MISSION: to unleash NC’s innovative potential for sustained economic and community impact

CONVICTIONS
1. Future is dependent on innovation
2. Innovation is often place-based
3. These efforts need to be intentional & connected
4. Progress is only sustainable if it is inclusive

Problem
• North Carolina ranks mid-pack among the nation’s states in overall innovation capacity and effectiveness
• NC will fail to reach the top quartile unless more people in more communities are involved in a broad innovation turnaround effort to expand innovation capacity
InnovateNC

- Accelerate entrepreneurial activity and small business growth in micropolitan communities and under-connected metro areas
- Create opportunities for collaboration/shared learning between communities
- Develop a national model that increases visibility and support for NC’s innovation economy

Design

- State-wide learning collaborative modeled off of Forward Cities
- 10 partners supporting effort
- RFP for communities to participate:
  1. Commitment to two-year process
  2. Clear stakeholder engagement
  3. Proof of some initial momentum
  4. $15,000 of financial support

18 Communities Applied

- Albermarle/Locust, Stanly
- Asheville, Buncombe
- Chadbourn, Columbus
- Chapel Hill, Orange
- Elizabeth City (Greater), Pasquotank
- Fayetteville, Cumberland
- Gaston County
- Greensboro, Guilford
- Greenville, Pitt
- Morganton, Burke
- New Bern, Craven
- Newton, Catawba
- Pembroke, Robeson
- Rocky Mount, Nash & Edgecombe – Nash and Edgecombe
- Statesville, Iredell/Mecklenburg, New Hanover
- Wilson, Wilson
- Winston-Salem, Forsyth
PLACE-BASED ECOSYSTEM DEVELOPMENT

Community Engagement Process

- Local Innovation Council Formation
- Community Asset Mapping
- Attitudinal Survey
- Policy Audit
- Data driven strategic planning
- Story-telling: http://video.unctv.org/show/innovatenc/
Goals for Communities

- Increase innovation capacity, activity, and connectivity
- Accelerate “inclusive innovation”
- Foster cross-sector collaboration within communities and connections between communities
- Increase visibility and financial support
- Establish base-line data and alignment on targets

TARGET OUTCOMES

- Entrepreneurial opportunities for youth
- Retention of entrepreneurial talent
- Citizen engagement in entrepreneurial solutions
- Density of innovation cluster
- Increased entrepreneurial activity & connectivity
- Local jobs & tax base
- Economic growth and diversification
- Investment in local enterprises
- Local, state, and national recognition

Innovate NC 2.0

- Expand network of communities across NC
- Strengthen InnovateNC.org as learning platform including toolkit
- Extend capacity building support for communities
- Grow story-telling activities
- Establish research & evaluation efforts
- Establish state-wide convenings
- Connect to national network
- Create NC Community Innovation Fund
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT MODEL

AWAKEN
Learning platform, newsletter, stories, tools

CONNECT
National Convening, fee-based consulting/speaking

IMMERSE
City Workshops, Capacity building, Benchmarking

INVEST
Implementation grants

SCALE
Impact Investment, Scale-up/replication grants

Stories & Case Studies
HQ strives to be
THE LARGEST NETWORK OF
trepreneurial communities
IN THE SOUTHEAST
that helps to create hundreds of companies,
thousands of jobs, and lasting positive impact in the world.

HQ AFFILIATE STRATEGY
- Expanding HQ network to small/mid-sized markets through affiliate partners
- Seeking independent operating teams that share HQ vision & values
- Anchored in co-working spaces consistent with HQ design standards
- Opportunity to catalyze local entrepreneurial markets and contribute to robust regional network

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