



**Illinois Innovation Network
Council Meeting Minutes
Thursday, January 27, 2022
1:00 – 2:30 PM**

Welcome and Introductions

Jerry Blazey, IIN Council Chair called the meeting to order. He shared a special welcome to Lt. Governor, Juliana Stratton. Chair Blazey reminded all attendees, this meeting is open to the public and subject to the Open Meetings Act and added to please be mindful that if you are a guest, they are allowed to ask questions or provide comments only during the public comment section coordinated by Kyle Harfst. Chair Blazey requested attendees to identify themselves by name and name of institution represented in their zoom box.

Jay Walsh, Vice President for Economic Development & Innovation, University of Illinois System, welcomed Council members, staff, guests, along with a special welcome to Lt Governor, Juliana Stratton.

Roll Call

Lori Pflugmacher conducted roll call. The following Council members answered present:

Jerry Blazey Northern Illinois University
Leslie Roundtree, Chicago State University
Denise Cobb, Southern Illinois University Edwardsville
Chris Merrett, Western Illinois University
TJ Augustine, University of Illinois Chicago
Mike Bedell, Northeastern Illinois University
Ryan Hendrickson, Eastern Illinois University
Pradeep Khanna, Discovery Partners Institute
Gary Kinsel, Southern Illinois University Carbondale
Kim Kidwell, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign
Paul Leamon, Distillery Labs
Craig McLauchlan, Illinois State University
Bruce Sommer, University of Illinois Springfield
Colleen Sexton, Governors State University
- Trisha Kerns in attendance for Colleen Sexton
Alex Stagnero-Green, UIC Health Sciences, Rockford

Others in attendance: Lt. Gov. Stratton, Jay Walsh, Kyle Harfst, Lori Pflugmacher, Ben Taylor, Jisu Hong, Jeannette Tamayo, Adrienne Nazon, Lynn Andersen Lindberg, Charles Watkins, Courtney Breckenridge, Janelle Gurnsey, Jennifer Creasey, Katie Davison, Ken Anderson, Matt McCarroll, Molly Lamb, Sarah O'Brien, Stephen Walk, Angelica Alfaro, Lindsey Markel, and Nicole More



Remarks from Lt. Governor Juliana Stratton

Lt. Governor Stratton stated that she was first briefed on the IIN about a year ago during one of the Governor's Rural Affairs Council (GRAC) meetings. GRAC was created to improve the delivery of state services to rural Illinois, while expanding opportunities and enhancing the quality of life for all Illinoisans. GRAC work has many parallels to what the IIN is doing and we have many opportunities to work together. She shared that Governor Pritzker's office has taken note of the IIN and they see immense value in what the IIN can bring to our state. They look forward to exploring ways to work alongside of the IIN.

IIN Working Committee Updates

Public Policy Committee – John Charles, Committee Chair, provided an update of the committee's advocacy plan that is used as a framework for discussions with government and industry leaders. Presented on the deliverables that could be provided looking at the DPI and IIN goals of creating more jobs over the next decade, both within new economy jobs, as well as those jobs that support a growing new economy. Engaging with each university legislative liaisons to include messaging to elected officials to support the IIN message. A request of name change was presented that better represents the continued advocacy for IIN Capital Funding – Advocacy and Policy Committee.

Research & Collaboration - Craig McLauchlan presented an overview of the committee's charge. Viewing the new and improved map of the Illinois Innovation Network, it now highlights the different regions across the state. Craig reported the committee membership has grown over the past year having all but one hub represented. He reported on the Sustainability Conference virtually held on October 29, 2021. Another action item of the committee is the Sustaining Illinois Seed Grants. Four rounds of funding have taken place thus far. Approximately \$700,000 in total funding has been granted to date.

Approval of Courtney Breckenridge as Education and Workforce Development Committee Chair

Motion to approve by Craig McLauchlan
Seconded by Ryan Hendrickson

Aye: Jerry Blazey, Leslie Roundtree, Denise Cobb, Chris Merrett, TJ Augustine, Mike Bedell, Ryan Hendrickson, Pradeep Khanna, Gary Kinsel, Kim Kidwell, Paul Leamon, Craig McLauchlan, Bruce Sommer, Trish Kerns for Colleen Sexton, Alex Stagnero-Green

Nay: None

Motion carried



Build Back Better Regional Competition - Jeannette Tamayo summarized the EDA Build Back Better Regional Challenge and the Clean Tech Energy Coalition (CTEC) – led by mHUB Chicago. This proposal was the only one from the State of Illinois to receive a phase one award.

Clean Tech Workforce Development - Courtney Breckenridge presented an overview on the IIN Workforce and Education Exchange (WEX). It will facilitate statewide partnerships and collaboration to foster talent development and education for clean tech industries and employers. WEX activities will include convening employer and industry partners, asset mapping, curricular development and program design, and continuous technical assistance and training.

Transforming Coal Economies with Grid Modernization and Energy Storage - Ken Anderson summarized one of the six projects that make up the Illinois Clean Tech Economy Coalition proposal to EDA under the Build Back Better Regional Challenge. Southern Illinois University Carbondale is collaborating with Northwestern University and Argonne National Labs in this proposal. The main areas of focus in Southern Illinois include planning for changes in the regional electric grid and strategic deployment of charging stations for electric vehicles.

Website Development – Pixo Introduction – Ben Taylor introduced our partners in redesigning the IIN website, Nicole More, Lead Project Manager and Lindsey Markel, Senior Content Strategist from Pixo in Urbana, IL. They are currently working in the discovery phase and moving into the design phase. From there they will transition to the implementation phase where they implement the designs, do all the testing, and then to launch in April of 2022 for the new IIN Site.

Approval of November 18, 2021 Council Meeting Minutes

Motion to approve by Mike Bedell

Seconded by Gary Kinsel

Aye: Jerry Blazey, Leslie Roundtree, Denise Cobb, Chris Merrett, TJ Augustine, Mike Bedell, Ryan Hendrickson, Pradeep Khanna, Gary Kinsel, Kim Kidwell, Paul Leamon, Craig McLauchlan, Trish Kerns for Colleen Sexton, Alex Stagnero-Green

Nay: None

Motion carried

Public Comment - Kyle Harfst reported that none were received



IIN Strategic Plan Follow-up: Bylaws - Jerry Blazey and Kyle Harfst provided discussion on Ernst-Young facilitating a strategic plan that was adopted by the Council. One of the recommendations is to update the governance structure (bylaws). The Executive committee will review changes to bylaws and will make a recommendation to Council at the March Meeting. Elements of the Strategic plan (vision, mission incorporating purpose) will be inserted into bylaws. More detail will be created with respect to org structure, membership, and responsibilities of membership. One of the follow-up activities is to engage with additional key stakeholders who currently exist outside of the network.

New Business – Chair Blazey called for any new business. Chris Merrett brought forth the topic of the 33rd Annual World Community and Economic Development Conference. The conference is scheduled to be held virtually on Wednesday, February 23, 2022.

Jeannette Tamayo thanked members for helping provide input to the Minority Business Development Administration which is part of the US Department of Commerce received an authorization to establish rural business assistance centers nationally.

Adjourn – Chair Blazey adjourned at 2:12 pm



IIN Council Meeting

January 27, 2022





IIN Public Policy Committee

**John Charles, Committee Chair
Director of Government and Public Affairs
Southern Illinois University**

January 27, 2022



PUBLIC POLICY COMMITTEE CHARGE

- Advocate for policy and regulations that protect the public and the statewide economy without creating barriers to innovation and growth.
- Create a landscape where access to and participation in inclusive economic development initiatives will encourage growth and promote the Illinois portfolio as worthy of funding and investment.

PUBLIC POLICY COMMITTEE ACTIONS

- Research higher education policy to understand how the IIN may successfully operate within state and federal regulations
- Create an advocacy plan to be used as a framework in discussions with government and industry leaders
- In conjunction with the Education and Workforce Development working committee, develop a new equity-based model for higher education for the state of Illinois

ANTICIPATED IMPACT OF STATE POLICY (IIN)

Over the next 10 years, achieving DPI and IIN's goals will...

- Create or fill 49,000 new economy jobs
 - More than 9,500 created or filled annually by FY29
- Create an additional 28,000 jobs to support the growing new economy
 - More than 4,000 created annually by FY29
- Support 23,000 individuals from underrepresented backgrounds in gaining new economy jobs
 - More than 4,500 supported annually by FY29
- Generate \$19B in economic activity, through research and innovation programming
 - More than \$4.5B generated annually by FY29

PUBLIC POLICY ADVOCACY

- The IIN is a good investment for the state of Illinois
 - Advocated to Gov. Pritzker on behalf of hubs awaiting capital funding
 - Advocated for state legislators to convey this message to Gov. Pritzker
 - Shared information with university legislative liaisons to include in their messaging to elected officials
- Eight of the 15 hubs have not received funding
 - Economic impact metrics are based on capital projects

EQUITY-BASED MODEL: CAIRO



CHALLENGES FOR CAIRO - BECOMING PART OF THE SOLUTION

- Limited retail - no grocery store, gas station, hotel, pharmacy, etc
- Health care limited for immediate area - no hospital or nursing home
- Recent loss of public housing units
- High electricity rates - Cairo public utility is locked in to contract until 2035
- Overall lack of infrastructure for planned river port

WORKING COMMITTEE IN THE FUTURE

- Name change request – Advocacy and Policy Committee
- Continued advocacy for IIN Capital Funding
- Helping shape Federal Policy (Minority Business Development Agency – Rural Program Comments Discussion)

Research and Collaboration Workgroup Update to the IIN Council

January 27, 2022



Current Charge

The committee aims to achieve the following **objectives:**

- Promote and support research and collaboration across the IIN
- Amplify the impact of the IIN through collaboration by creating bilateral and multilateral relationships between hubs that address statewide issues
- Highlight the IIN's ability to address research issues of statewide significance through collaboration, knowledge and innovation

The working committee will:

1. Create and maintain an annual research conference focused on research topics connected to IIN goals that promotes participation by all IIN hubs;
2. Foster discussion of research topics and methodology to promote IIN research and inter-hub collaboration that address issues pertinent to the growth of Illinois;
3. Identify academic institutions, nonprofits, and/or community colleges at each of the IIN hub locations that are interested in working with the network to increase the visibility of their programming as it relates to research and collaboration;
4. Actively promote the IIN SEED grant program and other grant/research opportunities across multiple IIN hubs; and
5. By the Fall 2021 Council Meeting, prepare a presentation and accompanying progress report that incorporates information as it relates to items 1-4, as well as additional findings that support the working group objectives.

Research and Collaboration Workgroup Charge

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Concept

- Network of networks
- Value added and build on what we already have been doing
- Captured in Vision and Mission

The Illinois Innovation Network drives inclusive and integrated research, innovation, and economic development across Illinois.

The Illinois Innovation Network fosters collaboration, increases capacity, and integrates systems in education, research, and innovation by connecting people, organizations, and resources. Together, we build equitable, inclusive, and sustainable communities across Illinois.

Goal 1: The IIN will foster collaborative research and inclusive innovation to solve challenges that affect Illinois.



Committee Members

Craig C. McLauchlan- Chair	Illinois State
Sarah O'Brien – Vice Chair	Illinois-Chicago
Charlie Catlett	Discovery Partners Institute
Michael Glasser	Illinois-Chicago
Kyle Harfst	IIN
Ryan Hendrickson	Eastern Illinois
Gary Kinsel	Southern Illinois-Carbondale
Paul Leamon	Distillery Labs
Chris Merrett	Western Illinois
Susan Morgan	Southern Illinois-Edwardsville
Devi Potluri	Chicago State
Thomas Skuzinski	Northern Illinois
Jeff Stein	Illinois-Urbana-Champaign
Michael Stern	Northeastern Illinois
Lucia Vazquez	Illinois-Springfield
Ken Voglesonger	Northeastern Illinois
Jun Zhao	Governors State



As of December 2021

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Sustainability Conference

- 2nd Conference
- Held virtually October 29, 2021
- Hosted by Illinois-Springfield – Lucía Vazquez
- Sessions:
 - One morning session, presentations 50-minute long
 - Lunchtime keynote
 - Three afternoon sessions:
 - One faculty session
 - Two concurrent student sessions
- Presenters:
 - 13 non-student presenters; all from academic institutions
 - 20 student presenters; all from academic institutions
- Attendees:
 - 77 from academic institutions
 - 1 from industry
 - 2 from government agencies (DNR and Institute for Work & the Economy)



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Sustaining Illinois Seed Grants

- Helped fine-tune Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) each time
 - Collaborative proposals between hubs
 - Caps on awards and on amount to be used for senior personnel
- Four rounds of funding since inception
- First round in Summer of 2020, latest just completed/announced
- Increased number of applicants
- COVID-19 has delayed outcomes for many
- Hope to continue program as funding permits

Seed Grant Statistics



24 total awards



~\$690k in total funding



12 hubs have served as PI



11 hubs have served as co-PI



4 proposals funded in latest round



Every region represented



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Past successes

- Classes across the network (2019)
 - Graduate Course on Sustainability – 20 students
- Grant proposals (recent examples)
 - Esp. workforce – Economic Development Authority
 - Build Back Better
- Leveraged programming
 - Seminars and webinars – e.g. NIH Center for Scientific Review
- Coordinated efforts across state (COVID-19 example)
 - IIN early on with pandemic in 2020
 - Available resources inventory activity
 - Set up testing centers
 - Available PPE
 - PCR capabilities (instruments/reagents)

Future possibilities

- Tech Talk
- Workshop
- Shared and leveraged assets
- Seed funding showcase
- Growing participation from more hubs and their networks

Across committees

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Objectives

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Clean Tech Energy Coalition (CTEC) - Led by mHUB Chicago



- **EDA Build Back Better Regional Challenge**
 - **Phase 1:** December 13, 2021 - 60 Finalists selected from 529 applications nationwide
 - **Phase 2:** March 15, 2022 - deadline to submit one comprehensive application
- **Phase 2 Application: 19 funded organizations**
 - IIN: CSU, DPI, GSU, NIU, SIUC, SIUE, UIC
 - IIN: Leverage ENGAGE - Distributed Instrumented Teaching Facilities at 3-5 locations
 - Program Manager(s): Civic Consulting Alliance, RW Ventures
 - Illinois Legislative Alignment:
 - Illinois Clean Energy Jobs Act
 - Reimagining Electric Vehicles Act

Reenergizing Southern Illinois

- One of six projects that make up the **Illinois Clean Tech Economy Coalition** proposal to EDA under the Build Back Better Regional Challenge
 - Overall project led by Mhub
 - SIU is Project Leader working with Northwestern University and Argonne National Lab.
- Three main areas of focus in Southern Illinois:
 - Planning for changes in the regional electric grid
 - Strategic deployment of charging facilities for electric vehicles, including agricultural vehicles
 - Professional and technical workforce development
 - Electrical Engineering and Automotive Technology

IIN Workforce and Education Exchange (WEX)

The WEX will facilitate statewide partnerships and collaboration to foster talent development and education for clean tech industries and employers. The WEX will focus on curriculum development, on-the-job-training, and recruitment and outreach for education and training programs including traditional degree attainment, apprenticeships, alternative digital credentials and corporate partnerships.

WEX activities will include:

- **Convening employer and industry partners**, including women- and minority-owned businesses, for education and training alignment
- **Asset mapping** to identify existing resources as well as areas of need
- **Curricular development and program design** investments to address gaps in education and training with an emphasis on increased access to rural and underserved communities
- **Continuous technical assistance and training** in digital literacy, marketing and recruitment, sector strategies, case management and diversity, equity and inclusion