



News Release

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Four Research Centers to Receive State Funding

PIERRE, S.D. – South Dakota’s Research and Commercialization Council (RCC) has selected four research centers to receive funding through the Governor’s Research Center Program.

At its meeting last month, the RCC chose the following new centers for funding:

- ***South Dakota Center for Biologics Research & Commercialization***, led by Dr. Christopher-Hennings at South Dakota State University, will receive \$3,817,603 over five years to conduct translational research in nutraceuticals, probiotics, vaccines, and diagnostic collaboration with industry partners, who will license and commercialize the technologies developed by the center. The center’s overarching goal is to become a nationally recognized center of excellence in biologics research.
- ***Center for Fluorinated Functional Materials***, led by Dr. Sun at the University of South Dakota, will receive \$2,710,969 over five years to build a self-sustaining discovery-based research center to commercialize fluorinated functional materials in the sectors of materials and advanced manufacturing, energy and environment, and human health and nutrition.
- ***Center for Genetics & Behavioral Health***, led by Dr. Forster at the University of South Dakota, in collaboration with the Avera Institute for Human Genetics, will receive \$3,466,300 over five years to study genetic and environmental influences that interact with other biological, psychological, and behavioral factors to impact post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). The center aims to place South Dakota at the forefront of personalized treatment of trauma-related illness to significantly reduce the substantial health, financial, and personal burden of PTSD and associated disorders.
- ***Composite and Nanocomposite Advanced Manufacturing – Biomaterials Center***, led by Dr. Salem at the South Dakota School of Mines & Technology, will receive \$1,806,427 over five years to develop low-cost biopolymers from renewable sources and develop commercially-viable processes for the transformation of these materials into valuable polymers and high performance bio-composites and bio-nanocomposites.

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“The goal of the Governor’s Research Center Program is threefold: to develop focused research centers that are competitive for external research funding; to develop and license inventions; and to support existing and spin off start-up companies in South Dakota,” said Nathan Lukkes, assistant vice president for research and economic development at the South Dakota Board of Regents.

“Since its inception in 2005, the state’s investment in this program has generated more than \$249 million in additional extramural research funding, in excess of 150 invention disclosures, and provided research opportunities for over 940 students,” Lukkes said. “Additionally, the program has spun out or attracted more than 20 startup companies, which currently employ over 185 people in SD, and include such companies as Alumend, SBS CyberSecurity, and VRC Metal Systems, to name a few.”

The RCC, which is comprised of five public members appointed by the Governor and four members serving by virtue of their position, is charged with oversight and selection of the research centers. The Governor’s Office of Economic Development and the Board of Regents jointly administer the Governor’s Research Center Program.