



# Texas A&M Innovation

## STRATEGIC PLAN FOR RESEARCH COMMERCIALIZATION AND IMPACT

MOVING IDEAS INTO SOLUTIONS THAT IMPROVE LIVES  
AND STRENGTHEN COMMUNITIES

# LETTER

FROM THE CHIEF INNOVATION OFFICER & ASSOCIATE VICE CHANCELLOR



The Texas A&M University System has extraordinary strengths to build on. Across our 12 universities and 8 state agencies, we generate world-class research, cultivate exceptional talent, and serve communities in every corner of Texas. The opportunity before us is to connect those strengths more deliberately so that discoveries move farther, faster, and with greater benefit to the people we serve.

That is the purpose of this strategic plan. It reflects a clear belief that innovation is not separate from the A&M System's mission. It is one of the ways we fulfill it — by translating research into products, companies, industry collaborations, and practical solutions that improve lives, strengthen communities, and support the long-term competitiveness of Texas.

We are entering a period in which leadership in research alone is not enough. The institutions that create the greatest public value are those that also build the systems, partnerships, and culture needed to translate discoveries into impact. That requires more than strong individual efforts. It requires alignment across the A&M System, disciplined execution, and a shared commitment to supporting innovators at every stage of the journey.

This plan is designed to help us do exactly that. It lays out a focused strategy to strengthen commercialization excellence, expand a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship, build the infrastructure that connects resources across the A&M System, and measure success by real-world outcomes. It is grounded in the principle that impact — not revenue alone — should be the standard by which we judge our work.

The Texas A&M University System is uniquely positioned for this moment. With deep research capabilities, statewide presence, mission-driven agencies, and strong relationships across key sectors, we have the foundation to build one of the nation's leading university innovation enterprises. Realizing that opportunity will take sustained effort, collaboration, and an openness to new ways of working together.

This is long-term work, and it matters. By building a stronger, more connected innovation system, we can extend the impact of A&M System research far beyond the laboratory and into the markets, industries, and communities that need it most.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Samuel Kim'. The signature is fluid and cursive, written in a professional style.

Samuel Kim, Ph.D.  
The Texas A&M University System  
Chief Innovation Officer & Associate Vice Chancellor

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



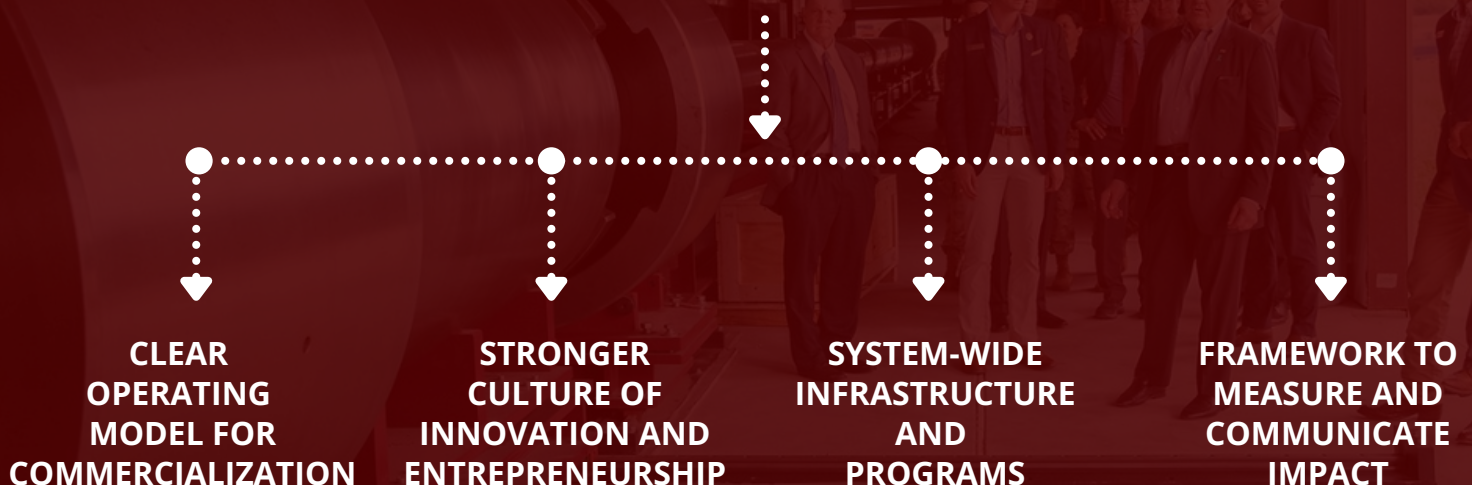
## A MOMENT TO BUILD ON

This strategic plan positions The Texas A&M University System to become a national leader for innovation - translating research into products, services, industry collaborations, and ventures that create measurable economic and societal impact.

Built on benchmarking against high-performing peers, comprehensive internal assessment, and broad stakeholder engagement across the A&M System.

Focused on what distinguishes top university innovation ecosystems from those that underperform: organizational design, incentives, infrastructure, and disciplined execution.

## WHAT THIS PLAN DELIVERS



# A FOUNDATION BUILT FOR IMPACT

The Texas A&M University System is exceptionally well positioned to expand its leadership in research commercialization, with more than \$1.58 billion in annual research expenditures, over 175,000 students, 12 universities, 8 state agencies.

Its footprint across Texas - physically present in 250 counties and programmatically engaged in all 254 - creates a uniquely powerful platform to connect discovery, applied research, industry collaboration, entrepreneurship, and public service.



World-class universities, mission-driven state agencies, applied research facilities, testbeds, and strong industry relationships across energy, agriculture, transportation, manufacturing, health, infrastructure, semiconductors, defense, and national security.

The opportunity is not research volume alone, but organizing this strength into a coordinated innovation enterprise that accelerates commercialization, supports new ventures, deepens industry engagement, and delivers measurable outcomes.



## Why Investment Matters

Top-tier institutions (MIT, Stanford, Johns Hopkins, Michigan, UT System, and others) have built sustained commercialization capacity over decades - specialized teams, clearer processes, better data systems, translational funding, venture support, and visible innovation platforms.

For the A&M System, the constraint is not scale or relevance of research, but the need for a more coordinated, better resourced, and strategically aligned innovation enterprise.

# VISION, MISSION & GUIDING PRINCIPLE

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## VISION

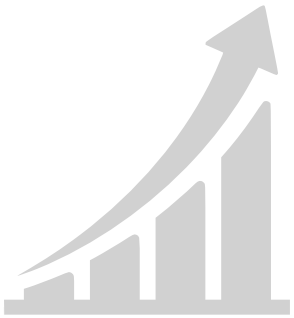
The Texas A&M University System will be a national leader in translating discoveries into real-world products, services, and ventures that drive economic growth and societal impact.

## MISSION

Texas A&M Innovation will unlock the full impact of A&M System research by enabling, accelerating, and scaling commercialization through world-class technology transfer, entrepreneurial support, industry collaborations, and ecosystem building - serving faculty, students, industry collaborators, and the people of Texas.



## GUIDING PRINCIPLE: IMPACT OVER REVENUE



Impact - not revenue maximization - is the primary objective. Financial returns matter and will be tracked carefully, but are treated as important lagging outcomes of sustained impact rather than the leading purpose of the strategy.

Texas A&M Innovation will be evaluated by whether it strengthens the innovator experience, builds and supports viable companies, enables streamlined industry and community access to A&M System capabilities, attracts external investment and collaborations, and helps generate meaningful economic and societal outcomes.



# STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

The plan is organized around four strategic pillars that together define a comprehensive and mutually reinforcing innovation strategy. Excellence in execution strengthens culture; culture expands participation; infrastructure builds capability; and impact ensures the strategy is measured by real-world outcomes, not internal activity alone.

## FOUR PILLARS WITH SIXTEEN KEY INITIATIVES



### COMMERCIALIZATION EXCELLENCE

High-performing, metrics-driven commercialization engine with clearer pathways, transparent processes, and disciplined execution.

PILLAR 1



### INNOVATION CULTURE

Stronger culture of innovation and entrepreneurship that makes commercialization a credible, supported pathway for impact and academic success.

PILLAR 2



### INNOVATION INFRASTRUCTURE

Coordinated pathways, translational funding, venture support, physical space, and system-wide infrastructure to move technologies from discovery to market.

PILLAR 3



### INNOVATION IMPACT

Measurement, storytelling, and continuous improvement to demonstrate and enhance economic, societal, and institutional value.

PILLAR 4

# COMMERCIALIZATION EXCELLENCE



Build a high-performing, service-oriented commercialization engine that provides clear pathways, consistent support, and disciplined portfolio management for inventors, founders, and external organizations across the A&M System.

## ORGANIZATIONAL REDESIGN & SPECIALIZED CAPACITY

- Expand capacity in licensing, business development, marketing, new ventures, strategic relationships, and operations.
- Organize licensing and business development around technology verticals to strengthen relationships with faculty and industry collaborators and deepen domain knowledge.

## TRANSPARENCY & SERVICE EXCELLENCE

- Publish clear service standards, process timelines, and assessment rubrics.
- Implement best-in-class portfolio management tools so inventors and staff can track progress of their innovations online.

## DIFFERENTIATED PATHWAYS & STARTUP PIPELINE

- Use structured assessment tools to match each invention with the right path: direct licensing, startup, sponsored research, or strategic collaborations.
- Create dedicated New Ventures pipeline with defined processes, stage appropriate resources, and conversion metrics.

## STRATEGIC PORTFOLIO MANAGEMENT

- Use documented stage-gated reviews, standardized evaluation rubrics, and external expertise (industry leaders, founders, investors) to focus resources on opportunities with the strongest impact potential.

### What Success Looks Like

**Faster cycle times, clearer decisions, more quality deals, improved satisfaction for innovators and external organizations, Innovation viewed as a trusted collaborator.**



# INNOVATION CULTURE



Make innovation and commercialization a visible, credible, and supported aspect of academic life and public service, aligned with the A&M System's mission and attractive to current and future faculty and students.

## ▶ **AWARENESS & EDUCATION**

- Launch a sustained culture-building campaign focused on why commercialization matters, using faculty stories, practical examples, and roadshows across the A&M System.
- Integrate commercialization awareness into new faculty orientations and provide first-time inventor coaching and navigation support.

## ▶ **PROMOTION, TENURE, & RECOGNITION**

- Develop model language and evaluation rubrics to help committees assess commercialization work fairly.
- Highlight how patents, licenses, startups, and collaboration contribute to research funding and impact.
- Elevate recognition through high-visibility awards, incentives, and celebration of innovation-supportive units and leaders.

## ▶ **POLICY & REGULATORY ALIGNMENT**

- Collaborate with relevant units to review and modernize policies that affect commercialization, conflict of interest, use of facilities, industry-sponsored research, and related approvals.
- Re-evaluate policies, including royalty distributions, to better align incentives for innovators, labs, departments, colleges/schools, and A&M System members.

## ▶ **TRAINING FOR COMMERCIALIZATION AND VENTURE CREATION**

- Provide handbooks, workshops, and venture readiness training, in collaboration with programs and entrepreneurial centers across the A&M System, to give faculty and researchers the skills and confidence to navigate the commercialization process.

# INNOVATION INFRASTRUCTURE



Build or collaborate to create the infrastructure - financial, programmatic, physical, and relational - that connects people, ideas, and resources across the entire A&M System and beyond.

## A&M SYSTEM INNOVATION FUND

- Launch a robust program to fund proof-of-concept, prototype development, and market validation in the gap between research funding and private capital.
- Target a portfolio of high-potential projects each year, and grow the fund over time through corporate and philanthropic support.

## VENTURE ACCELERATOR & MENTOR NETWORK

- Coordinate internal and external resources (A&M System entrepreneurial centers, I-Corps, incubators, economic development programs) with stages of technology and company development.
- Build venture studio collaborations and a structured mentor network, leveraging former students and experienced operators in a more formalized, team-based model.

## INNOVATION SPACE & INCUBATION CAPACITY

- Develop a dedicated innovation environment that amplifies the A&M System brand, provides co-located space for the growing team, startups, and ecosystem partners, and serves as a convening hub.
- Build a System-wide innovation network with representatives from each university and agency, making programs and resources accessible across all members, and coordinating regular pipeline and strategy discussions.

## A&M SYSTEM-WIDE COORDINATION

- Build a coordinated, system-wide commercialization platform that gives every A&M System institution and agency clear, consistent access to innovation support.
- Connect the system through shared tools, common processes, and regular cross-campus coordination so promising ideas can move faster to impact.



# INNOVATION IMPACT



Ensure that the strategy delivers tangible value to Texas communities, organizations, and people by measuring outcomes, telling compelling stories, and continuously improving.

## IMPACT MEASUREMENT, DASHBOARDS, & REPORTING

- Track a full range of value: licenses, startups, capital raised, jobs, sponsored research growth, joint development agreements, and major deployments.
- Capture both economic and societal impact, such as products on the market, energy saved, health outcomes improved, and communities served.
- Provide leadership and stakeholders with clear dashboards, annual impact reports, and college/department snapshots.

## SINGLE FRONT DOOR FOR EXTERNAL ORGANIZATIONS

- Offer a simple, coordinated entry point into the A&M System, helping organizations find the right people, capabilities, and pathways.
- Provide concierge-style support from introduction through agreements and follow-up, working in concert with sponsored research teams, IP, and legal.

## IMPACT STORYTELLING & COMMUNICATIONS

- Translate impact data into user-centered stories - how innovations help patients, producers, manufacturers, students, communities, and the state.
- Use publications, digital media, events, and short-form content to raise visibility and strengthen confidence in the A&M System's innovation mission.

## RESULTS MONITORING & STRATEGIC IMPROVEMENT

- Maintain a cadence of reviews and stakeholder feedback sessions to refine programs, scale what works, and stop or redesign what does not.
- Treat the plan as a living roadmap that evolves with evidence and experience.

# TURNING VISION INTO ACTION

This is a generational investment that requires patience, alignment, and shared commitment across all 12 universities, 8 state agencies, System-level entities, and external collaborators. By connecting research scale, statewide reach, applied capabilities, and innovation assets into a more integrated enterprise, The Texas A&M University System can build a powerful engine for discovery, translation, economic growth, and public benefit.



## HOW TO ENGAGE



### FACULTY AND RESEARCHERS

Disclose, explore programs, connect with Texas A&M Innovation.



### STUDENTS AND FOUNDERS

Engage with entrepreneurship programs and venture support.



### EXTERNAL ORGANIZATIONS

Use the front door to find technologies, expertise, and collaboration pathways.



### COMMUNITIES AND SUPPORTERS

Follow impact stories, share needs, and help shape future priorities.



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