



**Growing Rural Oregon**

# Entrepreneurial Ecosystem Work

March 2021

# Welcome and Introductions

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## **The Ford Family Foundation:**

- Kathleen Flanagan, Community Economic Development
- Rozalyn Mock, Community Economic Development

## **E2 Entrepreneurial Ecosystems:**

- Don Macke, Vice President

## **NetWork Kansas:**

- Steve Radley, President & CEO

## **Central Oregon Intergovernmental Council:**

- Scott Aycock, Community and Economic Development Manager



## What is an entrepreneurial ecosystem?

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- It is a community-based system
  - A culture of trust and collaboration
  - The ecosystem's whole is greater than the sum of its parts.

# Key Elements of an Entrepreneurial Ecosystem

SOURCE: Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation

**Talent** – ecosystem building requires attracting, retaining & cultivating talented people, including entrepreneurs, employers and supporting partners

**Champions & Conveners** promote entrepreneurs, organize the ecosystem and build awareness

**Culture** – a culture of collaboration, cooperation and trust that inspires people to move quickly, help each other and be open to novel ideas is critical for entrepreneurial growth

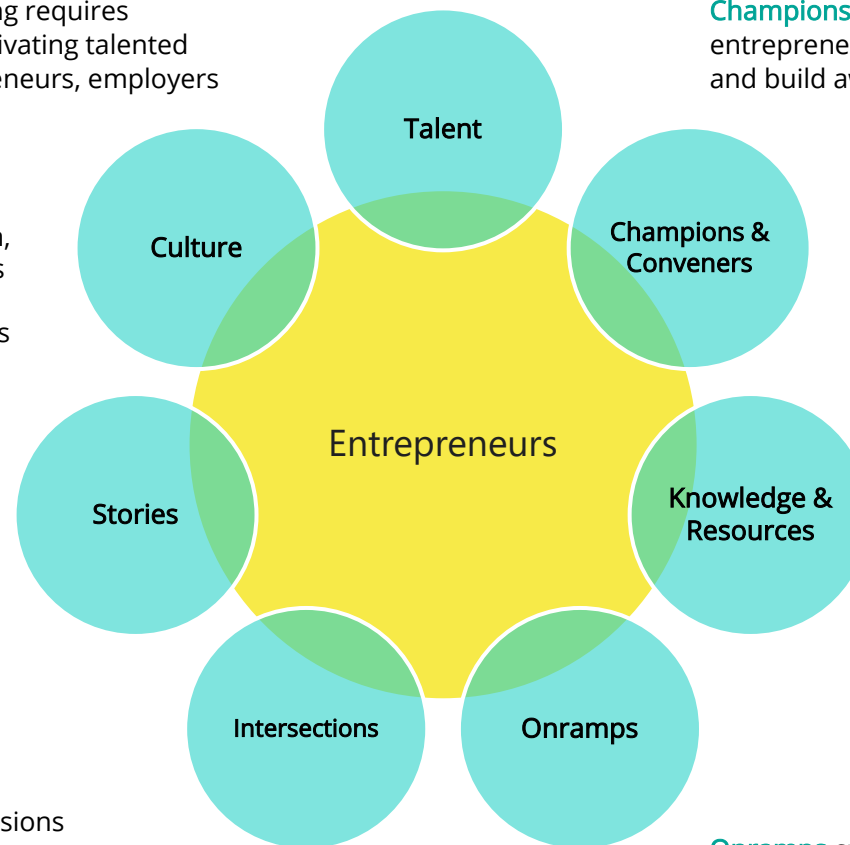
**Knowledge & Resources**  
A thriving ecosystem is an environment that encourages people to ask questions and offers an abundance of easy ways to find the answers. Knowledge may reside with other entrepreneurs, other people (e.g. mentors or professionals), or institutions (universities, libraries, accelerators, etc.).

**Stories** – The collective story that people tell themselves and the rest of the world powerfully shapes an ecosystem's future. It frames what is possible.

**Intersections** are where collisions between people, ideas and resources often allow entrepreneurs to find missing pieces of the puzzle. Intersections may be institutions, in-person events or take place online.

Resources are the assets entrepreneurs need, such as capital, employees, office space, professional services, or raw materials. In a successful ecosystem, these resources are more abundant and visible.

**Onramps** create clear, visible and welcoming paths for people to join the ecosystem. Onramps may be events, organizations or online communities.





To learn more about the role of entrepreneurship and community economic development opportunities read the documents included with the webinar invite.

## The role of entrepreneurship in community economic development:

- Research has shown the importance of entrepreneurship for sustained economic growth and improved wellbeing.
- Entrepreneurship generates increased and better venture deal flow and creates economic development impacts such as investment, jobs, and local tax base.
- Rural communities must continue to innovate, compete, and work to survive and thrive. Community economic development never ends.
- Our world is dynamic and everchanging, requiring our continuous engagement in community economic development.

# An entrepreneurial ecosystem works at individual, community and statewide levels.

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## Individual

Entrepreneurs know how and where to access supports and resources at every stage of the business cycle



## Community

Rural communities can leverage their unique assets to stimulate innovation and sustainable economic vitality

Rural communities have the tools and resources to create entrepreneurial ecosystems that stimulate, and support increased entrepreneurial behavior and outcomes



## Statewide

Provides a cohesive strategy, rather than one off approaches in individual communities and the involvement of all stakeholders in discussions, planning, and decision making to support rural entrepreneurs.

# How we got here...

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Five years of relationship building, working with residents across the region, supporting grantees and identifying key economic development partners has led the CED staff to develop this systems strategy to support community economic development.



CED staff have worked with e2 Entrepreneurial Ecosystems, NetWork Kansas, and key colleagues to develop an entrepreneurial ecosystem building program that communities in rural Oregon can adapt to meet their needs.



e2 has a proven track record of accelerating entrepreneurial activity in rural communities. NetWork Kansas is growing an entrepreneurial environment in Kansas by cultivating resources to start and grow small businesses.

# GRO Framework and Process

This two-dimensional graphic appears to be linear and sequenced, but each community starts the e2 journey at a different point. For example, readiness and organizing may be completed and the community is ready to craft a next-generation strategy. This illustration can serve as a community road map. Additionally, growing an entrepreneurial economy and culture is a continuous process. Over time a community can move from “getting started” to growing a “high impact and robust” entrepreneurial ecosystem enabling transformative change.



Source: e2 Entrepreneurial Ecosystems



# Economic Resiliency and Recovery

- Ecosystem building work results in community economic development
- Positions communities to be better equipped to access and manage additional resources and investments
- Entrepreneurial ecosystem building can be a strategy for post-COVID recovery that builds community resiliency and capacity to better respond to future challenges or disasters.
- American Rescue Plan



## Let's do a temperature check

**Which of the following best describes how you are feeling at this point?**

- 1 = I am not yet clear on the entrepreneurial ecosystem concept.
- 2 = I think I am starting to understand the entrepreneurial ecosystem concept and have some clarifying questions.
- 3 = I understand the idea of building an entrepreneurial ecosystem and most of my questions are “**me**” questions.
- 4 = I understand the idea of building an entrepreneurial ecosystem and most of my questions are “**we**” questions.
- 5 = I am excited about the program and ready to learn more about helping my community move forward.



Let's return  
in ten  
minutes

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# Foundation Supports



- Host organization
- Trained coach that will work with the community for up to 5 years
- Annual financial support for local coordination: \$25,000 for staff person and \$5,000 volunteer stipend
- Virtual and in-person cohort gatherings
- Training opportunities, technical assistance
- Community profiles
- Evaluation framework and tools, community vignettes

# Community Benefits

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- Participate in a **learning cohort**
- Assigned a trained **community coach** that will work one-on-one with the community for up to 5 years
- Gain a greater **understanding of its entrepreneurial opportunities** and create a **long-term sustainable strategy** and stronger ecosystem to support the needs of business growth
- Generates **additional venture deal flow** generating traditional **economic development impacts**
- **Identify and expand leadership** base to champion entrepreneurial activity now and into the future
- **Financial assistance** to support staff time, a local volunteer (stipend), and training
- Access to **technical assistance**
- **Evaluation tools** for tracking program impact
- After phase 1, qualified communities will be well-positioned to **apply for and raise funds** - not just through the Ford Family Foundation - **for implementation projects**

# GRO's long-term impact



- **Increased entrepreneurial behavior** as indicated by new businesses, entrepreneurial support process improvements, new or enhanced training opportunities
- **Increased competitiveness** illustrated through increased number of ventures selling outside of the community and increased wages
- **Increased prosperity**, such as tax revenue and increased school enrollment
- **Broader diversification** in leadership and community activity
- **Increased resilience** demonstrated through economic diversity
- Overall, the community will be able to **attract new dollars from the private sector**

# Community Selection Process

CED is working with:

- Oregon Economic Development Districts (OEDD) to host the entrepreneurial ecosystem building work.
- Central Oregon Intergovernmental Council, under the umbrella of OEDD, will be responsible for leading the GRO program.



## Communities learn about GRO

Communities interested *and* ready to participate in the first cohort, submit a letter of interest and complete a community self-assessment.



## Review letters of interest + community self-assessment

A review panel will determine which communities to move forward for due diligence and a site visit.



## Site visit

The site visit will allow for a deeper dive into a community's readiness and capacity for participation in the GRO program.



## Select communities + begin work

Upon completion of the site visits, the first cohort of communities will be announced.

# Community Readiness



The Community Readiness Assessment is a tool for helping a community determine its starting point.

## What we will look for

- ✓ City population must be under 35,000 and not geographically adjacent to an urban area
- ✓ Submission of a Letter of Interest and completion of a Community Readiness Criteria self-evaluation
- ✓ Identified local fiscal host organization that has an Internal Revenue Service 501(c)3 public charity status or is a government agency and can receive a grant to support local coordinator and volunteer
- ✓ Entrepreneurship is a strategy in the community's economic development efforts, or the groundwork has already been laid for entrepreneurship to become a strategy
- ✓ A diverse group of community members are participating in the effort



# Community Readiness

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By understanding the attributes of an entrepreneurial community and your starting point (through the Community Readiness Assessment), a community will learn if its entrepreneurial ecosystem building journey is just beginning or if it is well-positioned to participate in the GRO program.

## What we will look for

- ✓ Entrepreneurs are at the center of economic development work in the community
- ✓ Community members and local government are supportive of and committed to an entrepreneurship strategy
- ✓ A commitment to invest in this work as it demonstrates impact
- ✓ There is a willingness to commit resources to an entrepreneurial ecosystem building strategy, there is a qualified person to lead the effort, there is a team of local champions, including entrepreneurs to actively engage in development and implement the strategy
- ✓ There are entrepreneurship programs already in place and the community is connected to resources (e.g., community development financial institution, Small Business Development Center, venture catalyst, etc.)

# Community Commitment

Because of the ongoing, iterative and phased nature of this work, to effectively implement an entrepreneurial ecosystem building framework and to deploy resources, business owners, entrepreneurs, residents, foundations, government officials and economic development organizations must be involved.

- ✓ **Commit to the 5-year program** and dedicated staff time for a local community coordinator
- ✓ **Develop a leadership team** committed to meeting regularly to prioritize and advance initiatives that are critical to the development of your community's entrepreneurship development strategy
- ✓ **Regularly engage with community coach** in working through the GRO framework
- ✓ **Willingness to invest** in developing and implementing systems and processes for the long-term
- ✓ **Ability to track and monitor progress** against program metrics, as well as an eagerness to learn from doing so
- ✓ **Willingness to engage (if not already) in an asset-based community development approach**, maximizing strengths, talents and resources of the local community

# Community Commitment

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A long-term commitment to and investment in the approach from local entrepreneurs, municipalities, residents, key community leaders, organizations and institutions is necessary to make positive changes in the community.

- ✓ Ability to collaborate with other organizations – internal *and* external to the community - in unique and effective ways
- ✓ Identify diversified funding opportunities; develop a solid sustainability plan
- ✓ Understanding of community demographics and broad representation in leadership (age, gender, race, ethnicity, socioeconomic)
- ✓ If the Foundation has provided support to your community, **demonstrate successful partnership with TFFF** through previous programming and/or grants
- ✓ Must be prepared to **begin work in summer of 2021**
- ✓ Commit to **participating in training and peer learning opportunities**

# Roles and Responsibilities

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## OEDD/COIC

- ✓ Program management
- ✓ Develop, hire, and support a community coaching team
- ✓ Develop and support positive community partner relations
- ✓ Support story capture
- ✓ Provide support to the evaluation process



## The Ford Family Foundation

- ✓ Provide evaluation framework and tools
- ✓ Provide GRO program funding, including:
  - Host organization
  - \$30,000 annually for local staffing support
  - Training for Community Coaches
  - Technical assistance
  - Community analyses and interpretation



## Community Coach Model

- ✓ The host organization assigns a trained Community Coach to each cohort community
- ✓ Community coach serves as a program guide, mentor, trainer, TA provider, connector, etc. and helps build development capacity such as how to mobilize community engagement, community builders, staffing and funding

# Next Steps

- ✓ Review the reading material provided
- ✓ Contact us if you have questions
- ✓ Discuss the GRO program within your community
- ✓ If interested in the GRO program, request the LOI and Community Readiness materials

LOI and supporting documents are due by 5:00 PM on May 3, 2021

