



The Enterprise Center

University

Louisiana Tech University

Center Director

Dave Norris

Center Location

Outreach Unit

Center since 2004

Center Activities

- Business counseling
- Incubator services
- Matchmaking
- Economic development strategies
- Applied research

Clients

- Entrepreneurs
- Start-ups
- Existing businesses
- Local and regional communities
- Creative economy workers

Assessment Techniques

- Feedback from staff
- Client interviews
- Feedback at workshops

Contact Information

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Louisiana Tech Enterprise Center

As the primary business support and development outreach arm of Louisiana Tech University, the Enterprise Center is designed to facilitate and promote the growth of new and existing ventures of the enterprises related to innovation along the I-20 corridor of Louisiana.

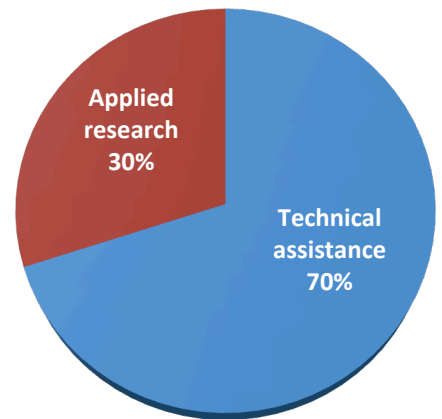
The Enterprise Center houses the Louisiana Tech Technology Incubator, the Technology Business Development Center, and the Enterprise Center Art Gallery.

Recently, the Enterprise Center also has taken a lead role in the development of the new Louisiana Tech Enterprise Campus – a commercial research and development park designed to support the growth of technology-based businesses and to foster the relationship of those businesses with activities of the University.

Activities

The main technical assistance the Center provides is business development support to new ventures, which includes incubator services, start-up coaching and

mentoring, networking and investor relationship assistance, and business growth and expansion support. The Enterprise Center plays the lead role in developing private sector partnerships to support the technology development projects and speed successful commercialization of new technologies into the private sector. The Center strives to connect new ventures with funding, to the point of facilitating the formatting of a local



seed capital fund (see success box). The Center administers the grants from the Innovation Enterprise Fund, the regional angel/venture funding group. The grants are designed to dramatically accelerate the movement of innovation from the research lab to the marketplace and fill critical gaps in

funding opportunities for early-stage companies.

Outside of business support, the Center supports the creative economy through the Art Entrepreneurship Program, which seeks to integrate art and technology entrepreneurship through the hosting of art exhibits.

The Center also conducts applied research on economic development topics relevant to north Louisiana and

the innovation economy. Specific projects have focused on a gap analysis and a needs assessment for the regional information sector workforce.

Leveraging

The Center leverages the intellectual property from the University's research programs through the technology transfer office. The Center leverages other university resources including data sources, analytical expertise, and specialized equipment.

The Center also uses graduate students for its applied research. The Center leverages extensively its relationships with regional entrepreneurs through the Regional Innovators Network, as well as through other centers in the Enterprise Center umbrella, including the Center for Entrepreneurship and Information Technology, the Technology Business Development Center, the Enterprise Campus, and the Rural Development Center.

*"This organization has helped a large number of young people who have a view of a visionary future get through the hard knocks of making mistakes in business. Taking a product from ground zero to manufacturing is a task with a lot of holes to fill in." --
Center Stakeholder*

Success

Making connections where connections are sparse

In an effort to promote entrepreneurship and technology commercialization in a rural setting where lack of access to networks of other entrepreneurs, resources, and investment capital can hamper growth, the Enterprise Center created a Regional Innovators Network consisting of over 600 individual members, businesses, and communities from northern Louisiana. This network spawned an early-stage seed capital fund named the Innovation Enterprise Fund. The Enterprise Center has helped raise over \$250,000 and has the goal of raising \$1 million. The Center also administers the fund's small grants, which are awarded to early stage

companies that are spin-offs from the Louisiana Tech's technology transfer activities. Companies apply for the funding and priority is given to companies that appear likely to have a substantial local or regional impact. Two rounds of funding have been completed.

By creating a network and building community relationships, the Enterprise Center played a major part in meeting a critical need for the growth of innovation in the region.