



**IIN Council Meeting**  
**Thursday, January 28, 2021**  
**1:00 – 3:00 PM**

**Welcome and Introductions.**

Jerry Blazey, IIN Council Chair, called the meeting to order at 1:02 PM. Council members and guests were welcomed to the first Council meeting of the new year.

The following Council members answered present to roll call: Jerry Blazey, TJ Augustine (proxy by Kristy Kuzmuk), Mike Bedell, Matt Bell, Beth Cada, Denise Cobb, Ryan Hendrickson, Gary Kinsel, Susan Martinis (proxy by Melanie Loots), Craig McLauchlin, Chris Merrett, Leslie Roundtree, Bruce Sommer, Alex Stagnero-Green. Council member Ryan Spain not present for roll joined the meeting at 1:15 pm.

Also present, Jay Walsh, Kyle Harfst, Ben Taylor, Lori Pflugmacher, Jeannette Tamayo, Jisu Hong, Suzi Stadel, Ken Anderson, Lynn Anderson Lindberg, Marissa Brewer, John Charles, Jennifer Creasey, Mary Daniels, Gireesh Gupchup, Teresa Johnston, Paul Leamon, Leslie Matuszewich, Kip McCoy, Kristi Mindrup, Rob Patino, Vicky Rhine, Andy Singer, Rex Schaeffer, and Nancy Sullivan.

Jay Walsh, Vice President for Economic Development and Innovation at the University of Illinois welcomed everyone and expressed how pleased he is with witnessing the continued activity with all the partners and protentional partners even in the middle of a pandemic.

**Approval of November 19 Council Meeting Minutes:**

With no discussion of minutes as presented, motion to approve by Alex Stagnero-Green  
Second by Leslie Roundtree

Roll call vote was taken as follows:

AYE: Jerry Blazey, Proxy Kristi Kuzmuk, Mike Bedell, Matt Bell, Beth Cada, Denise Cobb, Ryan Hendrickson, Gary Kinsel, Proxy Melanie Loots, Craig McLauchlin, Chris Merrett, Leslie Roundtree, Bruce Sommer, Alex Stagnero-Green

NAY: None. Motion carried unanimously.

**Public Comment – None received**



## **DCEO Broadband READY Planning Grant Update**

Kyle Harfst and Jeannette Tamayo presented an overview of the DCEO Broadband ready program and the Broadband Ready awarded grants as presented from the slides. Of the four regional grants awarded, 3 were awarded to IIN Hubs that have partnered with local stakeholders in Phase 1 of the program.

## **Capital Funding Discussion**

John Charles shared a presentation that had previously been presented to the IIN Executive committee.

- Continuing advocacy for IIN Hub Funding
- 2021 Advocacy goals and objectives
- IIN Council next steps
- Individual Hub next steps

Discussion focused on crafting a letter from each Hub that would be shared with the Governor's office. Work to develop a unifying template with a prepared statement at the front end how the network is helping to drive forward the individual efforts and advocating for each other.

In moving forward, it was suggested that each of the IIN Hubs should plan to meet with the University of Illinois Capital programs to form that relationship in addition to CDB.

## **Working Committee Chairs Meeting Report**

Jerry Blazey presented on each of the working committees as asked for reports on their first year of review of their charges and reconsideration of their committee composition.

- Education & Workforce Development – charge content and objectives required no change. With respect to composition of the committee, a co-chair with very strong community college relationship would be appropriate.
- Entrepreneurship & Corporate Engagement – the charge remains appropriate. They reported a well-developed six subcommittee structure. An interest in splitting into two committees to improve the focus and accelerate progress was discussed. This could be considered a first reading for a later action for the Council. Next steps included preparing separate charges for consideration.
- Public Policy – Charge remains appropriate. Should consider the importance of adding advocacy as a partner to policy.
- Research & Collaboration – The committee is working on a revised charter and rescaling to focus on the annual research conference, fostering research topics and collaborations, and focusing on the seed grant program.



### **Research & Collaboration Working Committee**

Ryan Hendrickson led the discussion and included a PowerPoint to assist with his presentation.

- EIU-IIN Graduate Course on Sustainability
- IIN Sustainability Research Conference
- Sustaining Illinois Seed Grants

### **Sustaining Illinois Seed Grant Awards**

Kyle Harfst presented on Round 2 with a total of 15 different submissions received from across eight different hubs. With an increase in funding eight proposals totaling \$229,000 were awarded. Funding of \$120,000 will be awarded for Round 3 with a deadline of May 2021. With an announcement before the start of the new fiscal year.

### **Technical Assistance for Hubs**

Jeannette Tamayo summarized her assignment. Here under the CARES Act, this requires she focuses on resiliency and economic resiliency for the state of Illinois. As outlined from her slide presentation Jeannette discussed the technical assistance she can provide for the Hubs:

- Brainstorming and translating the who, what, where, when, why, how approach to application development and program review.
- Aligning with federal priorities

### **Rural Economic Development Conference**

Chris Merrett summarized the upcoming IIRA Rural Economic Development Conference scheduled for February 24-25, 2021. A complete breakdown of the conference days was detailed in the presentation.

### **Strategic Planning Discussion**

Jerry Blazey initiated discussion around future direction and strategic planning for the IIN. Selecting focus areas that we can work on together corporately, or as a group. It was determined that it would be a useful exercise. Options for moving forward and next steps were discussed. It was decided to have the original planning documents be made available with this the primary agenda topic for the Executive Council meeting next month.



**Adjournment:**

Motion was made by Mike Bedell and seconded by Beth Cada to adjourn the meeting.

Roll call vote was taken as follows:

AYE: Jerry Blazey, TJ Augustine, Mike Bedell, Matt Bell, Beth Cada, Ryan Hendrickson, Gary Kinsel, Susan Martinis – Proxy, Melanie Loots, Craig McLauchlin, Chris Merrett, Leslie Roundtree, Bruce Sommer

NAY: None. Motion carried

Meeting Adjourned at 3:00 pm



Working together to ignite the Illinois economy

**IIN COUNCIL MEETING**

**JANUARY 28, 2021 | ZOOM MEETING**



## MEETING NOTES

**For today's Zoom meeting, please mute your microphone unless you are speaking.**

**If you have a question or comment, please indicate that by "raising your hand" in Zoom (under participants panel or alt-Y/option-Y) or sending a note in chat and we will recognize you.**

**We are recording today's meeting for note-taking and sharing purposes.**



# CALL TO ORDER

- **Jerry Blazey, Illinois Innovation Network Council Chair will call meeting to order**
- **Attendance roll call**
  - **Jerry Blazey, Northern Illinois University (NIU) (IIN Council Chair)**
  - **TJ Augustine, University of Illinois Chicago (UIC)**
  - **Mike Bedell, Northeastern Illinois University (NEIU)**
  - **Matt Bell, Discovery Partners Institute (DPI)**
  - **Beth Cada, Governors State University (GSU)**
  - **Denise Cobb, Southern Illinois University Edwardsville (SIUE)**
  - **Ryan Hendrickson, Eastern Illinois University (EIU)**
  - **Gary Kinsel, Southern Illinois University Carbondale (SIUC)**
  - **Susan Martinis, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign (UIUC)**
  - **Craig McLauchlin, Illinois State University (ISU)**
  - **Chris Merrett, Western Illinois University (WIU)**
  - **Leslie Roundtree, Chicago State University (CSU)**
  - **Bruce Sommer, University of Illinois Springfield (UIS)**
  - **Ryan Spain, Distillery Labs**
  - **Alex Stagnaro-Green, University of Illinois Chicago (UIC) Health Sciences Campus-Rockford**

# WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS



- **Jerry Blazey, Illinois Innovation Network Council Chair**
- **Jay Walsh, Interim Vice President for Economic Development & Innovation, University of Illinois System**



# MEETING AGENDA

- **Approval of Nov. 19 meeting minutes (ACTION ITEM)**
- **Public comment**
- **DCEO Broadband READY planning grant update**
- **Capital funding discussion**
- **Working committee chairs meeting report**
- **Research & collaboration working committee update**
- **Sustaining Illinois seed grant awards**
- **Technical assistance for hubs**
- **Rural Economic Development Conference**
- **Strategic Planning Discussion**

# DCEO BROADBAND READY GRANTS

- **Notice of funding opportunity available on [DCEO website](#)**
- **IIN hubs can serve convening and connecting roles with regional partners, while providing best practices**
- **Explore opportunities for equitable advances in broadband access, adoption and utilization**

# BROADBAND READY PROGRAM

## **Regional Evaluation for Adoption + Digital Equity (READY) Program**

- Add context + contour to the current Office of Broadband mapping
- Regional evaluation + engagement
- Deliverables include:
  - Regional current conditions report
  - Roadmap to digital equity impact (NDIA)
  - Critical indicator dashboard
    - Access (IOB Mapping)
    - Affordability (BAC Study for Illinois General Assembly)
    - Adoption (ACS)
    - Utilization



# BROADBAND READY PROGRAM

## **At least 3 IIN hubs are partnering with local stakeholders in Phase 1 of the program**

- Eastern Illinois University (Southeast Region)
- University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign (East Central Region)
- Southern Illinois University (Southern Region)
- Northern Stateline Region





# **Continuing Advocacy for IIN Hub Funding**

John Charles

Executive Director for Governmental and Public Affairs, SIU System

January 28, 2021



# CONTINUING ADVOCACY FOR IIN HUB FUNDING

## Getting to this point...

### 2018

- University of Illinois develops vision for DPI/IIN
- February: Governor Rauner introduces \$500 million for the program in his introduced budget
- May: The funding is passed by the General Assembly

### 2019

- January: Governor Pritzker takes office and efforts are back to square one
- May: Following months of advocacy, Pritzker includes \$500 million for DPI/IIN in the FY20 budget
- July 1-end of calendar year: Process of advocating to the Governor's Office for funding to be authorized for release

### 2020

- February: Pritzker formally announces the program will move forward
- May: Funding for DPI/IIN is re-appropriated in FY21
- August: All capital projects are put on hold due to the pandemic and lack of revenues
- November: Initial funding for 6 IIN Hubs becomes one of very few projects statewide to have any money released

# 2021 ADVOCACY GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

- Have 10% planning funds released for other 9 IIN hubs
- Work with CDB and GOMB to develop timeline for release, possibly including request for input regarding prioritization of projects
  - State revenues and rationale for considering prioritization
- Proceed with University of Illinois seed grant opportunities while waiting for state funds to continue to flow
- Identify possible hub operations that can begin prior to state funds being received

## NEXT STEPS: IIN COUNCIL

- Have 10% planning funds released for other 9 IIN hubs
- Work with CDB and GOMB to develop timeline for release, possibly including request for input regarding prioritization of projects
  - State revenues and rationale for considering prioritization
- Proceed with University of Illinois seed grant opportunities while waiting for state funds to continue to flow
- Identify possible hub operations that can begin prior to state funds being received

## NEXT STEPS: INDIVIDUAL HUBS

- Create one-page advocacy documents specific to individual hubs outlining the purpose of the hub and the uses of state/matching funds
- Organize a letter to be signed by local, private partners in support of funds moving forward
  - Example: NIU's letter signed by the DeKalb County Economic Development Committee, Facebook, Ferrara and Syngenta
- Communicate with local legislators and executive stakeholders



# WORKING COMMITTEE CHAIRS MEETING REPORT

**Jerry Blazey, IIN Council Chair**





# RESEARCH & COLLABORATION WORKING COMMITTEE UPDATE

## **2020-21 Members**

Ryan Hendrickson, Eastern Illinois University (Chair)

Leslie Matuszewich, Northern Illinois University (Vice Chair)

Charlie Catlett, Discovery Partners Institute

Gary Kinsel, Southern Illinois University-Carbondale

Craig McLaughlin, Illinois State University

Chris Merrett, Western Illinois University

Susan Morgan, Southern Illinois University-Edwardsville

Sarah O'Brien, University of Illinois Chicago

Devi Potluri, Chicago State University

Lucia Vasquez, University of Illinois Springfield

# EIU-IIN GRADUATE COURSE ON SUSTAINABILITY

Fall 2019

Online Graduate Seminar on Sustainability

Dr. Nichole Hugo, Eastern Illinois University  
Graduate Program Director for M.S. in Sustainability

## **Partners:**

Center for Innovation in Teaching and Learning (UIUC)  
University of Illinois System: IIN graduate teaching assistant

## **Course enrollment:**

- 17 EIU students
- 2 ISU students
- 1 NIU student



# IIN SUSTAINABILITY RESEARCH CONFERENCE

October 29, 2020

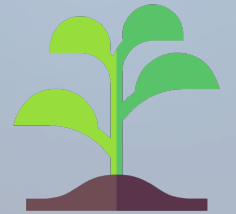
Promotion and support from IIN Research and Collaboration Working Committee members

## **EIU conference organizers:**

- Dr. Ryan Burge and Dr. Nichole Hugo

## **Partners:**

- University of Illinois System
  - Zoom conference management
  - Marketing/publicity
  - Financial support (honorariums and student awards)



**IIN SUSTAINABILITY  
RESEARCH CONFERENCE**





# IIN SUSTAINABILITY RESEARCH CONFERENCE

## **Morning Presentations**

Ryan Burge (EIU) and Nichole Hugo (EIU): Sustainability Workshop on Sustainability Datasets in Illinois

Robert Brinkman (NIU): Defining Sustainability in a Post-COVID World

Amy Bardwell (ISU): Benefits of Buying Local

Plenary Address – Denise Lee (SIUE): Science that Serves

*The morning sessions had approximately 100 participants*

## **Afternoon Panel Sessions:**

11 sessions each @ one hour with break-out rooms

43 different research presentations

*Afternoon panel sessions had approximately 140 participants*

# IIN SUSTAINABILITY RESEARCH CONFERENCE

## **Student Research Awards**

Pearl Deku (SIUC): Best graduate research presentation

Jennifer Davis (UIS): Best undergraduate research presentation

Graduate research presentation merit awards:

Elijah Schukow (ISU)

Anna Bukowska (ISU)

Jack Wassik (ISU)



# SUSTAINING ILLINOIS SEED GRANTS

## **Working committee activities:**

- Helped define the criteria for these seed grants
- Promoted seed grant opportunities within our universities
- Received 15 submissions in Round 2, a major increase over Round 1
- Selected 8 projects for funding

# RESEARCH & COLLABORATION WORKING COMMITTEE UPDATE

## **Revisions to working group charge (under consideration)**

- Maintain an annual research conference
- Foster discussion of research topics and methodology to promote IIN and inter-hub collaboration
- Identification of partners (universities, nonprofits, community colleges) that foster IIN research collaboration
- Ongoing promotion of IIN seed grant program: further encourage inter-hub collaboration

# SUSTAINING ILLINOIS SEED GRANTS - ROUND 2

## Projects funded

### **The design, development, and deployment of a mobile child vaccination program for underserved communities in Illinois using novel digital analysis and artificial intelligence (AI) tools - \$19,024**

- Scott Barrows, director of OSF HealthCare's Jump Design Lab and clinical assistant professor of emergency medicine at the University of Illinois College of Medicine at Peoria; and Shaoen Wu, professor of information technology, Illinois State University (ISU).

### **Mitigating future threats to biodiversity: The role of headwater streams and land-management practices in the Kaskaskia River watershed - \$30,000**

- Joan M. Brehm, professor of sociology, ISU; Bill Stewart, professor of recreation, sport and tourism, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign (UIUC); Cory Suski, professor of natural resources and environmental sciences, UIUC; and Maria Librada Chu, associate professor of agricultural and biological engineering, UIUC.

### **Development and application of a novel cancer-mortality index in Illinois: Discovering opportunities for public health intervention - \$30,000**

- Courtney Hughes, associate professor of public health, NIU; Mahdi Vaezi, assistant professor of engineering technology, NIU; and Margaret Wright, senior research scientist, University of Illinois Cancer Center.

### **Building a sustainable geo-STEM learning ecosystem for Illinois teachers - \$29,993**

- Nicole LaDue, associate professor of geology and environmental geosciences, NIU; Praveen Kumar, professor of civil and environmental engineering, UIUC; and Sarah Fisher, director of environmental education, Lewis and Clark Community College.



# SUSTAINING ILLINOIS SEED GRANTS - ROUND 2

## Projects funded

### **Forever chemicals: PFAS detection, fate and transport in Illinois - \$30,000**

- Melissa Lenczewski, professor of geology and environmental geosciences, NIU; Kevin Tucker, assistant professor of chemistry, Southern Illinois University Edwardsville (SIUE); and Megan Brown, assistant professor of geology and environmental geosciences, NIU

### **Development of robotic technologies tailored to support the specialty crop production in the state of Illinois - \$30,000**

- Nima Lotfi, assistant professor of mechanical and mechatronics engineering, SIUE; Hasan Ferdowsi, assistant professor of electrical engineering, NIU; and Carrie Butts-Wilmsmeyer, associate professor of biological sciences, SIUE.

### **Establishing a caregiver stakeholder registry for collaboration for health equity, engaging technology for aging in the home (CARE for CHEETAH) - \$30,000**

- Naoko Muramatsu, professor of community health sciences, University of Illinois Chicago (UIC); Milos Zefran, professor of electrical engineering, UIC; Emily Stiehl, clinical assistant professor of health policy and administration, UIC; Kathleen Diviak, senior research scientist in the Institute for Health Research and Policy, UIC; Michael Scott, associate professor of mechanical and industrial engineering, UIC; Alex Leow, associate professor in psychiatry and bioengineering, UIC; and Jennifer Gray, associate professor of public health, NIU.

### **Sustainable water supply system in Illinois using innovative electrochemical treatment technology - \$30,000**

- Tomoyuki Shibata, associate professor of public health, NIU; Kyu Taek Cho, associate professor of mechanical engineering, NIU; and Xiao Su, assistant professor of chemical and biomolecular engineering, UIUC.

# TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FOR HUBS

## **Focus**

- Addressing the impact of COVID-19 by promoting inclusive economic development growth initiatives statewide
- Leveraging partnerships to provide opportunities for local communities to be globally competitive

## **Technical Assistance Available**

- Review of federal funding proposals through an equity lens
- Guidance on alignment of program specific proposals with federal initiatives
- Guidance on uniform federal requirements for funding community initiatives (HUD, USDA, DOT, DOC, SBA, DOL/ETA, DRA)
- Discernment of applicability for opportunity zones proposal development
- Inter-agency engagement and collaboration



# TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FOR HUBS

## Brainstorming and translating: the W-H approach to application development and program review

- Who - Identify the **partnerships**
- What - Specify the project **scope**
- Where - Demonstrate the **region** impacted
- When - List the grant period and **post-grant expectations**
- Why - Tell the **local story** and **scale or replication** possibilities
- How - Infuse the project plan with **measurable deliverables**

## Aligning with federal priorities

- Shifting from outputs to outcomes while providing program accountability

# IIRA RURAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE

- **32<sup>nd</sup> Annual Rural Community and Economic Development Conference, Wednesday, February 24, 2021**
- **1:00-2:30 p.m. Opening Session: Dealing with the Pandemic. Moderator:** Chris Merrett, Director, IIRA@WIU.
  - “GRAC Agenda and Plans to Revitalize Rural IL.” Lt. Governor Juliana Stratton, Governor’s Rural Affairs Council (GRAC).
  - “The Mettle of Mom & Pops: Small Business Innovation and Resilience during Covid.” Michael Powe, National Main Street Center.
  - “Are we There Yet? Realities and Implications of Population Change in the Midwest.” Emily Wornell, Ball State University.
- **3:00 to 4:00 p.m. (Concurrent Sessions) Serving Rural Populations with New Approaches**
  - “Predicting the Future: Creating Thriving Communities in Times of Change.” Danny Langloss, City of Dixon, Illinois.
  - “Farmhouse Market: The Unstaffed (Yet Open 24/7?) Grocery Store of Rural America.” Kendra Rasmusson, Farmhouse Market.
  - “Building Rural Resilience through Small Business Development.” Kimber Lanning, Local Arizona First and PRA.
  - “Innovation in Rural IL—Role of the IIN.” Kyle Harfst, UI System & IIN, Jay Walsh, UI System, and Chris Merrett, IIRA@WIU.
  - “Accessing and Using Census Data to Support your Work.” Zach Kennedy, UI Extension.
  - “Market on the Hill: A Community Owned Market Sourcing Local Food.” Sean Park, IIRA, Shaun Tyson, Tyson Farms, & Kyle Reed, Fox Path Farm.
- **4:15 p.m. to 5:15 p.m. (Concurrent Sessions) What Have we Learned from the Pandemic?**
  - “Mattoon in Motion: Results with Outcomes.” Ed Dowd, Mattoon Chamber of Commerce and Carlos Ortega, Elevate CCIC, Inc.
  - “Telehealth Today and Tomorrow.” Kari Wolf, Southern Illinois University School of Medicine.
  - “Creating a Skilled Workforce – Innovation in the Cornfields.” Kathy Lively, Man-Tra-Con Corporation.
  - “Main Street for All Ages – Engaging the Generations.” Richard Zietlow, Le Mars Iowa Historic Preservation Commission.
  - “A Rural Renaissance: How Small Towns Across the Country Are Developing Thriving Digital Economy Ecosystems.” Matt Dunne, Center on Rural Innovation (CORI).

# IIRA RURAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE

- **32<sup>nd</sup> Annual Rural Community and Economic Development Conference, Thursday, February 25, 2021**
- **8:30 to 10:15 a.m. Shaping a New Future for Rural Communities. Moderator:** Norman Walzer, Director Emeritus, IIRA
  - “Reimagining Rural Policy: Organizing Federal Assistance to Maximize Rural Prosperity.” Tony Pipa, Brookings Institution.
  - “Future-Proofing the Rural Economy.” Arthur Scott, National Association of Counties.
  - “A Regional Approach to Rural Economic Development: How DCEO Is Driving Rural Economic Opportunity Statewide.” Jonathon McGee, DCEO.
- **10:45 to 12:00 Noon (Concurrent Sessions)**
  - “Challenges and Opportunities for Illinois Rural Hospitals.” Abby Radcliffe, Illinois Health & Hospital Association.
  - A Seat at the Table: The Role of Nonprofits in Improving Quality of Life in Rural America.” Jayme E. Walters, Utah State University.
  - “COVID-19 & Post-Pandemic Roles for TIF/Business Development District Incentives.” Steve Kline, The Economic Development Group, Ltd., Herb Klein, Jacob & Klein, Ltd., Richard Kopczick, City of Morris, Illinois, and Michael Phelan, Village of Peoria Heights, Illinois.
  - “Rural Communities as the Hub for Aging Innovation.” Sandy Markwood, National Association of Area Agencies on Aging.
  - “Dual Enrollment and Community Health: University Partnerships for Community Development.” Javaid Siddiqi, The Hunt Institute and Michael Villarreal, UT San Antonio.
  - “Reducing Rural Social Isolation and Loneliness: Lessons from Community Pubs in the UK.” Stephen McCusker, Manchester Metropolitan University.
- **Registration:** <http://www.iira.org/32nd-annual-rural-economic-development-conference/>
  - Virtual Conference / \$25.00 registration fee.
  - IIN and UI System are sponsors and providing technology support (thank you!).



# STRATEGIC PLANNING DISCUSSION

## IIN Guiding Principles

- Assess and meet regional needs through collaborative research, public-private partnerships, and entrepreneurship and training programs
- Increase collaboration among hubs and share best practices
- Advocate for the value of higher education at the state and national levels



# ADJOURN

**Next meeting:**  
**March 25, 2021 (Zoom)**

**Kyle Harfst, IIN Executive Director**

[kharfst@uillinois.edu](mailto:kharfst@uillinois.edu)