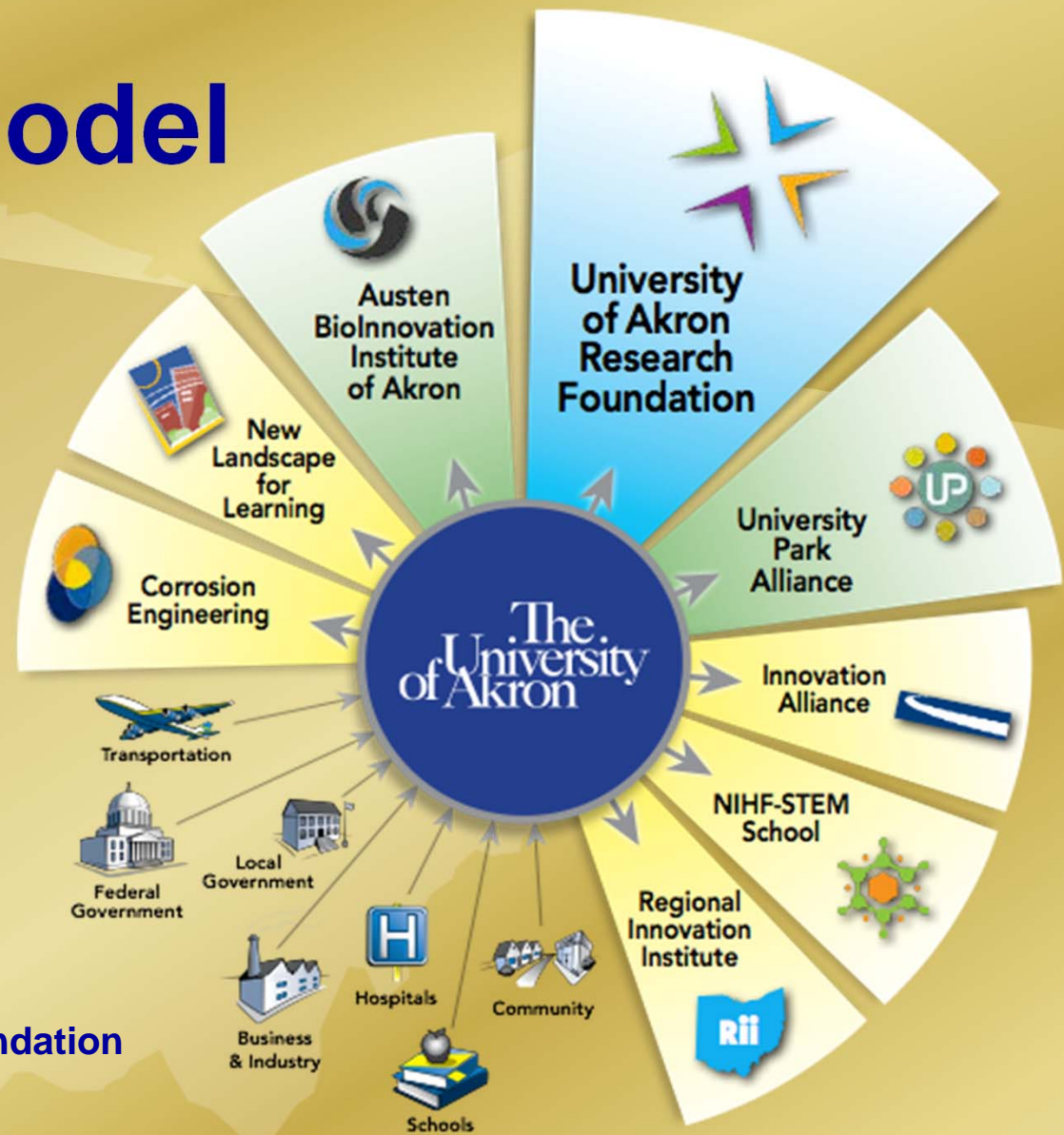
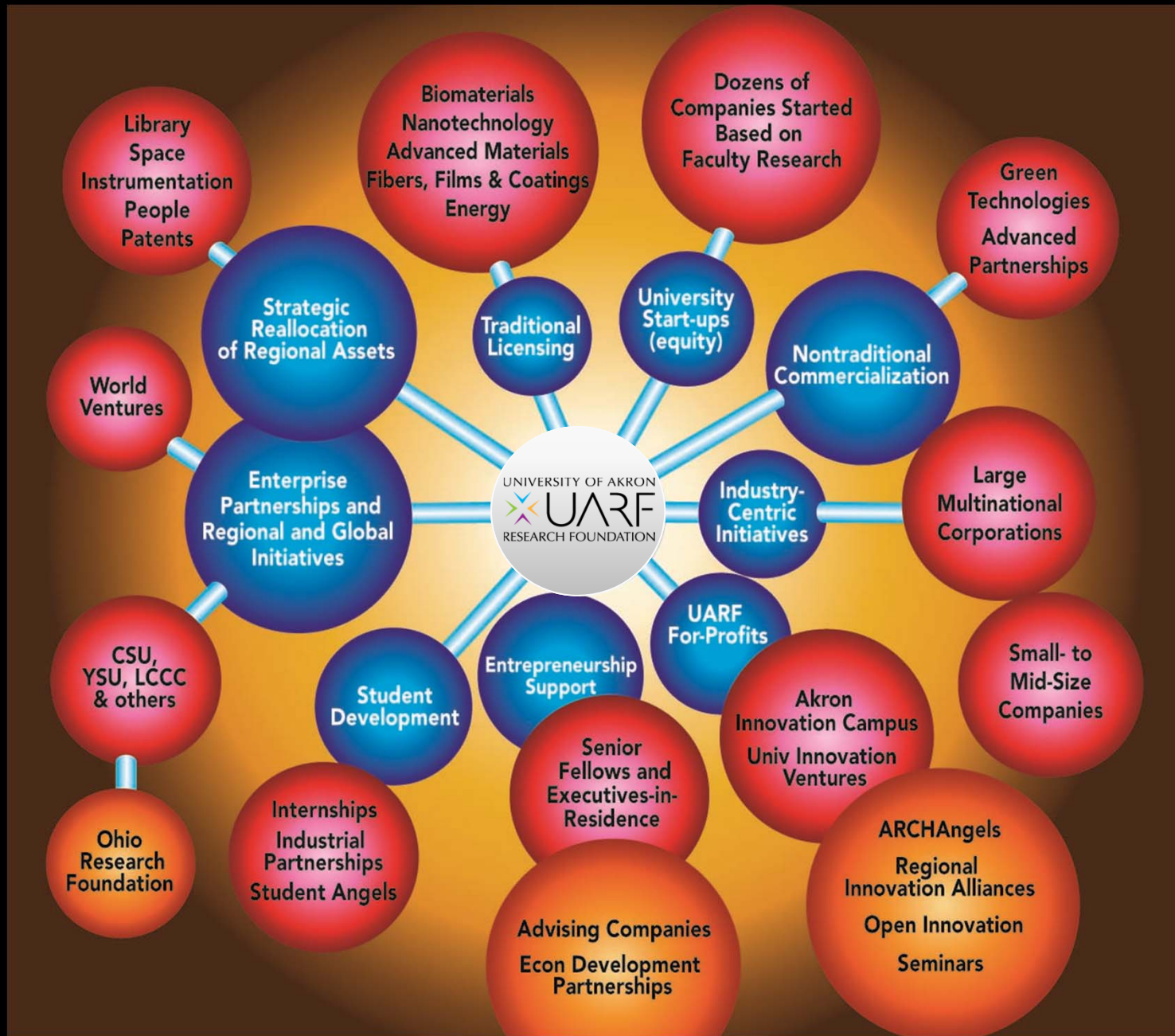


The Akron Model

A Robust and
Broad-based
Platform or
“Tool Chest”
for Economic
Development

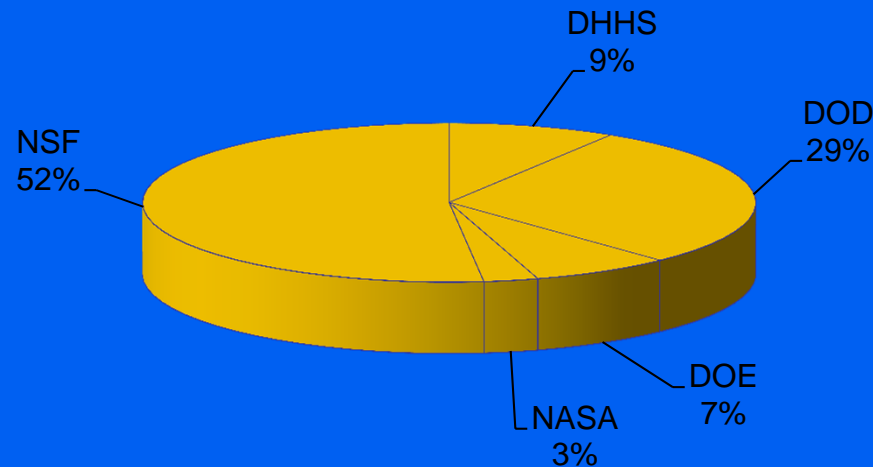
Barry Rosenbaum, Sr. Fellow
The University of Akron Research Foundation
February 5, 2014





The University of Akron SBIR/STTR Awards

5 Agencies



22 Companies (**6 UA spinouts**)

ADAP Nanotech

Akron Air Materials

Akron Ascent Innovations

Alpha STAR

Arbomatrix

Aspen Aerogels

Maverick

ASTI

Bertec

Biomedical Research Assoc.

Deformation Control Tech.

H-Cubed

Kent Displays

E 3 Materials

U. of Dayton Research Institute

Materials Research & Design

Mempro Ceramics

Premix

Sentient Science Corp.

SORAA

Nano Gas Jet

Exacter

UARF Strongly Supports SBIR / STTR Programs

For UA Startups and Tech Based Early Stage Companies

- Research Services Department identifies opportunities from agency solicitations
- Company formation support provided to SBIR / STTR applicants
- Some grant-writing resources provided especially for commercialization plans – faculty focus on technical program
- Identify potential non faculty Principal Investigators to lead start up companies through SBIR / STTR grant phases
- Identify commercial validation partners to support SBIR / STTR applications
- Handle all application paperwork, on line submissions, and budget plans
- Work with UA to identify and manage conflict of interest issues
- Participate in NE Ohio Jump Start Entrepreneurial Network – Work with collaboration partners. eg; NorTech, Bio Enterprises, Ohio Aerospace Institute to support SBIR / STTR programs for early stage companies
- **SBIR / STTR programs provide an essential source of seed funding for commercial development of new technologies**

Barriers to University Participation in the SBIR / STTR Programs

- Faculty cannot be the Principal Investigators and must be surrounded by supporting and nurturing commercialization organization to make the process work
- Much effort required for relatively small dollar grant with not a high probability of winning
- Identifying high potential Principal Investigators with skills to lead companies through early stage commercialization is a MAJOR challenge
- Must work through administrative details of company / university collaboration to assure smooth working relationships
- Faculty not skilled in the technology commercialization aspects of SBIR / STTR programs

Examples of The University of Akron Participation in SBIR / STTR Programs

University of Akron Spin Outs

- * NGJ: low cost carbon nanofibers: NSF Phase 1 SBIR
- * Akron Ascent Innovations: Dry reusable adhesive: NSF Phase 1 SBIR (NSF iCorps graduate)

NE Ohio Early Stage Companies

- * Exacter: Predictive maintenance for electrical grid (DOE Phase 1 SBIR with UA and OSU)
- * Kent Display: Flexible Electronics, Digital E Writer (NSF Phase 1 STTR)
- * Premix: Composites (NSF Phase 2 SBIR)

Suggestions for Improving University Utilization of SBIR / STTR Programs University of Akron Perspective

- **Expand educational programs in Technology Commercialization like NSF I Corps for faculty and students**
 - + **Eligibility for non NSF funded researchers**
 - + **Adopt the I Corps Program for other SBIR / STTR sponsoring agencies**
- **Support organizations like NCET-2 that focus on increased use of SBIR / STTR programs by university startups**
- **Encourage federal agencies to select SBIR / STTR program managers with business / start up company experience**
- **Increase communication with university tech transfer offices and faculty to expand utilization of SBIR / STTR programs**
- **Encourage more focus on early stage technology commercialization in SBIR / STTR programs across all agencies (NSF model)**