BRIDGETOWN – HOW UNIVERSITIES CAN CONNECT INNOVATORS TO INCUMBENTS

Presented at the University President’s RoundTable at the Pacific Northwest Economic Region Annual Summit In Portland, OR.

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THE R&D AND START-UP COMMUNITY SPEAK OF THE “TECHNOLOGY VALLEY OF DEATH” TO DESCRIBE THE DIFFICULTY OF COMMERCIALIZATION OF NEW TECHNOLOGY.

“Technology Valley of Death”
A term of art in venture capital referring the time for a startup’s initial capital contribution to revenue generation.

Four in five technologies fail to cross the valley of death.
WE HAVE CLASSIFIED ECONOMIC PLAYERS IN FOUR CATEGORIES BASED ON THEIR LIKELIHOOD TO INNOVATE.

Note: Notional graph based on an aggregation of technology transfer and adoption studies including:
- Sandia National Labs
- UC Davis Center for Entrepreneurship
- National Research Council
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We need a Bridge to help startup innovation get tested and implemented in the economy.
THE BRIDGE – UNIVERSITIES CAN SERVE AS AN ECONOMIC/R&D ANCHOR FOR A COMMUNITY TO HELP INNOVATORS CONVENE AND CREATE.

Startup Needs:
Software is easy for entrepreneurs – all infrastructure can be virtual.

Other industries are harder:
• Life Sciences startups need wet lab space
• AEC startups need heavy equipment storage and warehouse space
• Hardware startups need rapid prototyping and fabrication labs

Cross Industry Collaboration
• IT is good at developing DevTech tools – they are not as good a linking with other industries.
• Investors like to address low-hanging fruit – inefficient market segments that have a low barrier to entry and require limited infrastructure

How do we get beyond e-market places?

Corporate/Investor Involvement
Upfront investments
• Capstones
• Collaborative Research
• Teaming on contracts/grants
• Core investment in the Startup Community

Downstream Investment
• Seed and Angel investment
• Technology evaluation partnerships