AWARDS OF EXCELLENCE IN INNOVATION

The AURP Awards of Excellence in Innovation honor exceptional research parks, innovation districts, their visionary leaders, and the groundbreaking companies driving technological advancements. Each year, we recognize those who contribute to fostering innovation, developing tomorrow's workforce, and addressing global challenges, celebrating their achievements in building thriving R&D communities.

Distinguished Community of Innovation of the Year

2026 Purdue Research Park, West Lafayette, Indiana
2025 Iowa State University Research Park, Ames, Iowa
2024 Tech Port San Antonio, San Antonio, Texas
2023 Nebraska Innovation Campus, Lincoln, Nebraska
2022 University of South Florida Research Park, Tampa, Florida
2021 Oklahoma City Innovation District, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma
2020 University of Utah Research Park, Salt Lake City Utah
2018 Genopole, Évry, France
2017 University of Maryland BioPark, Baltimore, Maryland
2016 Western Research Parks, London, Ontario Canada
2015 University of Maryland Research Park, College Park, Maryland
2014 Technology Square - Georgia Institute of Technology, Atlanta, Georgia
2013 University of Oklahoma University Research Campus, Norman, Oklahoma
2012 Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus, Buffalo, New York
2011 Research Park at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Champaign, Illinois
2010 Virginia Tech Corporate Research Center, Blacksburg, Virginia
2009 Innovation Place, Saskatchewan, Canada
2008 Sandia Science & Technology Park, Albuquerque, New Mexico
2007 Centennial Campus at North Carolina State University, Raleigh, North Carolina
2006 The University City Science Center, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
2005 Delaware Technology Park Inc., Newark, Delaware
2004 Purdue Research Park, West Lafayette, Indiana
2003 The University of New Orleans Research & Technology Park, New Orleans, Louisiana
2002 Discovery Parks, Vancouver, British Columbia
2001 University of Arizona Science and Technology Park, Tucson, Arizona
2000 Rensselaer Technology Park, Troy, New York
1999 Research Triangle Foundation of North Carolina, Research Triangle Park, North Carolina
1998 Massachusetts Biotechnology Research Park, Worcester, Massachusetts
1997 Cummings Research Park, Huntsville, Alabama
1996 University Research Park, University of Wisconsin-Madison, Madison, Wisconsin

Emerging Community of Innovation

2026 The Peninsula Innovation District, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, Tennessee
2025 Aggie Square at University of California, Davis, Davis, California
2023 Wichita State University Innovation Campus, Wichita, Kansas
2021 Van Camp Incubator, Michigan State University Foundation, East Lansing, Michigan
2019 Capital City Innovation, Austin, Texas
2018 Lehigh University Mountaintop Campus, Bethlehem, Pennsylvania
2017 Nebraska Innovation Campus, Lincoln, Nebraska
2016 University of Wollongong Innovation Campus, Wollongong, Australia
2015 McMaster University Innovation Park, Hamilton, Ontario, Canada
2014 University Technology Park at Illinois Institute of Technology, Chicago, Illinois
2013 Louisiana State University Innovation Park, Baton Rouge, Louisiana

Continued – Emerging Community of Innovation

2012 King Abdullah University of Science and Technology (KAUST) Science Town, Thuwal, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
2011 The City of Agrifood, Veterinary and Agroenvironment Biotechnology in Saint-Hyacinthe, Quebec, Canada
2010 Science + Technology Park at Johns Hopkins and New Eastside Community, Baltimore, Maryland
2009 Clemson University International Center for Automotive Research (CU-ICAR), Greenville, South Carolina
2008 University of South Florida Research Park, Tampa Bay, Florida
2007 University of Maryland, Baltimore, BioPark, Baltimore, Maryland

Career Achievement

2025 Ken Marcus, Executive Vice President & CFO, Tech Parks Arizona, Tucson, Arizona
2024 Dan Berglund, President & CEO, State Science and Technology Institute, Columbus, Ohio
2023 Jane Shaab, Executive Director, UM BioPark; Associate VP, Economic Development, University of Maryland, Baltimore, Maryland
2022 Dan Duncan, Executive Director, Nebraska Innovation Campus, Lincoln, Nebraska
2019 Scott Levitan, CEO and President, Research Triangle Park Foundation, Research Triangle Park, North Carolina
2018 Charles D'Agostino, Executive Director, LSU Innovation Park and Louisiana Business and Technology Center
2018 Ilse Treurnicht, PhD, CEO, MaRS Discovery District, Toronto, Canada
2018 Thomas Hall, III, Vice Chairman of the Board of Directors, The University Financing Foundation, Atlanta, Georgia
2017 Brian Darmody, Associate VP, Corporate & Foundation Relations, University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland
2016 David Baker, Vice President of External Affairs, Illinois Institute of Technology, Chicago, Illinois
2015 Greg Hyer, University Research Park, University of Wisconsin-Madison, Madison, Wisconsin
2014 Joe Meredith, PhD, Virginia Tech Corporate Research Center, Blacksburg, Virginia
2013 Gregory W. Deason, Purdue Research Park, West Lafayette, Indiana
2012 Austin Beggs, Innovation Place, Saskatoon, Sask., Canada
2011 Nancy E. Kossan, PhD, University of California, San Diego Science Research Park, San Diego, California
2010 Jackie Kerby Moore, Sandia Science & Technology Park, Albuquerque, New Mexico
2009 J. Michael Bowman, Delaware Technology Park, Newark, Delaware
2008 Norma Grace, Executive Director, New Orleans Research & Technology Park
2007 Bruce Wright, University of Arizona Science and Tech Park, Tucson, Arizona
2006 Brian Donnelly, Southern Illinois University, Edwardsville, Illinois
2005 William M. Dean (formerly with !dealliance/Piedmont Triad Research Park)
2004 Richard D. Finholt, University of Missouri System-Missouri Research Park)
2003 Charles (Chuck) Henderson, University of Nebraska, Lincoln
2002 Claude McKinney, Centennial Campus
2001 Charles Dilks, University City Science Center
2000 James O. Roberson, Research Triangle Foundation of North Carolina)
1999 Wayne McGown, University of Wisconsin-Madison Research Park)
1998 Ronald Kysiak, Northwestern University/Evanston Research Park, Inc.
1997 Michael Wacholder, Rensselaer Technology Park, Troy, New York
1996 Mark L. Money, PhD, Texas A & M University and University of Utah

Leadership in Innovation

2026 Lyda Hill, Philanthropist, Entrepreneur, Advocate for Science-Driven Solutions, Dallas, Texas
2024 The Walton Family Charitable Support Foundation, Bentonville, Arkansas
2023 Randy Woodson, PhD, Chancellor, North Carolina State University, Raleigh, North Carolina
2022 Dr. Scott Mabury and Josh Mitchell, University of Toronto, Toronto, Canada
2019 Mayor Darryl Steinberg, City of Sacramento, Sacramento, California
2019 Chancellor Gary May, University of California, Davis, Davis, California
2018 Stephen Tang, PhD, MBA, President & CEO, The University City Science Center, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
2018 Honorable Steny Hoyer, United States Representative, Maryland
2017 His Excellency David Johnston, 28th Governor General of Canada
2016 Dennis Kekas, Associate Vice-Chancellor at Centennial Campus, North Carolina State University

Building Communities of Innovation

AURP Awards of Excellence in Innovation
Prior Awards Recipients

Continued – Leadership in Innovation

2015 Jaime Parada-Avila, PhD, PIIT / Institute of Innovation and Technology Transfer Nuevo Leòn, Monterey, Mexico
2014 Governor James Baxter Hunt, State of North Carolina
2013 Wexford Science & Technology, LLC, a BioMed Realty Company, Baltimore, Maryland
2012 Chancellor Emeritus Irving Shain, University of Wisconsin-Madison, Madison, Wisconsin
2011 Honorable Dave Heineman, Governor, State of Nebraska
2010 Frank B. Cerra, PhD, MD, University of Minnesota Academic Health Center, Minneapolis, Minnesota
2009 David J. Ramsay, University of Maryland BioPark, Baltimore, Maryland
2008 Sherman McCorkle, Science & Technology Park Development Corporation, Albuquerque, New Mexico
2007 Rasesh Thakkar, Senior Managing Director, Tavistock Group, Orlando, Florida
2006 Eugene P. Trani, PhD, President, Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, Virginia
2005 Raymond D. Smoot, PhD, Chief Operating Officer, Virginia Tech Foundation, Blacksburg, Virginia
2003 Manuel T. Pacheco, PhD, President Emeritus, University of Arizona, Tucson, Arizona
2002 Louisiana Governor M. J. "Mike" Foster, Jr., New Orleans, Louisiana

Innovation Impact

2026 Marble Technologies at Nebraska Innovation Campus, Lincoln, Nebraska
2024 Blue Halo – LOCUST Laser Weapon System at Sandia Science & Technology Park, Albuquerque, New Mexico
2024 Dreamscape Learn at Arizona State University, Tempe, Arizona
2023 BULB-Building an Understanding of Lab Basics at University City Science Center, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
2022 Tritan Renew from Eastman Chemical at Centennial Campus at NC State University, Raleigh, North Carolina
2021 IonQ at the University of Maryland Discovery District, Baltimore, Maryland
2020 EarthSense, Inc. at the University of Illinois Research Park, Urbana-Champaign, Illinois
2019 Emagine Solutions Technology at Tech Parks Arizona, Tucson, Arizona
2019 Sempulse at STAR Park, San Marcos, Texas
2018 HudsonAlpha Institute for Biotechnology, Huntsville, Alabama
2017 Paratus Diagnostics at STAR Park, San Marcos, Texas
2016 NOMADD of King Abdullah University of Science and Technology, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
2016 The Emerge Center at the Louisiana State University Innovation Park, Baton Rouge, Louisiana
2015 Pindrop Security at Georgia Institute of Technology, Atlanta, Georgia
2015 SMARTERSHADE at University Technology Park, Illinois Institute of Technology, Chicago, Illinois
2014 Modernizing Medicine at the Research Park at Florida Atlantic University, Boca Raton, Florida
2013 Multi-junction Solar Cells, EMCORE Corporation, Sandia Science & Technology Park, Albuquerque, New Mexico
2012 Stratatech StrataGraft Skin Substitute, University Research Park-University of Wisconsin-Madison, Madison, Wisconsin
2011 TEAM Technologies, Inc., Sandia Science & Technology Park, Albuquerque, New Mexico
2010 Fraunhofer USA, Plymouth, Michigan
2009 Medipacs, The University of Arizona Science & Technology Park, Tucson, Arizona
2008 Wake Forest Institute for Regenerative Medicine, Piedmont Triad Research Park, Winston-Salem, North Carolina
2007 bwtech@UMBC, Baltimore, Maryland

Master Planning Excellence in Innovation

2026 The Pearl Innovation District, Charlotte, North Carolina
2025 Michigan State University Crescent Road Innovation Community, East Lansing, Michigan

Rising Star: Next Gen Innovation Leader

2026 Casey Carrillo, University of Arizona Center of Innovation, Tucson, Arizona
2025 Shafin Khan, The Beach at UNO, New Orleans, Louisiana
2023 Jonathan Hunt, McMaster Innovation Park, Hamilton, Ontario, Canada
2022 Mary Mumper, Aggie Square with the University of California, Davis, Davis, California
2021 Keisha Demps, Centennial Campus Partnership Office at NC State University, Raleigh, North Carolina
2020 Merry Hunter Caudle, Georgia Institute of Technology, Atlanta, Georgia

Continued – Rising Star: Next Gen Innovation Leader

2020 Eric Smith, University of Arizona Center of Innovation, Tucson, Arizona
2019 Kate Engel, Nebraska Innovation Campus, Lincoln, Nebraska
Honorable: Stephanie Miller, Embry Riddle Aeronautical University; Victoria O'Dell, Capital City Innovation

SPECIAL AWARD DESIGNATIONS

These Special Award Designations are presented by the AURP Awards Committee to honor exceptional contributions within the network and recognize outstanding leadership within our members' communities. Nominations are not accepted for these designations; however, submissions received may be considered for elevation to these specific award categories and recognition.

DEVELOPING COMMUNITIES OF INNOVATION

2018 The Research Triangle Park, Triangle Park, North Carolina
2017 Cummings Research Park, Huntsville, Alabama
2013 The University City Science Center, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
2011 Purdue Research Park, West Lafayette, Indiana

VISION

2026 Scott Levitan, The Research Triangle Park of North Carolina, Research Triangle, North Carolina
2024 Peter Pellerito, Biotechnology Innovation Organization, Washington, D.C
2023 Daisy Magnus-Aryitey, Code the Dream, Research Triangle Park, North Carolina
2022 Jim Berens, Wexford Science & Technology, Baltimore, Maryland
2021 Vickie Palmer, AURP, Tucson, Arizona
2019 Kevin Byrne, The University Financing Foundation, Atlanta, Georgia
2018 Honorable Jerry Moran, United States Senator, Kansas
2016 Eileen Walker, MIM/MBA, Former Chief Executive Officer at AURP
2015 Honorable Christopher Coons, United States Senator, Delaware
2014 Robert T. Geolas, The Research Triangle Foundation, Research Triangle Park, North Carolina
2013 J. Michael Bowman, Delaware Technology Park, Newark, Delaware
Honorable Jeff Bingaman, United States Senator, New Mexico

EXCALIBUR

2020 National Institute for Innovation in Manufacturing Biopharmaceuticals (NIIMBL), Newark, Delaware
2020 Biotechnology Innovation Organization, Washington, DC
2020 Nebraska Innovation Campus, Lincoln, Nebraska
2020 National Governors Association
2012 John Fernandez, Former Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Economic Development
2011 Senator Mark Pryor of Arkansas
2006 Louisiana Business Technology Center, Louisiana State University, South Campus Research Park / Charles D'Agostino, Executive Director, Baton Rouge, Louisiana

APPRECIATION

2026 Austin Beggs, Stiletto: Make a Point, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Canada
2022 Stephen Frayser, Executive Director of STAR Park, San Antonio, Texas
2021 Joe Meredith, President / CEO, Virginia Tech Corporate Research Center, Blacksburg, Virginia
2021 Charles Dilks, President of Dilks Consulting, Inc.
2019 State Science and Technology Institute, Westerville, Ohio
2016 Steve Hanssen, Director of Development, Wexford Science & Technology, Baltimore, Maryland
2009 Eva Klein, Eva Klein & Associates, Ltd., St. Louis, Missouri
2008 Vernon George, George, Henry, George Partners, Virginia