



RETHINKING CLUSTER INITIATIVES

CASE STUDY

CENTRAL INDIANA

**CENTRAL INDIANA
CORPORATE PARTNERSHIP**

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HIGHLIGHTS

GEOGRAPHY

The Central Indiana Corporate Partnership (CICP) is located in the state of Indiana (population 6.7 million people), and is headquartered in the Indianapolis region (population 2 million people).

CLUSTER TYPE

CICP defines clusters based on linkages between industries but also their joint reliance on technologies and talent; clusters include life sciences, technology, advanced manufacturing/logistics, agbiosciences, and energy technology.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

CICP has developed six talent and industry sector initiatives that focus on a combination of interventions, including talent development; technology development; capital provision; district/infrastructure development; and research, information provision, and education. CICP operates as a CEO-led holding company that houses six distinct initiatives, which each have their own mission, board, resources, and partnership networks. CICP operates as a (c)(3) and (c)(6) organization, with some for-profit organizational structures within the CICP umbrella.

RESOURCES AND KEY ASSETS

Key organizational resources include a prestigious board of 65 members, all executives at companies, educational institutions, and philanthropies; unique levels of catalytic funding from Lilly Endowment Inc.; and a highly competent staff that have launched transformative initiatives that attract significant resources and attention from the private sector (e.g., 16 Tech innovation district, Indiana Biosciences Research Institute, etc.).

BACKGROUND

At the turn of the 21st century, Indiana found itself in a moment of transition. Economically, the state had relied upon agriculture in the 19th century and manufacturing in the 20th century to supply large numbers of good-paying jobs, drawing on a combination of plentiful land, a strong labor pool, and the ingenuity of entrepreneurs, such as James Allison, Clessie Cummins, and Eli Lilly. It was clear that agriculture and manufacturing would remain important sources of jobs (although at a smaller base), exports, and economic growth, but maintaining their competitiveness would require the adoption of new technologies. In addition to building on these historic strengths, it was clear that Indiana would need to develop new specializations. Life sciences represented the state's clearest bridge from the 20th to the 21st century, but how would Indiana be positioned to take advantage of emerging platforms such as information technology?

In other words, the state and region's foothold in the modern economy was far from certain. In their book *The New Localism*, Bruce Katz and Jeremy Nowak write that Indianapolis in the 1970s was "flat on its back, weakened by deindustrialization and excessive suburbanization." In a case study of Central Indiana's market evolution, Katz and Nowak note that the initial market momentum in the region came through a series of signature investments to become the "Amateur Sports Capital of the World," including successfully building the Hoosier Dome in the 1980s and attracting the NCAA's headquarters in the 1990s.

These major civic wins focused the region's business and political leadership on the necessary next step: a fundamental transformation of the region's economy towards innovation-based economic growth. Drawing on the recommendations of a task force put together by Clay Robbins, the chairman, president and CEO of the Lilly Endowment Inc.—one of the nation's largest philanthropic foundations, separate from the pharmaceutical giant Eli Lilly and Company, but organized by members of the Lilly family in the 1930s—and local business leaders Larry O'Connor and Sallie Rowland, Central Indiana's corporate leaders recommended forming an invitation-only CEO group to guide the region's economic development. The Central Indiana Corporate Partnership (CICP) was founded in 1999 "to transform the economy of Indiana in order to create a more sustainable prosperity and quality of life for our citizens and future generations."

As CICP President and CEO David Johnson recalls, the organization's original intent was to be an extremely rigorous advisor and advocate, drawing on the best thinking in the private, philanthropic, and university sectors to inform investments and strategies led by policymakers at the local and state level. Very quickly, however, CICP realized that transformative initiatives would require a combination of private and philanthropic investment along with support from the public sector. Organizations outside of government had to become active participants and investors, in addition to advisors. The question was what investments the region should prioritize to solidify its economic future.

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The process of identifying and prioritizing economic opportunities in the Central Indiana economy has evolved over time, but three core elements define CICP's process: an appreciation for rigorous research and data; a deep commitment to delivering value for its members, and therefore local industries; and an operational ethos that values continuous improvement, meaning a collective acknowledgement that the region's innovation and industrial strengths could be improved by bringing together institutions and firms with a shared interest in the competitiveness of key industry clusters.

In 2000, CICP obtained some funding from the Lilly Endowment to commission a report from the Battelle Technology Partnership Practice on the region's economy. That report argued that the competitiveness of two legacy industry clusters (advanced manufacturing and life sciences) and one emerging cluster (information technology) would determine the future of Central Indiana's economic prosperity.

The Battelle report provided a roadmap that could galvanize leadership around a shared set of facts, but it required an incredible breadth of organizations to act in service of its findings. CICP became the much-needed organization to help coordinate the actions of employers, philanthropies, and universities that together could push transformative economic change.

Rather than an organization devoted to a single cluster initiative, CICP has proven over the past two decades to be the rare organization that can seed several high-capacity industry interventions that address the weaknesses and build on the strengths of Central Indiana's regional economy. As of 2018, CICP housed six initiatives related to life sciences (BioCrossroads, 2003), technology (TechPoint, 2006), advanced manufacturing and logistics (Conexus Indiana,

2007), energy technology (Energy Systems Network, 2009), agbiosciences (AgriNovus Indiana, 2015), and talent development (Ascend Indiana, 2015). Several individual project efforts complement these six pillar initiatives, such as the Indiana Biosciences Research Institute, 16 Tech innovation district, and Indiana Innovation Institute.

CICP's mandate is to identify and prioritize pressing issues and then channel resources from the business, university, and philanthropic communities toward solutions. The organization is business- and civic-led, but there is intentional engagement with the public sector, given government's ability to scale through policy and regulatory change. Every initiative the organization supports is vetted by its 65-member board of directors, whose support typically requires rigorous, independent research that identifies opportunities and challenges within a key industry cluster (or group of clusters) and offers a plan to address them. However, it would be simplistic to characterize the CICP process as a rote series of research reports followed by strategic implementation. Three CICP initiatives reveal the diversity of approaches through which the organization identifies and prioritizes interventions.

BioCrossroads is CICP's longest running and arguably most impactful cluster initiative and provides one example of the organization's identification, decisionmaking, and strategic implementation process.

The identification and prioritization of the life sciences cluster resulted partly from the 2000 Battelle report mentioned above and partly from broader civic dynamics. That report used various metrics—employment concentrations, productivity levels, and the share of the regional economy accounted for by life sciences—to argue for life sciences as a pillar cluster, one that had

an enormous impact throughout the region and state. Yet, while boasting Eli Lilly and Co., Roche Diagnostics, the Cook Group, Corteva Agriscience, Agriculture Division of DowDuPont, Zimmer, Biomet, Anthem, and the Indiana University School of Medicine, the report also identified untapped potential.

Specifically, it cited four key areas: strengthening the sector's brand, ensuring the talent supply was sufficient, linking university and business leaders through shared opportunities, and building a local market of startups and scale-ups that can access growth capital.

In response, Indiana University, Purdue University, Eli Lilly and Co., the Indiana Health Industry Forum, and the Indianapolis mayor's office, with support from the Lilly Endowment, established BioCrossroads to address these imperatives. Anne Shane, a long-standing civic leader in Indianapolis who was integral to the founding of BioCrossroads, recalls a convergence of political and institutional factors that led to BioCrossroads' creation: a new mayor interested in economic development, the recognition among university leaders and scientists that they were being held accountable for the commercialization of their research (partly due to changes in National Institute of Health requirements), and the interest on the part of younger faculty members to engage in industry-relevant research.

AgriNovus Indiana, CICIP's cluster initiative devoted to food and agricultural innovation (the "agbiosciences"), emerged in 2014. Ongoing research by BioCrossroads on the life sciences cluster had revealed the convergence of Indiana's legacy advantages in agriculture and life sciences and a notable opportunity to recognize and build upon a specialization in agricultural technology and innovation. Key employers that were already members of BioCrossroads, like Corteva Agriscience, Agriculture Division of DowDuPont, very clearly

saw the link between agricultural sciences, human health, and life sciences.

The work to prioritize the cluster began with David Johnson asking Beth Bechdol to conduct an initial exploration to determine whether a cluster initiative made sense. Bechdol had grown up on a farm, worked in agribusiness, spent time in Washington, D.C. working on agriculture policy, and then served as the deputy director of the Indiana State Department of Agriculture. She had a deep knowledge of the industry and strong professional networks within the agribusiness community, two elements that made conducting dozens of interviews with firms and researchers across the state a doable and valuable exercise. Along with her review, CICIP received funding for a report from the Lilly Endowment to hire Battelle to examine industry trends and state advantages and conduct a landscape analysis of key stakeholders, from large firms (e.g., Corteva Agriscience, Agriculture Division of DowDuPont) to universities (e.g., Purdue University) to smaller and mid-sized companies (e.g., Whiteshire-Hamroc).

What emerged from the quantitative inquiry and interviews was that Indiana indeed had notable strengths in not only agricultural production, but also agriculture-related research and development and science, as measured by local patents, research publications, and university scientific discovery. Bechdol took the white paper she had produced and translated it into a business plan that resulted initially in the Indiana Food and Agriculture Innovation Initiative. That organization eventually evolved into AgriNovus Indiana, a cluster initiative that focuses on promoting the agbioscience sector's assets, building talent pipelines, and supporting the formation of new, innovative companies. Those interventions are outlined in more detail in the next section.

Ascend Indiana, CICIP's workforce development initiative, represents a third type of origin story.

Rather than focus on an individual cluster, Ascend sits as a supportive “horizontal” initiative across CICP’s cluster verticals. Its formation resulted partly from conversations amongst CEOs at CICP board meetings. A common refrain among executives was that their businesses were struggling to find qualified workers in a competitive environment and that employers could grow more rapidly if we could fill our open positions and reduce turnover.

Meanwhile, then Indianapolis Deputy Mayor for Education Jason Kloth met with David Johnson to discuss what to do after Mayor Greg Ballard’s term ended. During that conversation, Kloth summarized his conclusions from his time with the city about the state of Central Indiana’s workforce, noting the frustrating dual reality of

many Hoosiers struggling economically, even as firms sought to make job-creating investments in the city. Specifically, he recalled a firm that wanted to invest in Indianapolis and create 400 jobs, but with very particular knowledge and skills requirements. Yet, there was no “turnkey mechanism” to deliver on talent requests from employers. Similar to AgriNovus Indiana, Johnson asked Kloth to put together a white paper to go deeper on his perspective. Using detailed labor market analysis, the white paper confirmed the feedback from private sector leaders: Labor market supply and demand suffered from misalignment in key areas of the Central Indiana economy. Armed with that information, Kloth raised nearly \$1 million dollars to found Ascend Indiana and form a CEO-level steering committee.



ICP's development of cluster initiatives required not only cluster identification, but also a clear set of identifiable trends, opportunities, or challenges to be addressed by strategy. Once again, rigorous research and intelligence gathering from public, private, and civic stakeholders were critical to identifying these steps, which did not necessarily occur separately from the prioritization of the clusters.

BioCrossroads: At the core of BioCrossroads' efforts to identify opportunities for intervention within the life sciences cluster is what David Johnson calls the "innovation-addition problem" of developing not only effective clusters of existing industry and research assets, but then also driving these clustered institutions further to push innovative startups on the landscape. Research from Battelle revealed that Indiana's success in life sciences required seeding new companies that could commercialize new discoveries, in addition to the stable of very large companies that Indianapolis already had. The challenge, as Johnson notes, is that "innovation is typically expensive, risky by definition, and requires sustained investments over many years (and often, substantial good luck)." More specifically, this meant efforts to "shoulder the risks of the 'innovation-addition problem'" by:

- ▶ **Investing** in startups and scale-ups through its for-profit BC Initiative, which houses three seed funds for biotechnology and medical technology growth companies. Anne Shane commented that capital provision was critical in setting BioCrossroads apart from previous attempts to support life sciences that could not draw on a large base of resources: "Money on the table makes it real."
- ▶ **Connecting** life sciences companies and research universities to pursue applied research together through the Indiana

Biosciences Research Institute (IBRI). The establishment of IBRI is one of BioCrossroads' most significant accomplishments. In 2011, Battelle conducted yet another study examining the state's scientific and innovation strengths and weaknesses within life sciences, this time being able to draw on much more granular data measuring scientific publications and patents (data that was not available during the 2000 study). Armed with new data, BioCrossroads brought together industry leaders, university scientists, and institutions in the ecosystem to discuss shared research needs. What they learned was that many of these organizations had similar research interests but were not leveraging one another, and that much of the research and development conducted by major life sciences companies was going to researchers outside the state.

IBRI was a response to "localize more of that R&D spend" by recruiting leading researchers to Indianapolis to work in close proximity with companies in the life sciences cluster. BioCrossroads—in tandem with the R&D departments of major companies and the leading labs at the state's universities—identified shared interests in metabolic disorders, nutrition, and obesity. Importantly, the research needs under these areas were noncompetitive, meaning that the cluster's firms had incentives to jointly fund these ideas. Johnson calls IBRI the "ultimate intermediary," meaning that it situates cleanly within the shared objectives of academic and industry players.

Given this position, IBRI preferred to be located in a physical space surrounded by labs and startups interested in technological development and research collaboration. As IBRI was under development, so was an idea called 16 Tech that would develop

an innovation district in the urban core, surrounded by Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI) and IU Health and very close to Eli Lilly and Co. and Cook Regentec, to anchor the region's advanced industries. 16 Tech's development, which is now underway, was solidified by IBRI's decision to serve as its first anchor tenant. This required generous support from the city of Indianapolis, including \$75 million in bonds to support the public infrastructure needed to support the district.

- ▶ **Educating** industry leaders, potential investors, and the public through white papers, trend reports, and partnerships with higher education institutions to train Hoosiers in the STEM fields. While not as flashy, this function remains very important for BioCrossroads. It is seen as both a knowledge resource for the public and non-experts—to galvanize support for investments in the cluster—but also providing research and expertise for executives within the life sciences industry.

AgriNovus: The opportunities in the agbiosciences—defined as the field where food, agriculture, science, and technology converge—also arose from the detailed industry study by Battelle. The overall takeaway of that study was that the agriculture sector in Indiana had the potential for significantly more innovation and greater statewide impact. That research effort involved interviews to determine the primary needs and interests of key stakeholders in the cluster, from which AgriNovus and Battelle identified four key areas: greater collaboration between firms and public/educational institutions, more early stage technology commercialization, general sectoral promotion and support, and the development of new capabilities in big data analytics for food and health. AgriNovus has since implemented around three key functions:

- ▶ **Public Education and Awareness:** When forming the initial set of priorities for

AgriNovus, advancing public understanding of the agbiosciences sector and showcasing the competitive assets and strengths of the state stood out as a clear desire among stakeholders. AgriNovus is working to build awareness of the industry's ingenuity and value through the branding and advancement of Indiana's agbiosciences innovation. Specifically, this is being accomplished through the social media campaign of #timetotell which highlights the state's companies, universities, and business landscape in addition to the hosting of new industry events.

- ▶ **Talent Development:** AgriNovus' Do What Matters talent initiative targets, informs, and engages with individuals on the career and professional opportunities in the agbiosciences. This includes promoting jobs in agbiosciences through an extensive career awareness program, an industry-relevant certificate program, and an agbiosciences fellows program to attract more young people to the field.

- ▶ **Entrepreneurship:** In order to cultivate an agbiosciences entrepreneurial ecosystem, AgriNovus is focused on fostering food and agriculture business growth by directing businesses to growth capital opportunities, mentors, and potential partners, in coordination with other entrepreneurship organizations.

Ascend Indiana: To address the commonly held notion that businesses were struggling to find the talent they need, Ascend's leadership assembled research to make the case for a new commitment to talent development. This involved a rigorous review of the workforce landscape and reports from leading education and labor market scholars and think tanks. It also involved a deep review of labor market trends using data from EMSI, Burning Glass, and Monster in addition to a review of educational institutions. From that research, Ascend projected that by 2025, 60 percent of jobs in



Central Indiana will require a postsecondary education or credential, but that only 41 percent of workers would have those skill levels. This resulted from 1) too few students enrolling in higher education, 2) too few students concentrating in high-demand fields, 3) too few students completing postsecondary credentials, and 4) too few students finding a job and staying in Indiana. Within Central Indiana, that meant about 215,000 adults would need to obtain a postsecondary credential to meet labor market demands.

Ascend's solutions built from these findings, but also from a review of the existing regional economic and workforce development infrastructure in Central Indiana. Many organizations were already working on issues of talent development and labor market alignment,

but CICP identified a niche for Ascend to work with individual employers and education providers to align the supply of talent with jobs demanded from employers. Specifically, Ascend seeks to:

- ▶ **Engage employers** to understand their needs and the skills and abilities needed to fill positions by working with real-time labor market data and feedback from human resources departments,
- ▶ **Identify and connect talent** by working with universities and colleges to support career services offices in the job search process,
- ▶ **Build talent pipelines** by recruiting and launching training programs that lead to relevant postsecondary credentials, and
- ▶ **Provide research and thought leadership** to inform public policy.

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CICP: The Central Indiana Corporate Partnership operates under the following organizational structure. CICP itself is a 501(c)(6) business league entity led by David Johnson, who also leads BioCrossroads. The CICP Foundation is a 501(c)(3) public charity that supports the charitable and educational programs of CICP. Finally, CICP has ownership stakes in four for-profit C corporations housed within their various cluster initiatives.

CICP funds its operations through membership dues, which supports 13 staff members and one consultant. Those staff support the umbrella organization. Across all initiatives, the staff increases to 73 individuals, including consultants. CICP's leadership consists of 65 board members 55 corporate CEOs, three philanthropic leaders, and seven university presidents. The board meets three times per year, nominates and elects new members from time to time, and maintains fiduciary responsibility for CICP, CICP Foundation, and talent and sector initiatives. Within the board, there is a seven-member executive committee, elected by the 65-member board. The executive committee meets four times per year. In its review of CICP, Katz and Nowak's *The New Localism* stresses the importance of CICP's board: "CEOs are not only pulled together to discuss, they convene to decide." This structure has allowed the institution to maintain rigor, exclusivity, and nonpartisanship.

BioCrossroads: BioCrossroads is one of CICP's most comprehensive cluster initiatives. It employs seven staff and has 21 board members representing business, philanthropy, and academia. The board meets three times per year. The organization's funding comes from philanthropic sources, such as the Lilly Endowment and the Richard M. Fairbanks Foundation, and through capital investments from corporations and other institutional

investors supporting its for-profit and seed funding programs. Since its founding, BioCrossroads has seeded nearly a dozen separate sub-initiatives. Most of these are not-for-profit efforts focused on research, education, and collaboration. However, the BC Initiative includes three for-profit seed funds focused on early-stage biotechnology, pharmaceutical, medical device, diagnostics, agbiotech and health information technology products. A seven-member investment committee manages each of those seed funds. BioCrossroads has also organized two venture capital funds totaling \$131 million. AlInvest Partners, one the largest private equity companies in the world, manages both funds.

AgriNovus: AgriNovus employs five employees and has 20 board members that meet quarterly, with representation from public, private, civic, and academic institutions. The Lilly Endowment provided AgriNovus with a \$4.2 million grant to fund its operations, which included a \$500,000 investor match.

Ascend Indiana: One of CICP's newest initiatives, Ascend is also its largest. With a budget of \$9 million, led by a \$5 million grant from the Lilly Endowment and \$1 million in funding from employers, Ascend employs about 40 people, including interns, and is led by a 33-member board of directors. Like BioCrossroads, Ascend operates a mix of nonprofit (Ascend Network) and for-profit (Ascend Services) efforts. The Ascend Network is a system that Ascend has built to prequalify early-in-career candidates (college students and graduates early in their careers) and match them to the right employers using an intuitive software interface, combined with human interaction. Ascend Services works with employers for eight to 14 months to build customized talent pipelines.

CICP remains one of the most impactful business and civic leadership groups in the nation. Katz and Nowak called CICP a nationwide best practice “for its collaborations within sectors, technological innovations and investment in the workforce of the future—launched into the global sphere through civic efforts and strong local leadership.”

When asked what makes CICP unique, David Johnson responds with two characteristics. First, the board: CICP has been able to assemble the chief executives of the state’s most important, well-endowed companies and education and research institutions. CICP’s process reflects the rigor of corporate decisionmaking, and its board’s willingness to commit resources ensures that whatever decisions the process yields have a good chance at successful implementation. Both elements give CICP distinct levels of credibility within the region and state.

The second characteristic is the organization’s staff. Johnson described them as “75 to 80 incredibly smart, analytical, and driven people that have the capabilities to move a research report into action.” Leaders of the individual initiatives bring deep industry expertise and success in the private sector, but also often have picked up an understanding of public sector dynamics through a stint in government. Attracting strong initiative leads also stems from the respect that Johnson has within the state and nationally within the life sciences space. At the staff level, CICP attracts project-driven, outcome-oriented individuals with many of the same skills and attributes as management consultants. The competence and professionalism of the staff, coupled with the intellect and gravitas of the organization’s leadership, provides an environment that matches the exceedingly high expectations of the high-level CEOs and university presidents on its board.

In a positive feedback loop at the heart of strong institutions, smart, hardworking individuals are drawn to one another—the board’s ability to support and implement initiatives attracts mission-oriented staff looking to strengthen the Indiana economy. In turn, the competence of the staff ensures value to the board, solidifying their interest and resources. This dynamic has allowed CICP to implement and demonstrate progress consistently across multiple cluster initiatives. The three initiatives profiled here are at various stages of implementation, based on the length of their existence and their size.

BioCrossroads: The impact of BioCrossroads has been striking, especially in regards to research and development, growth capital, and industry intelligence gathering. On the former, BioCrossroads helped form the Indiana Biosciences Research Institute (IBRI) in 2012, which has received \$150 million (including nearly \$80 million from the Lilly Endowment) in an effort to attract star scientists to Indianapolis to conduct industry-sponsored life sciences research. While IBRI is no longer housed within BioCrossroads, the organization was instrumental in establishing the institute, which has since received support from the state of Indiana and involves major private and educational partners, such as Eli Lilly and Co., Roche Diagnostics, Corteva Agriscience, Agriculture Division of DowDuPont, Cook Medical, Indiana University School of Medicine, and Indiana University Health, one of the state’s largest hospital and health systems.

In regards to capital access, BioCrossroads has launched and managed three for-profit seed funds, the first two of which have together dispensed \$12 million in seed capital to 26 Indiana-based startup companies. A third seed fund of \$9 million is beginning active investments in 2018. In addition, two BioCrossroads-sponsored venture capital funds

have dispensed more than \$131 million in capital since 2003. Taken together, these BioCrossroads seed and early-stage investment vehicles have made investments that have in turn attracted an additional \$450 million for the development of more than 40 Indiana companies, three of which have gone public. An additional portfolio company has been acquired for nearly \$1 billion by Eli Lilly and Co. to support a new product line. Finally, BioCrossroads continues to be the authoritative data source and information engine for the state's life sciences sector. In 2017, BioCrossroads launched www.biospeakindiana.com, a hub for Indiana life sciences company and research news and event announcements.

AgriNovus: AgriNovus' implementation strategy includes promotion, convening, career awareness, and entrepreneurship support. In 2017, the organization focused on telling the story of its cluster via a #timetotell campaign that explains how agbiosciences operates at the intersection of agriculture, life sciences, and science and technology. Major CEOs and Governor Eric Holcomb participated in a short video communicating their commitment to agbiosciences. AgriNovus also hosted several promotional summits and showcases. The Indiana Agbiosciences Innovation Summit brought together 350 industry, policy, academic, and scientific leaders to discuss the latest



sector trends. AgriNovus also hosted its second startup showcase, which attracted over 200 attendees. The organization is now moving toward promoting careers in agbiosciences through an extensive career awareness program, an industry relevant certificate program, and an agbiosciences fellows program to attract more students to the field. Finally, AgriNovus collaborates with organizations like The Foundry at Purdue University to provide entrepreneurial support to young companies and introduce them to business and investment groups.

Ascend Indiana: Since its October 2016 launch, Ascend has implemented interventions in three areas. First, through Ascend Network, it seeks to profile and connect employers and candidates through an algorithm-driven online platform. The platform breaks jobs into character traits and then seeks to match them to early-in-career candidates based on information gathered about candidates' skills and interests. The platform was a highly technical undertaking, which required support from software developers and user experience and user interface consultants. CICP's deep ties to the local business community proved integral in obtaining the technical expertise to launch the platform. A local venture capital investor and entrepreneur, Mark Hill, serves as the Ascend board chair, and another board member, Mike Reynolds, runs a digital product development and user experience firm that was integral in helping create the platform. The Network is still in its pilot phase, which will continue through 2018, but it has

already recruited 62 employers and 14 higher education institutions. Pilot employer partners include Roche Diagnostics, OneAmerica, Ontario Systems, Cook Medical, and the United Way of Central Indiana. Pilot education partners include Butler University, Indiana University, Purdue University, and Ivy Tech Community College.

Second, through Ascend Services, Ascend provides tailored consulting services to help employers develop talent pipeline solutions. Essentially, Ascend Services acts as an intermediary between employers and higher educational institutions. It enters into contractual agreements to deliver customized talent pipelines for individual companies and then works with higher education institutions to educate and connect younger workers. Ascend has either completed, or is in the process of completing, talent pipeline strategies with the Community Health Network's Nursing Academy and Behavioral Health Academy, Roche Diagnostics, and College for America. As an example, the Roche partnership will work with the University of Indianapolis to build a pipeline of "early-in-career biomedical equipment technicians with the potential to produce 25-30 work-ready hires per year."

Third, Ascend is providing a thought leadership, research, and public policy function within Indiana. The organization partners with national research organizations to conduct research on the regional and state labor market and seeks to inform broader public policy debates about education and workforce development.

CONCLUSION

CICP's strategic approach offers several conclusions for public, private, and civic leaders stewarding their economies in other markets. First, CICP is the rare organization that is not devoted to a single issue or cluster, but rather has developed the reputation and abilities to seed several well-respected initiatives over time. It has become a durable institution because it values professional and technical guidance, continuous assessment and learning, and rapid adaptation, if necessary.

Second, to build and steward this type of institution requires a significant amount of staff expertise and strong leadership. CICP has been selective and strategic about who it puts in positions of leadership. At the initiative level, they have been able to find systems entrepreneurs that have significant subject matter expertise and the personal presence to connect with C-suite executives. At the staff level, CICP has been able to attract, partly due to its strong leadership, a crop of young, motivated, outcome-oriented individuals to implement its activities. CICP's boards—those of both the overall organization and the individual initiatives—are the final piece of the leadership triangle. They have assembled individuals who run organizations that can move major

resources in service of shared goals and, in the process, cement CICP's reputation as a table where big things can be accomplished, which further attracts and solidifies board buy-in.

Third, CICP has been able to garner significant resources to do its work. It is hard to understate the importance of the Lilly Endowment in this regard, as the philanthropy has provided the seed funding necessary to get CICP and most of its initiatives off the ground. The critical role of philanthropies should not mask that a majority of resources come from the business community. This is because CICP constructs strategies a) to appeal to bottom-line interests such as research, technology commercialization, and talent development; b) in ways that yield collaboration within industries, rather than competition; and c) at the front end, in conjunction with the very same businesses and higher education institutions from which it needs to establish buy-in to implement. All of this demands the requisite technical expertise to engage in conversations with businesses about the frontier of their R&D operations or the challenges in worker training and development. In this way, CICP's talent base and resource base—like many strong institutions—are intimately connected and mutually reinforcing.



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