



ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY RESEARCH PARKS

For Immediate Release

AURP 2016 International Conference Kicks-off in Oklahoma City

*Thriving Innovation District Welcomes University Research Park Representatives
from Around the World*

OKLAHOMA CITY, OK, September 28, 2016 – The Association of University Research Parks (AURP) kicked-off its annual International Conference today in Oklahoma City (OKC) with hosts University of Oklahoma (OU) Research Campus and the Greater Oklahoma City Chamber. This event is being held primarily at the Skirvin Hilton today through September 30, 2016—drawing industry experts and research park leaders from across the U.S. and internationally.

This year's theme is "Harnessing the Winds of Change: Pioneering the Future of Ingenuity at University Research Parks." With research parks evolving and changing rapidly, parks are forced to examine and improve upon current processes and strategies. This year's conference will address this movement, as well as the current university research park landscape, and provide insight and best practices on how research parks can thrive through the power of ingenuity.

The AURP Conference Planning Committee, made up of many of the world's top research park directors, has selected an array of dynamic speakers from the U.S. and around the globe—including France, Brazil, Australia and The Netherlands—to discuss a number of engaging topics. Highlighted speakers include:

- **Hugh Forrest** – Director of the annual South by Southwest Interactive Festival (SXSW)
- **Jeffrey Greene** – Award-winning innovator, patented inventor, entrepreneur and Founder and CEO of MedEncentive, LLC
- **Michael Eckert** – A deeply engaged angel investor, Founder and Chairman of NO/LA Angel Network and former CEO of The Weather Channel
- **Dr. Spence Taylor** – Academic vascular surgeon and Founding Senior Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and Diversity at the University of South Carolina School of Medicine in Greenville
- **Dr. Jason Sanders** – Provost, University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center (OUHSC)
- **Scott Andes** – Senior Policy Analyst and Associate Fellow with the Bass Initiative on Innovation and Placemaking with The Brookings Institution



Creating Communities of *Innovation*

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Additionally, some of the key events during this year's conference include:

- **Communities of Innovation 101** – Designed for those who are new to university research parks and innovation districts, this intensive pre-conference session will address park and innovation district organization and management with a special emphasis on development, funding, marketing and economic impact.
- **Oklahoma City (OKC): An Innovative Ecosystem** – Attendees will learn how local research parks and innovation centers can work with communities and industry leaders to harness innovation and entrepreneurship. OKC representatives will share the success of OKC's innovation district.
- **Tours: National Weather Center & OU's Innovation Hub** – Attendees will tour the University Research Campus at the University of Oklahoma (OU), Norman, will experience weather predictions and forecasts firsthand at the National Weather Center, and will tour OU's new Innovation Hub, which includes a 5,000 sq. ft. digital fabrication lab/makerspace that opened in Spring 2016.

“Oklahoma City has served as a prime example of the impact that research and innovation parks can have in local communities, beyond the research they provide,” said AURP President and Executive Director of the LSU Innovation Park and Louisiana Business & Technology Center Charles D’Agostino, MBA. “As parks forge strong partnerships with the cities and areas surrounding their facilities and campuses, they foster greater opportunities for innovative developments down the road.”

The event will include ample opportunities to visit several of Oklahoma City's research parks and innovation center to understand how it has transformed itself to become a premiere location for research in the world. For more information on AURP's 2016 International Conference, visit: <http://international.aurp.net/>.



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About the Association of University Research Parks (AURP)

The Association of University Research Parks is a professional association of university related research and science parks. AURP's mission is to foster innovation, commercialization and economic growth through university, industry and government partnerships. For more information, visit AURP's web site at www.aurp.net.

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