

From the Desk of the Chancellor – October 16

Last week's strategic planning probe on community engagement generated excellent responses. Thanks to all who shared ideas. This week, I'd like you to think about research collaborations. The questions I pose derive from a presentation given by BioCrossroads CEO David Johnson at last week's Council of Deans meeting:

- Federal and other funding resources are increasingly requiring deep and broad multidisciplinary and cross-industry partnerships for awards. How do we position ourselves to be competitive for the shrinking, or flat, amount of dollars available for research?
- Industry is finding research and development to be too costly for its bottom line and needs to partner more on discovery with research universities and other centers and institutes. How can we better reach out to industry and facilitate industry reaching out to us?
- As manufacturing development and production becomes more advanced, a high school education will not be enough for most life science industry jobs. How can colleges, universities, and industry be better partners in workforce education?

Why is this effort so important? Indiana is one of five states leading the nation in opportunities to advance business and industry in the life sciences (Battelle [report](#) [PDF] prepared for BioCrossroads¹). Our closest competitors are Massachusetts, California, New Jersey, and North Carolina. But, with every state in the union trying to advance its life sciences capabilities, Indiana must be nimble and strategic to maintain the edge we have.

The Battelle study was able to map areas of shared industry-university capability in Indiana. This led to the identification of five broad platforms where sharing assets and exploring cross-sector collaborations can put us in the forefront:

1. Drug Discovery, Development, Delivery and Diagnostics
2. Global Health (i.e. diabetes, infectious diseases)
3. Plant Improvement (same interests as life sciences sector in genetics, bioinformatics, etc.)
4. Health Information Technology and Bioinformatics, Outcomes, and Clinical Research
5. Orthopedics, Interventional Instruments, and Devices (medical technology)

David Johnson's presentation on BioCrossroads emphasized that no one player can bring everything to the table that is needed to advance the health and life sciences in Indiana. BioCrossroads is supported by universities, industries, and philanthropy. It has no public money, but exists to generate economic development that is important to public welfare; namely, advancing research, innovation, manufacturing, and entrepreneurship related to an area of the economy that is a special strength for Indiana.

In your area of expertise, place of work, or sphere of influence, do you see opportunities for collaboration that will improve Indiana's competitiveness in the health and life sciences by better utilizing assets that IUPUI can bring to the table?

Comments? Write_chancellor@iupui.edu or plan2025@iupui.edu.

¹ Battelle Technology Partnership Practice, "Advancing Indiana's Life Sciences Competitiveness and Strategic Collaboration among Industry, Universities, and Academic Health Centers in Targeted Areas of Opportunity" (May 2012)