



# Kentucky Senate Standing Committee on Appropriations & Revenue

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Innovation Infrastructure as an  
Economic Development Tool

**PRESENTED BY:**

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# THE SIMPLE PROBLEM KENTUCKY CAN SOLVE

## **KENTUCKY ALREADY FUNDS:**

- Research + university talent
- Workforce development
- Entrepreneurship programs

## **BUT STARTUPS STILL HIT A WALL:**

- No accessible, non-university lab infrastructure
- High fixed costs + compliance requirements
- Companies delay, leave the state, or never form

# WHY INFRASTRUCTURE IS DIFFERENT THAN A PROGRAM

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## STARTUP R&D HAS NON-NEGOTIABLES

- Safety + compliance systems
- Specialized utilities (HVAC, electrical, etc.)
- Capital equipment

## INFRASTRUCTURE IS REUSABLE

- One build-out → supports many companies
- Reduces duplication + accelerates time-to-market

# WHAT AN INNOVATION FACILITY DOES

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## INNOVATION FACILITIES PROVIDE:

- Regulated, shared physical space
- Capital-intensive equipment
- Safety and compliance systems

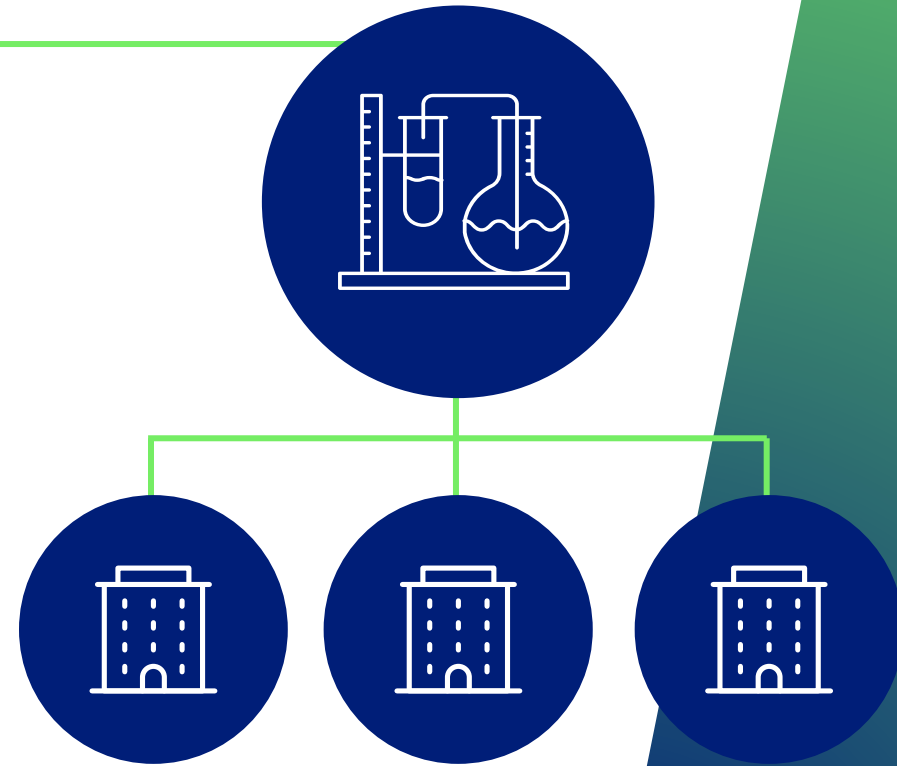
## THEY ENABLE:

- Company formation
- Federal grant eligibility (SBIR/STTR)
- Talent attraction and retention



# HOW SHARED INFRASTRUCTURE CHANGES THE ECONOMICS

- For a startup, the upfront cost of outfitting even a small lab, including build-out, safety systems, and essential equipment, can easily reach hundreds of thousands of dollars before any research begins.
- Labs, equipment, and safety systems are required
- Shared infrastructure reduces costs
- One investment supports many companies



# WHAT HAPPENED ONCE THE INFRASTRUCTURE EXISTED

## Startup companies chose Kentucky

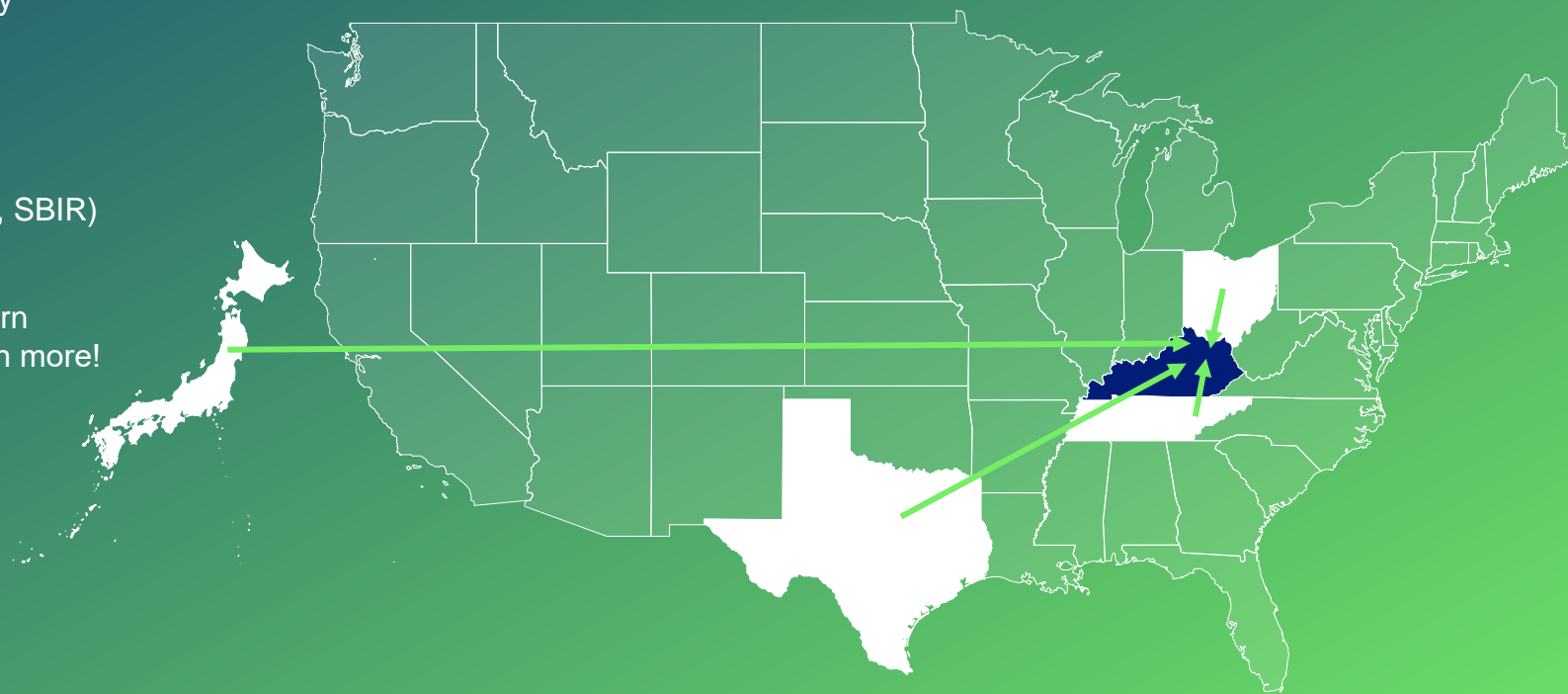
- Tennessee, Texas, Ohio, Japan... with more on the way

## Activity underway

- Applied research happening in Kentucky
- Startup companies pursuing federal funding (NIH, NSF, SBIR)
- National partnership: Thermo Fisher Scientific
- University Partnerships: University of Kentucky, Northern Kentucky University, Centre College... and interested in more!

## What this demonstrates

- Clear demand for shared innovation infrastructure
- A repeatable, nonprofit operating model
- Scalable for statewide deployment



# WHERE LIFESCIKY FITS IN KENTUCKY'S R&D-TO-JOBS CONTINUUM

## LIFESCIKY BRIDGES THE MIDDLE



# THE POLICY: WHAT THIS GRANT PROGRAM DOES

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## Kentucky Physical Infrastructure and Innovation Facilities Grant Program

- Competitive, statewide **capital-only** funding
- For **independent nonprofit** operators (non-university)

### Up to \$1M per project for:

- Facility upgrades + building systems
- Capital equipment + other physical improvements
- Physical capacity for entrepreneurs



# PEER STATES USE COMPARABLE INFRASTRUCTURE GRANT MECHANISMS

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## Missouri

- Missouri Technology Corporation's **Physical Infrastructure Grant Program** supports entrepreneurial infrastructure (statewide mechanism)

## Ohio

- Ohio Third Frontier:** long-running, technology-based economic development initiative supporting commercialization ecosystems



*Kentucky needs a comparable mechanism for non-university, nonprofit infrastructure to compete for founders + companies.*

# THE ASK: “BUILD ONCE. SERVE MANY. KEEP INNOVATION IN KENTUCKY.”

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## REQUESTED ACTION

- ✓ Establish the Infrastructure Grant Program within KPDI
- ✓ Fund capital grants and time-limited activation support
- ✓ Require clear performance measures and safeguards to protect taxpayer dollars and attract companies to the Commonwealth



# THANK YOU!

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