Engineering Research Center
ILO Retreat
Wednesday, June 20, 2012
Our Mission

"To Foster our Nation's Competitiveness in the Global Economy by Promoting our Nation's Innovations"
What is the Innovation Accelerator?

- Private side of a Public-Private Partnership with the National Science Foundation (NSF)

- Initial Focus: Assisting Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) and Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) Grantees *commercialize* their funded technologies
  - Business Strategy
  - Strategic Partnerships
  - Funding Opportunities
The Value of IA

- Understand the Audience
  - SBIR/STTR
  - Technology-driven Start-ups
  - Industry Driven Innovations

- Extensive Network Outside NSF
  - Kauffman Foundation
  - USPTO & Other Federal Agencies
  - Experienced/Serial Entrepreneurs
  - Industry Leaders
ERC Technology Commercialization

Challenge: corporate members are typically not well positioned in the near term to license and commercialize technologies emerging from the ERCs

- Technology is still too nascent / brittle
- Market opportunities are broad and fuzzy
- Little or no proprietary value-added IP
- High risk / ambiguous ROI is a bad formula for immediate financial investment

....Yet ......

Corporate members typically remain intrigued by the possibilities
Core Competencies

Universities Invent

Start-Up/Small Companies Innovate

Corporations Scale
A New Model for ERC Technology Commercialization?

- Educate … ERC students and stakeholders on the key principles and value of entrepreneurship
- Engage … business representatives from corporate members to identify and vet potential market opportunities for the funded technology
- Involve … experienced entrepreneurs to mentor students and otherwise assist in forming start-up companies
  - Partner … with one or more corporate members to further advise on new ventures
  - Funnel … resulting opportunities into the NSF SBIR program
Refactored Materials: A Case Study

- SynBERC
- IA Entrepreneur in Residence acted as Mentor
- Received NSF SBIR Funding
IA Is Well-Positioned to Help

- Apply Lessons Learned from our Phase II Grantee Commercialization Efforts
- Leverage our SBIR Relationships and Know-How
- Utilize our External Network
How IA Can Help

- Interactive Workshops
  - NSF SBIR Case Study Panels
  - “Mini” Sessions on KEY Topics with Outside Experts
- Develop or Adapt an Entrepreneurial Training Curriculum
  - Kauffman FastTrac
  - Peter Keeling Program
- Develop a Web-based Tool Kit for ERC’s
- Develop an Entrepreneurial Mentoring Program
- Identify a “Path to Success” from ERC to Commercialization via NSF
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