

The Business of Innovation

RTP, NC
NC Biotechnology Center

September 25, 2024
9:00AM to 3:00PM

Topics Covered

- ~ SBIR/STTR R&D Funding ~*
- ~ NC - Specific Funding Resources ~*
- ~ Equity Capital Insights ~*
- ~ The State of Innovation in North Carolina ~*
- ~ One NC Small Business Match and Incentive Programs ~*
- ~ Legal Considerations of Setting up an Innovation Business ~*
- ~ Business Development Ecosystem Resources ~*
- ~ Success Stories from Local Innovation Businesses ~*

Partners



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The SBTDC is a business and technology extension program of the UNC System and is funded in part through a Cooperative Agreement with the U.S. Small Business Administration

Speaker Bios

Jay Bigelow
CED



Jay Bigelow's primary focus at [CED](#) is organizing the expertise of the network to provide guidance, mentorship, and capital. As CED's Entrepreneur-in-Residence, Jay meets with each entrepreneur, assesses his/her needs, then recommends the next steps and connections either within CED or the greater CED network, to best help them achieve business objectives. Jay has worked in two startups and 3 scale-ups where he launched new products, and drove business development efforts and strategic planning. He earned his B.S in Business Administration from Drexel University

Mike Carnes
North Carolina Biotechnology Center



Mike Carnes is Vice President of the Emerging Company Development team at NCBiotech. In this role, he leads a team that identifies and evaluates promising early-stage life science companies for NCBC investments. The team also provides business and financing strategy support to portfolio companies to help them raise follow-on investment capital and grow their business in North Carolina.

Mike has over a decade of experience providing business mentorship and training to support emerging life science companies, focusing on raising grant and equity financing. This included his role as Equity Funding Specialist at the NC Small Business and Technology Development Center. Since that time, he has maintained connectivity with the investment community and participates in regional initiatives to enhance availability and access to early-stage investment capital.

Mike earned a Bachelor of Science in Microbiology in 2006, a Professional Science Master's in Microbial Biotechnology in 2012, and a Master's in Business Administration with an emphasis in technology commercialization and entrepreneurship in 2013 from North Carolina State University. Before that time, Mike used his scientific and analytic skills as a bench researcher at Syngenta Biotechnology, Inc. and NCSU's Department of Plant Pathology.

Tracey du Laney
North Carolina Biotechnology Center



Tracey du Laney, Ph.D., is a Senior Director, Science and Technology Development at the North Carolina Biotechnology Center. As Sr. Director, du Laney is responsible for managing and administering the North Carolina Biotechnology Center's research grant funding programs that are designed to advance promising scientific discoveries and technologies developed in N.C. colleges, universities, and non-profit institutions towards commercialization.

Recently, du Laney was named an AAAS Alan I. Leshner Leadership Institute Public Engagement Fellow, with a focus on human augmentation. Dr. du Laney

received her Ph.D. in Biochemical Engineering from Duke University and was a postdoctoral fellow at the University of North Carolina – Chapel Hill. Prior to joining the NC Biotech Center, Dr. du Laney was a partner and co-founder of an independent life sciences consulting firm, specializing in life sciences start-up company formation, entrepreneurship, grant writing, business plan review, investor due diligence, and life sciences markets and competitor analysis.

Sean Eakins

Collaborations Pharmaceuticals



Sean is founder and CEO of [Collaborations Pharmaceuticals, Inc.](#) which is focused on developing and using machine learning and AI approaches for rare and neglected disease drug discovery. Sean graduated from the University of Aberdeen; receiving his M.Sc., Ph.D. in Clinical Pharmacology and D.Sc. in Science. He was a postdoc at Eli Lilly then senior scientist at Pfizer, then served at increasing levels of responsibility in several start-up pharma and software companies (Concurrent, GeneGo, CDD and Phoenix Nest) as well as scientific advisor for several rare disease foundations (PHRF, HNF). He has authored or co-authored >370 peer reviewed papers, book chapters, edited 5 books on different aspects of drug discovery research as well as authored a new book on 'Winning Grants'. His interests include the dual use of AI and coverage of his research has also appeared

in the Economist, Financial Times, Washington Post and appears in a Netflix documentary "Unknown: Killer Robots".

Andrea Giska

SBTDC



Andrea is a seasoned professional with a diverse background spanning academia, startup ventures, and corporate innovation. She excels at navigating the intersection of technology, business, and market dynamics. Currently serving as a Small Business Equity Funding Specialist at the Small Business and Technology Development Center, University of North Carolina – Chapel Hill, she leverages her expertise in technology commercialization, market research, customer development, and fundraising to nurture emerging startups. Andrea's professional journey includes co-founding a hard-tech startup, consulting for startups, spinoffs from research institutions and nonprofits, and serving as an Early-Stage Opportunities Manager (Innovation Manager) at Corning Incorporated. Holding a PhD in Materials Physics from Goethe University in Germany, alongside an MBA from Cornell University, she brings a unique blend of analytical acumen,

entrepreneurial spirit, and cross-disciplinary insight to drive innovation and growth in every endeavor.

Joel Greenberg

Quadridox



Dr. Joel Greenberg is the President, CEO and CTO of Quadridox. As a co-founder of Quadridox, Joel brings an international presence in the scientific and entrepreneurship communities. Dr. Greenberg is an inventor of the technology being commercialized at Quadridox, is the author/editor of the book *X-ray Diffraction Imaging*, holds several patents, and has written over 40 papers on the subject. Joel serves on the board of directors of Scientific Workshops, the CCC Laser Program Advisory Committee, and is a chair of the SPIE Anomaly Detection and Imaging with X-rays (ADIX) conference. Prior to his move to Quadridox, Dr.

Greenberg spent 10 years as a member of the faculty in the Duke University Electrical and Computer Engineering Department and Medical Physics Program. Dr. Greenberg has a B.S.E. in Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering from Princeton University, Ph.D. in Physics from Duke University, and completed the NIH C3i program.

John Hardin

OSTI North Carolina Department of Commerce



John Hardin is the Executive Director of the Office of Science, Technology & Innovation. He was appointed Acting Director in 2008 and Executive Director in 2009. From 2003 to 2008, he served as the office's Deputy Director and Chief Policy Analyst. In his current role he conducts strategic planning and makes recommendations for technology-based economic development, implements technology-related economic development policy and resource allocations, supervises the staff of the N.C. Board of Science, Technology & Innovation, directs and oversees the administration of grant programs to support technology development and commercialization, and oversees strategic initiatives.

From 1998 to 2003, he served as Assistant Vice President for Research and Sponsored Programs in the UNC System Office. From 1998 to 2005, he held an Adjunct Assistant Professor position in the Department of Political Science at UNC-Chapel Hill. From 2006-2018, he was a Visiting Lecturer in the Department of Public Policy at UNC-Chapel Hill, where he taught courses on American politics, public policy, policy analysis, and science policy. A native of Tulsa, Okla., he holds M.A. and Ph.D. degrees in political science from UNC-Chapel Hill, a B.A. in economics from Baylor University, and a certificate of completion for the Leadership Decision Making program, Harvard University, John F. Kennedy School of Government. He and his wife Jane live in Durham and have two adult daughters.

Mireya McKee

UNC – KickStart Venture Services



Dr. McKee is the Director of UNC KickStart Venture Services. She has over 20 years of research, technology transfer, and innovation management experience. She began her career as a researcher, completing a BSc in chemistry from Monterrey Tech, Mexico, and a PhD in biochemistry from the University of Texas-Austin. Afterwards, she carried out postdoctoral research in nanotechnology at Oxford University. She transitioned into business, completing a certification program on the commercialization of scientific research at Oxford's Saïd Business School. She then became a consultant and later a senior consultant in technology transfer for Oxford University Innovation (OUI) in the UK. After that, Dr. McKee started an innovation management consultancy company in the US, providing training and supporting the commercialization of innovative technologies from universities and start-up

companies from around the globe and led business development at Tekcapital Plc., a Miami-based venture capital firm. She has helped institutions design and implement seed funds, set-up accelerator programs, and develop strategies that promote entrepreneurship industry-academia collaboration. Dr. McKee is also a regular mentor for startups based on university research, helping them improve their overall business strategy and pitching for investment. At UNC she supports IP-based startups, helping them improve their overall business strategy, pitching for investment, and connecting them with entrepreneurs and service providers.

Seema Nandi
Selsym Biotech



Seema Nandi is the Co-Founder and Chief Executive Officer of SelSym Biotech, a startup focused on developing synthetic platelet technologies to address unmet needs in bleeding and wound care. She received her bachelor's degree in biomedical engineering from the University of Texas at Austin before coming to the triangle to pursue her doctorate in the Joint Department of Biomedical Engineering at UNC and NC State.

As a founder, she has experienced many sides of the early stages of a life science startup, from her initial role as SelSym's first employee and lead scientist through her current role as CEO. She has raised ~\$4.5 million to date in nondilutive funding for SelSym, including 3 Phase I STTRs from NIH.

Kevin Nicusanti
SBTDC



Based at the University of North Carolina - Chapel Hill, Kevin works with clients on developing funding strategies , investor presentations , creating relationships for founders to funders and generally connecting our clients to the NC entrepreneurial eco-system. Kevin works closely with our non-dilutive funding counselors to identify client funding roadmaps and calendars and prepare founders for eventual fund raising rounds. Kevin had previously been in this role at SBDC in Orange County , CA for three years and relocated here in September 2023. He earned a BA from Dickinson College in Carlisle , Pa and an MBA from Thunderbird Graduate School in Glendale , Arizona. He has been involved as an executive and in marketing/ product development for Fortune 500 companies for over 25 years and also is an

owner/entrepreneur in North Carolina.

Amy Parker
NC State University



As Assistant Director of Research Commercialization Programs, Amy manages NC State's Chancellor's Innovation Fund (CIF) gap funding program to accelerate early-stage research projects. She also manages NC State's National Science Foundation (NSF) I-Corps Program, which supports researchers in developing market assessment and customer discovery skills to increase their chances of commercialization success. Amy is responsible for building and maintaining ORC's collaborative relationships with ecosystem partners, while also supporting NC State's startup pipeline, and she leads the National Academy of Inventors (NAI) Fellows nomination process for NC State, which recognizes the most prolific and

impactful academic inventors.

Amy earned a B.S. in Criminal Justice from East Carolina University and is currently pursuing a Master of Business Administration at NC State. She has been with the Office of Research Commercialization since 2014 in a variety of roles within its operations and new ventures groups.

Ben Redding

NC IDEA



Ben is the Chief Financial Officer at NC IDEA where he oversees the day-to-day management of the Foundation's financial activities. He also manages the NC IDEA ECOSYSTEM grant program, working with partners throughout the state who share in our vision to maximize the economic potential of the people of North Carolina. Prior to NC IDEA, Ben served in CFO or senior Finance roles with several investor-backed firms. Ben received his Juris Doctor, MBA, and BSBA in Finance from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Jessica Reece

NC Biotechnology Center



Jessica Reece (she/her) is the Director of Life Science Intelligence at NC Biotech. Alongside her team of research analysts, she performs indepth searches of scientific and medical literature and gathers competitive intelligence for North Carolina's life science professionals. Jessica's professional passions revolve around supporting and motivating those around her. She joined the team in the fall of 2016 as Technical Services Librarian before transitioning to Research Analyst, Senior Research Analyst, and now Director. She received her Master of Science in library science from UNC-Chapel Hill in May 2016. Her free time is consumed by training and competing as an amateur strongwoman as well as reading and writing spooky things.

Bill Reynolds

Onda Vision Technologies



Dr. William D. Reynolds, Jr. is the Founder of Onda Vision Technologies Inc., a North Carolina State University spin-out company. Onda Vision Technologies develops wearable sensors to monitor those who experience abrupt changes in their hydration levels due to sports, occupation, or medical conditions. Dr. Reynolds has over two decades of experience in R&D divided between the commercial and government sectors. Dr. Reynolds designed, developed, and implemented signal and image processing algorithms that were deployed in defense systems and used as critical components in commercial products. Dr. Reynolds management experience extends over a decade of building and leading high-performing engineering teams. Dr. Reynolds has managed, executed, and delivered on high-risk research projects funded by the U.S. Army Night Vision and Electronic Sensors Directorate (NVESD), the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA), and the National Science Foundation (NSF).

John Rudd
Hutchison Law



John advises life sciences and technology companies in all stages of a company's life cycle. John typically acts as outside general counsel working closely with founders, management teams and boards of directors on company startups and formations, licensing of intellectual property, venture capital financings, commercial transactions, mergers and acquisitions and other strategic transactions. Prior to joining Hutchison, John was an associate in the mergers and acquisitions group of Jones Day's Tokyo office, where he advised public companies and private equity clients on various types of cross-border transactions, including acquisitions, divestitures, licenses, and strategic partnerships.

Connor Steenbock
SBTDC



Connor Steenbock is a Technology Commercialization Counselor at the NC SBTDC, supporting numerous North Carolina small businesses in securing funding, particularly SBIR/STTR grants, and developing commercialization strategies. His background is in the life sciences, with a Bachelors in Microbiology and a Masters in Microbial Biotechnology.

John Ujvari
SBTDC



John Ujvari the director of the Technology Commercialization program at the NC SBTDC and statewide SBIR/STTR Program specialist. Based at the University of North Carolina - Chapel Hill, John works with clients on the effective use of non-dilutive federal funding toward the commercialization of innovative technologies. His work has been recognized at both the state and national levels. As a frequent guest speaker, training program coordinator and business advisor, he has helped to guide clients with innovative technologies through significant fund raising and commercial successes since 2001.

John also founded and continues to lead the SBTDC's Technology Commercialization Graduate Summer Consulting program. This unique program has placed nearly 200 graduate business students from top tier universities with close to 400 early stage, commercialization-driven high tech companies in NC. John earned his MBA degree from Wake Forest University's Babcock Graduate School of Management with a concentration in entrepreneurship and received a BS degree from the University of Virginia.

Ramya Vijapurapu
SBTDC



Ramya Vijapurapu is a Technology Commercialization Counselor who graduated from Master of Microbial Biotechnology (MMB) program at North Carolina State University. Since September 2022, Ramya has been assisting small, innovation-based startups with strategizing and securing non-dilutive funding such as Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR)/Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) grants. Though all areas of biotechnology are well-known, Ramya has specific interest in and knowledge of the agricultural biotechnology industry.