



News Release

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Changes in Store for Governor Research Centers

PIERRE, S.D. – South Dakota is taking another step forward in advancing research and technology to enhance economic development. A new South Dakota Research & Innovation Center was recently created to link university-based research and National Science Foundation research priorities. In addition, two new Governor Research Centers, also supported by state funding, will launch this year on the campus of South Dakota School of Mines & Technology.

As current Governor Research Centers move into their final year of state funding, a committee of business, government, and academic leaders has endorsed creation of one larger research and innovation center that aligns with state research initiatives and NSF grant funding priorities. The proposal chosen, from among six submitted, will be under the project direction of Adam Hoppe at South Dakota State University. The new research center will be housed at SDSU, with all state universities collaborating on research activities taking part at this center.

“The work at this center will help partnering South Dakota companies in the development of innovative products and will provide them with the skilled workforce they need to prosper and grow,” said Pat Costello, commissioner of the Governor’s Office of Economic Development. “The partnership between the state, our public universities, and the private sector will result in a strong proposal to the NSF for an additional \$20 million to support the center.”

This new research and innovation center reflects a strong collaboration among researchers from SDSU, South Dakota School of Mines & Technology, and the University of South Dakota, along with private-sector involvement from Sanford Health and Avera Health. The researchers will use advanced imaging techniques and computational analysis to advance the discovery of new plants that are more productive and disease resistant than current varieties. Researchers affiliated with the center will also investigate ways to help heal injuries and maintain human health, using new materials to repair or replace damaged tissues.

“These technologies are expected to expand South Dakota’s economy by supporting existing business and providing an intellectual foundation to establish new biotechnology business,” said Paul Turman, vice president for research and economic development at the South Dakota Board of Regents. Turman said the state plans to commit \$12 million in funds over the next six years to allow for translational research activity at the new center, generated from basic research conducted through NSF’s Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research (EPSCoR).

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The two new Governor Research Centers, each to receive \$2 million in state funding over the next five years, are Advanced Manufacturing Process Technology Transition & Training, under the direction of Christian Widener, and Composite & Nanocomposite Advanced Manufacturing, under the direction of David Salem. Widener and Salem are both on the faculty at SDSM&T, and will collaborate with researchers at other public universities as well.

Turman said these two centers were chosen based on strong industry relations with South Dakota companies such as Raven, Falcon Plastics, and RPM, as well as out-of-state companies such as MOOG, an aircraft component manufacturer in New York. “These research centers have a strong potential for commercialization and positive economic development for the state,” he said.