vibrant knowledge hub, further attracting innovation to the region. Finally, this enhanced interaction produces common identity, reputation, and trust in the community, building region-wide social capital.

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The University of Michigan and surrounding Ann Arbor region illustrates the benefits generated from strong regional connections. The institution’s Technology Transfer Office (UMTT) acts as a single portal through which university researchers can access a variety of business support services existing within the university or external community. Internal R&D efforts are integrated with the larger community through their Catalyst Resource Network. The network is a database of mentors, industry experts, and serial entrepreneurs existing throughout the region willing to support institutional entrepreneurial endeavors. With the community supporting R&D efforts, university spin-offs are likely to remain in the region yielding economic benefits and generating a strong culture of innovation.44

**Recommendation 2.1: Formalize an institutional communication structure.** The networking and communication working group provides a foundation for formalizing the networking structures within the larger innovation network. Establishing memorandums of understanding or integrating these processes into the RAIN strategic plans can help define and articulate partner roles. These agreements could provide a framework that brings accountability to participating partners and enables the formation of formalized support structure.45

**Workforce Development**

Local workforce skills coupled with regional higher educational attainment have been shown to support and drive entrepreneurial success.46 With skilled regional labor markets instrumental to retaining and attracting innovative companies, it is pertinent that the region supports the development of a reliable, flexible, and qualified pool of workers.47 Building on strengths forged by our local academic institutions (University of Oregon, Lane Community College, and K-12 facilities) the region has an opportunity to support and nurture talent and develop practical skill sets necessitated by emerging technology-based businesses. The workforce working group comprised of Lane Workforce Partnership, University of Oregon, Lane Community College, City of Eugene, and the Eugene and Springfield Chambers of Commerce will address these challenges in:

- Supporting and strengthening the development of a skilled labor force in the Eugene-Springfield area
- Connecting developing technology-based businesses to that labor force

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• Addressing workforce needs to generate steady employment and retain employment opportunities within the region
• Expanding existing business relationships between workforce development partners and the business community

An example from Boston illustrates the importance of maintaining an educated and qualified labor pool. Housing some of the nation’s most revered institutions, the Boston region attracts major employers and industries. As a result, clusters have emerged in the high-tech, bio-tech, life sciences, and energy sectors. Businesses within these clusters are able to exploit the intellectual capital manifested by graduates from Harvard, MIT, Boston College, etc. Additionally this labor pool enables university spinouts to stay within region as their business expands and grows.48

Key Issues and Recommendations

A strong regional labor pool is essential in supporting the development and growth of innovation based businesses. Given the technology focus, these businesses demand an educated workforce with a refined skillset. Ensuring this workforce need is met is instrumental in retaining growing businesses and the subsequent high-wage jobs that these companies can provide.

Issue 1: Address the perceived disconnect between the theoretical knowledge of local graduates and the practical skill set mandated by the local business community. CPW’s research indicates a perceived disconnect between the knowledge base of local university and college graduates and the skills that local technology-based employers need. This issue is especially apparent in the software industry; according to local firms, University of Oregon computer-science graduates have a strong theoretical base, but tend to lack the practical programming skills that entry-level jobs require.49

Recommendation 1.1: Discuss and analyze cluster-based workforce needs with existing clients of workforce development partners. The workforce working group should build on previous cluster analyses by the City of Eugene50 and Lane Workforce Partnership51 to help RAIN’s local academic partners tailor their science and technology curricula to the clusters’ workforce needs. Conversely, the group should publicize the academic coursework and skill development training that local technology employers look for in new hires. This will help the workers know what skills they need to be competitive in an innovation-based workforce.

Issue 2: Increase the supply of skilled managers and executives. Our interviews identified a gap at the management/executive level in the regional science and technology workforce. Workers who accrue long-term experience in the local technology industries often leave the region in pursuit of higher wages and career advancement. As a result local companies cite difficulties in finding skilled managers and executives.

Recommendation 2.1: Create a system to recruit for innovation-based employment opportunities. Active cooperation among institutions such as UO and LCC, local governments such as Lane County and the Cities of Eugene and Springfield, nonprofits such as Lane Workforce Partnership, trade associations such as Silicon Shire, and businesses represented by the Chambers of Commerce can strengthen the regional job market and enhance the “stickiness” of the local area for talented workers. The workforce group should consider a range of strategies so that regional technology and innovation-based companies and workers will have a single, comprehensive forum for employment opportunities.

Issue 3: Increase regional engagement in technology-based educational opportunities. Providing applied, focused, and experiential educational opportunities is instrumental in developing a qualified labor pool. These educational opportunities must span across all academic platforms (K-12, community college, university), to stimulate and retain interest surrounding technology-based industries. Generating this regional interest supports the interaction between research assets (university) and industry, rendering an environment that supports the development of a qualified labor pool for emerging and growing technology-based businesses.

Recommendation 3.1: Utilize existing academic facilities to develop and publicize classes and skill development programs needed to be competitive in an innovation-based workforce. Developing a local workforce with skills tailored towards an innovation-based economy is dependent on investment in institutions that create and nurture this talent. Our local academic facilities present an opportunity to develop the focused human capital mandated by developing and growing technology-based businesses. RAIN should leverage these existing community resources (K-12 schools, Lane Community College, University of Oregon, Eugene and Springfield Public Libraries, etc.) to create and expand upon educational and workforce development programs. Improving education in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) at the K-12 level generates early


interest in technology-based applications and provides a foundation for higher education attainment. Additionally, engaging the local business community through job fairs, job shadowing, and internship opportunities are important in bridging the gap between academic and practical learning experiences. These programs help expose our region’s local technology-based clusters (EduTech, Silicon Shire, Sport Sciences, etc.) and the requisite skill set mandated by these companies to the region’s labor pool.

**Issue 4: Convene customized start-up teams instrumental in business development.** The initial formation of technology-based companies is another workforce issue that the working group should address. Technology startups, whether they arise from University research or community-based ideas, typically need three core team members: a technology expert, strategic entrepreneur, and an operations manager. In some cases, one person can fulfill more than one of these roles, but they all need to be represented for the new company to prosper.

**Recommendation 4.1: Expand on existing experiential learning programs between the University of Oregon and the entrepreneurial community.** The University of Oregon, through the Lundquist Center of Entrepreneurship, oversees experiential learning programs centered on connecting business students to researchers with commercially viable ideas. Generally, researchers lack the business skills necessary to launch their venture. However, through the Technology Entrepreneurship Program (TEP) and Strategic Planning Projects (SPP), researchers are paired with capable business students that work to translate the research into viable, self-sustaining business. A need to expand on these efforts emerges, where a broader range of commercially viable ideas from both the community and university are linked to qualified business professionals and capable business students.

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APPENDIX A: SUMMARY OF PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS AND PROGRAMS

This appendix provides one-page summaries of RAIN partner organizations and programs. Each summary includes the following information:

- Contact information
- Target audience(s)
- Program description and eligibility requirements
- Program goals
- Program funding
- Program success measures
# Oregon RAIN Partner – Key Information Sheet

**University of Oregon’s office for Research, Innovation and Graduate Education (RIGE) and Technology Transfer Services (TTS)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Primary Contact Information</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Staff Lead:</strong> Chuck Williams (Assistant Vice President, Innovation &amp; Technology Transfer Services)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Phone:</strong> 541-346-2028</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Email:</strong> <a href="mailto:crw@uoregon.edu">crw@uoregon.edu</a></td>
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**Geographic Scope:**
The University of Oregon’s office for Research, Innovation and Graduate Education serves faculty and students within the University campuses seeking support to develop their research projects.

**Agency Function and Roles Related to iOregon RAIN:**
- **Function:** UO RIGE offers a variety of research services including research development, sponsored project, research compliance, and technology transfer services. These services help researchers find the services they need to advance their research activities. Technology Transfer Services collaborate with innovators to connect them with the private sector and the community to leverage their positions as independent startups. By developing and maintaining relationships between UO researchers, industry, and the community, TTS supports the commercialization of research and contributes to economic development through the creation of startups.

- **Role:** TTS is particularly relevant to the development of an innovation network by identifying research that is fit for commercialization. Beyond this role, TTS serves as a liaison between UO researchers and the venture community in the region. Specifically, TTS assists researchers in commercializing their innovations through entrepreneurship programs offered by UO’s law and business schools and funding resources through the University Venture Development Fund. UO RIGE and TTS are specific to the UO community and innovation research stemming from UO. These services are also specific to first phase (proof-of-concept) of business development.

**Agency Audience:**
TTS serves UO faculty researchers.

**Programs and Services Overviews:**
The programs that UO RIGE/TTS offers to support new companies include the Innovation and Entrepreneurship Program (IEP) which aids in the creation and development of new university-related companies, as well as the Technology Entrepreneurship Program (TEP) in which law, business, and science graduate students collaborate to evaluate new technologies for commercial potential and build business plans around them.

Services include staff assistance in creating confidentiality agreements, non-disclosure agreements, intellectual property (IP) plans as well as other IP management. In knowledge economies, intellectual property is the means by which research is connected to the community. Therefore, appropriate IP management is fundamental for research and scholar outputs to reach maximum public benefit.

**General Financial Support/Capital Assets:**
UO RIGE/TTS is financed directly through UO. RIGE/TTS accesses resources from the University Venture Development Fund to support research commercialization. They offer funding resources such as proof-of-concept grants, venture launch grants and IEP grants offered through the University Venture Development Fund.

**Soft Assets:**
In addition to the IEP and TEP programs, The Center for Law and Entrepreneurship’s Small Business Clinic offers free legal services for small business owners in Oregon. These services extend beyond the UO into the community.

**Hard Assets:**
The Riverfront Research Park provides space to startup companies working at the cutting edge of their fields. Many of these companies are able to work closely with UO’s research labs in partnerships that encourage further research and discoveries.
### Oregon RAIN Partner – Key Information Sheet

**Springfield Chamber of Commerce**

**Primary Contact Information**
- **Staff Lead:** Dan Egan
- **Phone:** (541) 746-1651
- **Email:** dan@springfield-chamber.org

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Geographic Scope:</th>
<th>The Chamber’s membership is primarily located in the City of Springfield and the immediately surrounding region. However, location is not a condition of membership.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Agency Function and Role in Oregon RAIN:</strong></td>
<td>The Springfield Chamber’s primary functions are to advocate for the Springfield business community and to build a strong and vital network of businesses, support services, and investment resources.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>The Chamber’s close ties with the City of Springfield and other regional governments facilitate its advocacy function, ensuring that the business community’s concerns and priorities are represented in the policymaking process.</td>
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<td>The Chamber fulfills its networking function through formal meetings, breakfasts, and educational workshops for its membership. It also hosts business networking and social events such as Lunch &amp; Learn and Business After Hours that are especially beneficial to young and emerging entrepreneurs.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Role:</strong> The Springfield Chamber can serve a vital role in the RAIN framework as a connection between entrepreneurs and the networking opportunities and mentorship resources in the Springfield business community. This role is a natural extension of the Chamber’s existing programs and strengths into the greater region.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Agency Audience:</strong></td>
<td>The Chamber’s main audience is its portfolio of over 1,000 dues-paying members, as well as the overall community of Springfield.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Financial Support/Capital Assets:</strong></td>
<td>The Chamber is funded through its membership’s dues payments. It does not offer specific programs for direct access to capital, but instead facilitates networking among business owners and potential funding sources.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Soft Assets:</strong></td>
<td>Chamber events offer business owners and emerging entrepreneurs an opportunity to form networking and mentorship connections with others in the Springfield business community.</td>
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<td><strong>Hard Assets:</strong></td>
<td>The Chamber of Commerce facility also serves as the Springfield Visitors Center, located in the historic Springfield Railroad Depot.</td>
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### Oregon RAIN Partner – Key Information Sheet

**Oregon Small Business Development Center**

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<tr>
<td><strong>Staff Lead:</strong> Michael Lainoff</td>
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<td><strong>Phone:</strong> 541-463-5250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Web:</strong> <a href="mailto:Lainoffm@lanecc.edu">Lainoffm@lanecc.edu</a></td>
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### Geographic Scope:
The Oregon SBDC serves the entire State of Oregon through nineteen regional centers.

### Agency Function and Role in Oregon RAIN:
The Oregon SBDC is a state-run agency that provides resources and assistance to Oregon small businesses in a wide range of types, sizes, and stages of development. Launched in 1983, OSBDC is part of a national network of business development centers connected with the U.S. Small Business Administration. OSBDC’s primary function is to provide direct, no-cost advising services to Oregon small businesses. Its staff of advisors is experienced in business plan development, startup needs, employee management, marketing, financial analysis and strategy, and other crucial areas. These one-on-one advising services are complemented by classroom courses, workshops, seminars, and online training courses on a wide variety of topics. OSBDC also offers specialized programs for established businesses and those owned by Hispanic people and military veterans.

**Role:** OSBDC will play a key role in the RAIN framework by offering direct mentorship, networking opportunities, and capital assembly resources to entrepreneurs in the local community.

### Agency Audience:
The Oregon SBDC’s audience includes emerging entrepreneurs in the pre-venture and initial startup phases, as well as established businesses across the state.

### Programs and Services:
OSBDC’s core service is free and confidential advising for small-business owners and entrepreneurs by advisors experienced in starting and operating businesses in Oregon. Registered clients receive a customized SBDC web homepage with direct client-advisor communications, online file exchange, and resource recommendations tailored to their individual business needs.

OSBDC also operates a three-year Small Business Management program that includes classroom sessions, individual coaching, and peer-to-peer networking with other entrepreneurs in each three-year cohort. Classroom courses, workshops, seminars, and online training course topics include business startup, employee management, and technology education. Other programs include Grow Oregon, which is designed for established businesses with 10 – 99 employees and $1,000,000 - $50,000,000 in annual gross sales; Global Trade, which covers topics such as international logistics, trade finance, marketing, and legal issues; and federal SBIR/STTR grant application assistance.

### Financial Support/Capital Assets:
OSBDC derives funding from both the U.S. Small Business Administration and the Oregon Business Development Department.

**Capital Assets:** The Capital Access Team (CAT) helps connect businesses with lenders, provides financial assessments and strategic advice, and helps clients manage their loan packages and lender relations.

### Soft Assets:
OSBDC commands a wealth of human assets through its staff of experienced business advisors, who serve as mentors through all phases of business development. Its peer-to-peer and cohort-based business development programs also facilitate networking among entrepreneurs.

### Hard Assets:
OSBDC operates nineteen regional centers across Oregon in partnership with seventeen community colleges and two state universities. The center for the Eugene-Springfield region is housed in Lane Community College's downtown Eugene campus.

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# Oregon RAIN Partner – Key Information Sheet

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<tr>
<th>Lane Council of Governments (LCOG)</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Primary Contact Information</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Staff Lead: Steve Dignam</td>
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<td>Phone: (541) 682-4431</td>
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<tr>
<td>Email: <a href="mailto:sdignam@lcog.org">sdignam@lcog.org</a></td>
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**Geographic Scope:** Lane County, Oregon

**Agency Function and Role in Oregon RAIN:**

Function: LCOG has a refined role in regional planning, coordination, program development, and service delivery. Their interaction with local agencies and community partners renders them a key component in spurring regional economic development. With expertise in economic development, grant writing, and loan administration, LCOG is a valuable resource for public agencies and the local business community.

Role: LCOG serves as the primary assisted lending agency in the region. Operating a full spectrum of loan programs, LCOG offers enhanced access to capital to developing and growing businesses. LCOG’s assistance is suited to businesses within phase II and III of the business development cycle, requiring a refined business plan and adherence to regional economic goals outlined in the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS).

**Agency Audience:** LCOG is a voluntary association of 29 local governments within Lane County. The agency supports local public agencies in providing planning, administration, technological, financial, and services for senior and disabled clients.

**Programs and Services:** LCOG’s programs and services provide enhanced access to capital for businesses with ambitions to grow. The agency supports local governments in administering a variety of loan programs that provide attractive interest rates and lower equity requirements than traditional commercial bank loans. Companies seeking LCOG assistance are required to show the investment will assist the agency in meeting regional economic development goals identified in the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). LCOG maintains a robust GIS database that can provide data on commercial and industrial sites.

**Financial Support/Capital Assets:** Supported by funds allocated by the Small Business Administration (SBA), US Department of Agriculture (USDA), State of Oregon, and the City of Eugene, LCOG has approximately $500M available for lending through a variety of loan programs. SBA loans 504 and 7A, EDA’s Revolving Loan Fund, and the City of Eugene’s Business Development Fund are tailored to support growing businesses within Lane County. Despite this substantial pool of capital capable of supporting a variety of business ventures, LCOG cites difficulties in finding businesses qualified for their assistance.

**Soft Assets:** LCOG’s partnership with public agencies throughout Lane County enables the agency to provide referral services to businesses seeking assistance.

**Hard Assets:** None
# Oregon RAIN Partner – Key Information Sheet

**Lane Community College Small Business Development Center**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Primary Contact Information</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Staff Lead:</strong> Jim Lindly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Phone:</strong> (541) 463-4621</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Email:</strong> <a href="mailto:lindlyj@lanecc.edu">lindlyj@lanecc.edu</a></td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Geographic Scope:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Lane Community College Small Business Development Center (LCC SBDC) serves Lane County.</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agency Function and Role in Oregon RAIN:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Function: LCC SBDC helps entrepreneurs start their businesses by offering courses in business development, demystifying the resources needed to advance business development, and assist in the business planning process. LCC SBDC serves as a starting point for all aspects of business management, finance, research, and marketing. LCC assists the regional economic development by offering programs to meet the needs of the business community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role: LCC SBDC offers business management programs designed for entrepreneurs to gain the necessary skills to achieve business success. Business and entrepreneurial services include assistance with personalized and confidential business advising. Business advising focuses on essential business skills and the information needed to pursue any business goal. LCC SBDC works closely with business service providers and government agencies to expose information and regulations that affect business development. The business and entrepreneurial services that LCC SBDC offers fits into phases one and two—proof-of-concept and development and growth—of business development.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Agency Audience:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LCC SBDC’s services are open to any community member interested in starting or developing a business. In addition, they offer an Innovation Series program aimed at developing innovations and inventions into viable businesses.</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programs and Services:</th>
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<tr>
<td>LCC SBDC’s Small Business Management Program is designed to help business owners increase profitability and reach goals through improved business management. This experiential learning program caters to the needs of each businesses’ unique needs. The curriculum includes monthly personalized coaching as well as peer-to-peer group meetings. Personal coaches serve as confidential mentors that assist with developing an entrepreneur’s business potential. Peer-to-peer seminars work both as networking opportunities for entrepreneurs to meet other entrepreneurs and build their professional network, and serve as business problem solving sessions to discuss ideas in overcoming business development hurdles. Business startup and early-stage development programs offer assistance with evaluating innovation ideas, training on writing a business plan, and financial management.</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Financial Support/Capital Assets:</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LCC SBDC is funded in part through a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Small Business Administration and in part by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. It is also receives funding from the Oregon Business Development Department.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LCC SBDC offers financial management programs and workshops on attaining SBA loans. LCC SBDC is a portal to the state Capital Access Team (CAT) one the local SBDC exhausts their local resources. The SBDC CAT provides expert guidance to businesses seeking access to capital and lenders.</td>
</tr>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Soft Assets:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LCC SBDC has a network of experienced business advisors that assist entrepreneurs at different phases of business development to make critical business, marketing, and social networking decisions. LCC SBDC also offers employment training tailored specifically to individual businesses.</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hard Assets:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LCC has a downtown campus with a well-stocked business resource library and staff available to assist with questions.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Oregon RAIN Partner – Key Information Sheet

**Lane County Community & Economic Development**

### Primary Contact Information
- **Staff Lead:** Glenda Poling
- **Phone:** (541) 682-7231
- **Email:** Glenda.Poling@co.lane.or.us

### Geographic Scope:
- Lane County, Oregon

### Agency Function and Role in Oregon RAIN:

**Function:** Lane County’s Economic Development Department engages in activities that promote vital and sustained economies that lead to job creation and opportunities.¹ Expand this a bit

**Role:** The agency’s exceptional resource connection and accessible capital renders the department an integral component of the region’s innovation network. Partnerships with key agencies throughout the region helps the county guide businesses through the permitting, licensing, and financing hurdles associated with starting and growing a business. Guided by the Lane County Strategic Plan, investments made by the county are centered on preserving and increasing family wage jobs. The agency is attracted to financially supporting a growing technology sector, attesting to the industry’s ability to provide high wage jobs. Programs and services overseen by the agency primarily fit in Phase II and Phase III of the business development cycle, striving to establish, grow, and retain businesses within the county.

### Agency Audience:
- Lane County’s recent investments have targeted growing clusters in the food and beverage and advanced manufacturing sectors. Given the agency’s broad, county-wide focus, capital investment is split evenly between projects in rural and metropolitan areas.

### Programs and Services:
- Programs and services provided by Lane County are centered in providing emerging and growing companies leadership and access to capital. The agency links to services, information, and networking opportunities throughout the region. Access to capital is provided through the Lane County Economic Development Strategic Investment Program. Appropriating approximately $300K annually, the program disperses several $50-$100K awards to recipients whose investments will yield job creation. The county has traditionally financed established businesses with ambitions to grow, assisting in the financing of equipment purchases. Additionally, the agency is developing a revolving loan program in partnership with the Lane Council of Governments (LCOG) that will provide increased access to capital for businesses.

### Financial Support/Capital Assets:
- Funded by state lottery receipts, the department operates an annual budget of approximately $1.3M. This budget enables the agency to operate the Lane County Economic Development Strategic Investment Program, develop a revolving loan fund, and manage operational expenditures. Partnerships with LCOG and the Cities of Eugene and Springfield, enable the department to refer businesses to access loans and grants overseen by these agencies.

### Soft Assets:
- An approachable and knowledgeable staff enables the agency to serve a leadership role that assists businesses develop and grow within Lane County. With a comprehension of the region’s business support programs and services, the agency is well versed in connecting businesses to assets suited for their needs.

### Hard Asset
- Not applicable.

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¹ Development, L. C. (2013). Who We Are. Retrieved 2013, from Lane County Oregon: [http://www.laneCounty.org/Departments/CAO/EconDev/Pages/default.aspx](http://www.laneCounty.org/Departments/CAO/EconDev/Pages/default.aspx)
### Oregon RAIN Partner – Key Information Sheet

**Eugene Chamber of Commerce**

**Primary Contact Information**
- **Staff Lead**: Dave Hauser
- **Phone**: 541-484-1314
- **Email**: daveh@eugenechamber.com

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Geographic Scope:</th>
<th>Eugene, Oregon</th>
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| Agency Function and Role in Oregon RAIN: | Function: The Eugene Chamber has the role in building a strong communication and investment network throughout the community. Their interaction with local agencies and community business owner’s renders them a key component in spurring professional and personal connections which are vital to building a vibrant business community. With expertise in business success, public policy, and community development, the Eugene Chamber is a valuable resource for public agencies and the local business community.  
Role: The Chamber serves as the central hub for business owners to connect with one another and the larger Eugene community. Operating a full spectrum of investment and networking programs, the chamber offers enhanced access to venture capital and professional networking opportunities to budding, developing and growing businesses. With the large variety in programming, the Chamber’s assistance is suited to businesses within all three phases of the business development cycle. |
|------------------|-------------------------------------------------|

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agency Audience:</th>
<th>The Eugene Chamber of Commerce supports the efforts of local business owners throughout the three phases of business development. The Chamber serves as an advocate for the Eugene business community.</th>
</tr>
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</table>

| Programs and Services: | Smart-ups: Smart-ups Academy and Day One provide networking, mentorship, and business plan development services. Day One is a one day program that focuses on topics as: business finance & accounting, sales, marketing & public relations, while allow for networking opportunities between budding startups. Academy builds on Day One programming to provide entrepreneurs similar opportunities through six month program.  
Connect For Lunch: offers business owners up-close, personal, relationship-building opportunities that allow for intimate connections with key community stakeholders. This program allows for the opportunity for start-ups to become connected to the local business community and local agencies.  
**Women Business Leaders:** Essential program which provides women business owners and managers the opportunity to meet, advise, support and mentor one another in order to promote the success of their businesses.  
**Young Professionals Network:** Provides networking, advice, and skill building opportunities to the younger members of the Eugene business community |
|------------------|-------------------------------------------------|

| Financial Support/Capital Assets: | The **Southern Willamette Angel Network (SWAN):** The SWAN is an angel investor network. This group meets to review emerging growth business plans. The investors decide whether or not to invest – either individually or co-investing with other members.  
**Willamette Angel Conference (WAC):** The WAC is another angel investor network. This group provides seed and early stage investments to promising start-ups in the region. This network strives to educate and help support both the investors and business owners within the community. |
|------------------|-------------------------------------------------|

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Soft Assets:</th>
<th>The Chamber has numerous networking and mentorship opportunities available through such agencies/ partners as: SCORE, Downtown Eugene Incorporated, and Business Oregon</th>
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</table>

| Hard Assets: | The Chamber has meeting space available to the business community |
## Oregon RAIN Partner – Key Information Sheet

### City of Springfield – Economic Development

<table>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Primary Contact Information</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Staff Lead:</strong> John Tamulonis</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Phone:</strong> (541) 726 3656</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Email:</strong> <a href="mailto:jtamulonis@springfield-or.gov">jtamulonis@springfield-or.gov</a></td>
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### Geographic Scope:
The Springfield Economic Development Department serves the entire City of Springfield, which covers 14.4 square miles in north-central Lane County and is home to approximately 60,000 residents.

### Agency Function and Role in Oregon RAIN:
The Department emphasizes redevelopment, revitalization, diversification, and entrepreneurship in a shifting economic climate as Springfield transitions away from reliance on the timber and wood-products industry. These efforts are carried out with a particular focus on the creation and retention of jobs available to low- and moderate-income people in the community. Strategies include financial incentives, special enterprise and nodal development zones, referrals to local business support services, and encouragement of micro-enterprise development.

**Role:** Springfield Economic Development’s primary role in the RAIN framework is to serve as a gatekeeper and referral hub for emerging entrepreneurs. The Department can assess the potential viability of ideas and business plans, then direct promising new enterprises to the network of resources and service providers they need to develop.

### Agency Audience:
The City of Springfield intends to serve all of its residents and its business community, but it places particular focus on the welfare of low- and moderate-income residents.

### Financial Support/Capital Assets:
NA

### Hard Assets:
The City of Springfield works closely with the Neighborhood Economic Development Corporation (NEDCO). NEDCO recently opened a Downtown Springfield Business Incubator (DSBI) to assist in the development of micro-entrepreneurial companies through an array of business support resources and services.
### Oregon RAIN Partner – Key Information Sheet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City of Eugene Community Development</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Primary Contact Information</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Staff Lead: Mike Sullivan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phone: (541) 682-8367</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email: <a href="mailto:Mike.C.Sullivan@ci.eugene.or.us">Mike.C.Sullivan@ci.eugene.or.us</a></td>
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</table>

| **Geographic Scope:** | The City of Eugene’s Community Development division provides services and programs to the whole Eugene community with emphasis on local business owners, developers, and entrepreneurs. |

| **Agency Function and Role in Oregon RAIN:** | Function: The City of Eugene has a direct role in energizing local businesses with incentives, loan programs and development strategies. Their interaction with local agencies and community partners renders them a key stakeholder in spurring regional economic development. With expertise in business incentives, job creation, and loan administration, the economic development division is a valuable resource for the local business community.  

Role: The City of Eugene provides primary assistance to businesses throughout each phase of business development. Operating a full spectrum of economic development programs, this division offers enhanced access to capital to young and developing businesses. Unlike other resources in the region, the City’s assistance is suited to businesses within phase I and II of the business development cycle. Additionally, with their broadband plan and their regional economic development plan they are key stakeholders in moving not only businesses to a vibrant future, but the whole community as well. |

| **Agency Audience:** | The Business and Economic Development Division works directly with businesses, developers, and entrepreneurs to facilitate the necessary conditions to create local jobs, support local economic growth and add vitality to the community. |

| **Programs and Services:** | **Edu-Tech Report:** A recently completed report on the different economic clusters in the area such as educational technologies and food/brewery clusters  
**Lane Business link:** A one stop web portal designed to allow business owners to get an overview of what tools the city has for local business owners trying to get established in the community  
**Edev:** A separate organization with a presence on the City of Eugene’s website. Edev provides training technical assistance, microloans, and various workshops to entrepreneurs and start ups |

| **Financial Support/Capital Assets:** | **Emerging Business Loan Pool Program:** Provides low-interest loans to start-up companies. They are different than conventional loans because of the low-interest rates, and are more willing to lend funds based off of a proof of concept rather than a refined business plan  
**Business Development Fund (BDF):** Provides assistance to new and existing businesses from the Community Development Block Grant program. Established to create jobs and stimulate private sector investment.  
**West Eugene Enterprise Zone:** New businesses or businesses adding a new addition/equipment to their building within West Eugene could be eligible to be exempt from paying property tax for up to three years  
**Downtown Revitalization Loan Program:** Flexible financing loans available to incentivize downtown development in Eugene |

| **Soft Assets:** | Incentives for and knowledge of the local community  
**Regional Prosperity Economic Development Plan:** A key document to explore in understanding where Eugene in particularly sees itself over the next few decades |

| **Hard Assets:** | The city has boardrooms and physical space for meetings and gatherings. Additionally, the city has physical assets such as buildings that are bought and sold |
### Oregon RAIN Partner – Key Information Sheet

#### Business Oregon

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Primary Contact Information</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Staff Lead:</strong> Sean Stevens (Business Development Officer for Lane, Benton and Linn Counties)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Phone:</strong> 541-346-8620</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Email:</strong> <a href="mailto:sean.stevens@state.or.us">sean.stevens@state.or.us</a></td>
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| Geographic Scope: | Business Oregon serves the entire State of Oregon, with Business Development Officers each responsible for serving several counties in the state. |

| Agency Function and Role in Oregon RAIN: | Function: Business Oregon specializes in harnessing public-private partnerships that assist the development, growth and retention of Oregon’s Businesses through public-private partnerships. They offer extensive resources aimed at both developing and growing a business in Oregon. Specifically, Business Oregon connects emerging companies with several business development agencies and service providers that offer programmatic services, consulting, technical assistance, and financial services. Business support resources include a range of small business supports, access to industry associations, and provide innovation-technology support. Business Oregon also offers a database of business development resources available in each county. Furthermore, Business Oregon is part of the Oregon Business Development Commission, which influences policy towards an integrated approach to economic development. |

| Role: Business Oregon provides tools to access services needed in different stages of business development. Business Oregon networks with many organizations to help entrepreneurs find resources to start a business. These resources include business plan assistance, business financing, and licensing. Business Oregon can serve as a gateway to the resources offered in the area by searching their Business Support Resources by county. Their network of resources fit into all three phases of business development. |

| Agency Audience: | Business Oregon works with businesses that provide sustainable, living-wage jobs in Oregon. Their target market includes small businesses, innovation-technology focused businesses, and businesses focused on international trade. |

| Programs and Services: | Primarily, Business Oregon connects emerging businesses with business development agencies and service providers. Business Oregon’s business development officers, finance officers, and recruitment officers work to engage companies looking to relocate or expand in Oregon. The Infrastructure Finance Authority’s (IFA) regional coordinators work on coordinating infrastructure development. A global industry strategies team provides market research and economic data, and supports university-industry partnerships. |

| Financial Support/Capital Assets: | Finance officers provide a range of financing services such as revolving loan funds for working capital lending partners, loan guarantees on bank loans, loans for startup businesses, and tax-exempt bond financing for manufacturers. The finance programs offered by Business Oregon are supported by lottery dollars and include Oregon Business Development Fund, Oregon Capital Access Program, Oregon Credit Enhancement Fund, Oregon Industrial Development Bonds, Entrepreneurial Development Loan Fund, Oregon Trade Promotion Program, Oregon STEP program, Brownfields Development Fund, and the Business Retention Program. Each program requires an extensive application. |

| Soft Assets: | Business Oregon has a substantial list of agencies that offer consulting/counseling and financial advising services. Many agencies offer services in Spanish. |

| Hard Assets: | The Infrastructure Finance Authority (IFA) assists communities in building infrastructure. IFA regional coordinators facilitate local capacity-building, support the development of industrial and commercial areas, and advance efforts to promote economic development activities. |
# RAIN Stakeholder 1 Page Program

**Lane Community College/ Small Business Development Center (Lane SBDC) and Employer Training Services (ETS)**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Primary Address</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Staff Lead: Jim Lindly</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Phone: 541-463-6206</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Email: <a href="mailto:lindlyj@lanecc.edu">lindlyj@lanecc.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bethany Robinson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Phone: 541-463-6207</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Email: <a href="mailto:robinsonbg@lanecc.edu">robinsonbg@lanecc.edu</a></td>
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<tr>
<th>Target Audience</th>
<th>Description: Our center emphasizes the following:</th>
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<tr>
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<td>Free confidential business advising allows us, during the initial intake, to assess the needs of our business clients.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Referral to additional advising sessions; SBDC classes and programs; and other community partner resources helps develop businesses further.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Our Small Business Management Programs consist of classes over three terms, peer-to-peer/cohort learning, and monthly one-on-one advising with the instructor/coach. These signature programs include Small Business Management (SBM) and AgriBusiness. Other business management programs we offer are Non-Profit Management, Small Business Management for ODOT Contractors, Veterans Small Business Management, and Start, Run, Grow, Program-online entrepreneurial training.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>We continue to provide outreach to underserved populations of entrepreneurs such as minorities, disabled and special needs, women, low income, artisans and those in rural areas of the county.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>We also provide services to local employers, providing incumbent employee training to: improve manufacturing and service processes; increase customer service; cultivate better supervisors, leaders and communicators; provide basic and advanced career paths; facilitate on-the-job vocational training; develop better utilize technology for productivity gains; and enhance workplace safety.</td>
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<td>Eligibility: Open to the public</td>
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| Program Goals: | The Lane SBDC and ETS provide services to grow and strengthen businesses, create jobs and raise real wages. The department assists Lane County communities and their economic development agencies to build capacity to start, retain, expand and attract business. The result is improved national and global competitiveness of Lane County employees. |

| Program Funding: | The SBDC receives approximately 65% of its annual budget from Lane Community College, 25% from program income, 3% from an SBA grant, 3% from an Oregon Business Development Department (OBDD) grant, and 4% from the Oregon Small Business Development Center Network (OSBDCN). |

| Program Success Measures: | Our department collects statistics, through multiple databases, which includes information on capital formation, jobs created and other economic growth factors. This data is provided to Lane Community College, the SBA and to the OSBDCN. |
**Vision for a Local Innovation Network July 2013**

**Lane Workforce Partnership Certified Work Ready Communities Initiative**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Primary Address:</th>
<th>Primary Contact Information For This Program</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Staff Lead: Robin Scott</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Phone: 541-682-7224</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Email: <a href="mailto:robins@laneworkforce.org">robins@laneworkforce.org</a></td>
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| Program Geographic and Demographic Scope: | Lane County |

| Target Audience: | Jobseekers, youth and businesses |

| Program Description and Eligibility Requirements: | The Work Ready Lane County Initiative is designed to ensure that Lane County receives a “Certified Work Ready Community” designation through ACT by 2015. This designation will be met if a percentage of area jobseekers and youth earn a National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC) and if a percentage of Lane County businesses agree to recognize the NCRC in hiring. To earn an NCRC, the jobseeker or youth must sit for a 3 hour proctored exam (designed by ACT) covering 3 areas: applied reading, applied math, and locating information (the ability to discern information from graphs, charts and blueprints). Individuals receive a designation of Bronze, Silver, Gold or Platinum on their certificate which correlates to the basic skills required of various occupations. Recently, site selection magazine added the criteria “# of NCRC’s per 1,000 residents” to their state competitiveness index in recognition that being able to quantify the basic skills level of a community’s workforce is of value in economic development. NCRC testing is currently offered free to jobseekers and youth. Pre-screening identifies those that have low basic skills and are unlikely to qualify for an NCRC. Those individuals receive free basic skills remediation assistance. |

| Eligibility: | Open to all Lane County businesses, jobseekers and youth. |

| Program Goals: | Meet the benchmarks to qualify for “Certified Work Ready Community” status by 2015 |

| Program Funding: | State funding from the Governor’s office |

| Other Assets and Partners: | partners throughout the workforce system are involved in implementation (Oregon Employment Department, K-12, Eugene/Springfield Chambers of Commerce, LCC, local and state economic development, apprenticeship programs) |

| Program Success Measures: | Number of businesses that prefer the National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC) in hiring, number of youth and jobseekers that earn an NCRC |