



TULANE
INNOVATION
INSTITUTE

Impact Report 2024

ENERGIZE

VITALIZE

COMMERCIALIZE

TECHNOLOGY

NEW ORLEANS

STARTUPS

TEAM BUILDING

STRATEGY

COMMUNITY

An aerial photograph of the New Orleans skyline at sunset. The sky is a mix of blue, orange, and pink. The city is filled with various buildings, including several tall skyscrapers. The most prominent one is a tall, dark glass skyscraper with a red top. Other buildings are in various colors like white, yellow, and brown. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a bright glow and long shadows.

TULANE INNOVATION INSTITUTE

Established 2022

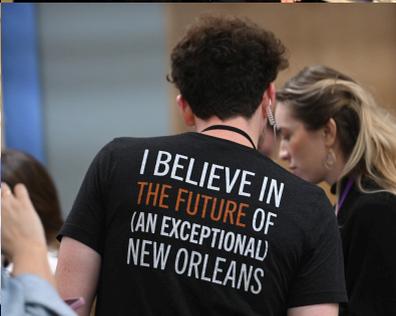
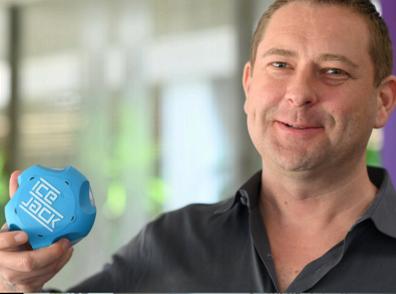
Inspire The world

**NEW ORLEANS, A UNIQUE PLACE
TO ACCELERATE YOUR IDEAS!**



“THE TULANE INNOVATION INSTITUTE
WILL BE A VICTORY FOR ALL INVOLVED;
TULANE, THE CITY OF NEW ORLEANS,
THE STATE AND THE REGION.”

**-PRESIDENT MICHAEL A. FITTS
TULANE UNIVERSITY
APRIL 2022**



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Dear friends of the Tulane Innovation Institute,

Two years ago, we embarked on a journey to create a visionary concept, establishing the Tulane Innovation Institute. This university-wide initiative is dedicated to nurturing innovation and startups born from groundbreaking ideas, research, and discoveries at Tulane University. Our mission is clear: serve the entire greater New Orleans community and make a mark on the world. We provide comprehensive education, expert mentoring, and unwavering support to innovators and entrepreneurs.

Education, creativity, and mentoring are the cornerstones of innovation and entrepreneurial success. There is no better place to cultivate these attributes than within our vibrant university community.

In FY24, we hit the ground running; the Tulane Innovation Institute launched ten programs, hired 17 team members, and acted as a catalyst for change by working with the region's ecosystem partners, celebrating entrepreneurs via New Orleans Entrepreneurship Week, Tulane's Research, Creativity & Innovation Summit, the National Academy of Inventors, and so much more. We began to create opportunities that will pave the way for building generational wealth for Louisiana citizens.

We appreciate your continued support and passion for our mission. Together, we are shaping a brighter future for all. It is with deep gratitude that I share the Institute's accomplishments and impact within the pages of our first annual report. We wouldn't be here without you and our Tulane family.

Kimberly Gram, MBA, PhD
David & Marion Mussafer Chief Innovation & Entrepreneurship Officer



“ Acting boldly to take
calculated risks for
our community. ”

Our Team

In 2023 /2024, our team grew from 3 to 17 armed with passion and a commitment to serve!

Kimberly Gramm

David & Marion Mussafer Chief Innovation & Entrepreneurship Officer

Amie Cannon

Operations Manager and Executive Assistant to CEO

Claiborne Christian

Executive Director of Commercialization

Jeanne Exnicios

Marketing & Communications Director

Sharon Goldsmith

Executive Director of Innovation & Entrepreneurship Programs

Matt Koenig

Executive Director, Office of IP Management

Matthew Hales

Entrepreneur-in-Residence

Jalin Carter

Community Program Manager

Jillian L. Delos Reyes

Commercialization Program Director

Jay England

Innovation & Entrepreneurship Program Manager

Ronni Johnson

Event Coordinator, TRICS

Marco Melero

Tulane Ventures Analyst

Rani Brooks

Colowick Innovation Fellow

Maryl Wright Ponds

Postdoctoral Innovation Fellow



Open Mic Night



LePage Cycle



Third Coast Venture Summit

Office of Intellectual Property Management

Samuel Jativa

IP Licensing & Portfolio Management Officer

John Scott

Associate Director

Nic Van Daalen

Intellectual Property Coordinator

Thank you to everyone in our community for helping us build the momentum to achieve so much. We are grateful to work with you and look forward to continuing to support those who dare to innovate and do the unthinkable!

Thank you!

TULANE INNOVATION AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP (TIE) COUNCIL

The TIE Council is a group of inspiring and generous individuals who support the Tulane Innovation Institute by making substantial financial contributions and sharing their innovative and entrepreneurial experiences to make a significant impact in New Orleans and beyond.



Michael Acks
RMC Capital, LLC



Shannon Priddy Acks,
Priddy Family Foundation



John (David) Barksdale,
Alluvian Capital



Stephanie Bosse Barksdale,
Tulane University



Carol Lavin Bernick,
Polished Nickel Capital Management



Alan Colowick,
Matrix Capital Management



Michelle Diener,
Former CEO, Hotels.com, Inc.



Robert Diener,
Co-Founder, Hotels.com, Inc.



Robert Hinckley,
Tulane President's Council



Cathy Isaacson,
Middle East Investment Initiative



Walter Isaacson,
Tulane University



Joel Kanter,
Windy City, Inc.



Andrea Turner Moffitt,
Future Heights Ventures



David Mussafer,
Advent International



Charles (Rusty) Pickering,
Ingo Money, Inc.



Robert Priddy,
Priddy Family Foundation



Terryl Propper,
Endodontic Practice Partners



Jeffrey Silverman,
Laconia Capital Group



Tony Suber,
SDG Impact Fund





Big, bold, bright ideas!

Foundational philanthropic support turns the Tulane Innovation Institute into a reality

The Priddy Family Foundation, led by Robert Priddy (UC '69) and his wife Kikie, along with their daughter and son-in-law, Shannon and Mike Acks, and their son, Christopher Priddy, contributed the first named gift to the Tulane Innovation Institute. The Institute launched with the Robert L. Priddy Innovation Lab, a primary driver of commercialization efforts that provides proof-of-concept and early-stage startup gap funding, mentorship, and support for aspiring entrepreneurs and promising technologies.

In addition, David Mussafer (B '85), incoming Chairman of the Board of Tulane University, and his wife, Marion, established the David and Marion Mussafer Innovation Fund and set up the endowment for the Chief Innovation & Entrepreneurship Officer. The funds support various activities promoting innovation and entrepreneurship on the Tulane campus.



It takes outstanding leadership and a plan to transform downtown New Orleans

The Tulane Innovation Institute, a presidential initiative led by Michael A. Fitts, is a university-wide initiative that champions innovators and entrepreneurs across all Tulane University campuses and the greater New Orleans area. The Institute's launch pad at the Thirteen15 building on Tulane's downtown campus is step one in the journey toward an incubator space in the redeveloped Charity Hospital building. This expansion will position and enhance our impact significantly.

Patrick Norton, Tulane University's Senior Vice President and Chief Operating Officer, plays a critical role in our future planning efforts. He supports the Institute as a catalyst for downtown redevelopment. State-of-the-art infrastructure is key to retaining talent and providing resources for the innovators of tomorrow.



Our Partners

Tulane Innovation Institute's local and national partners make a collective impact. We believe strategically aligned partners build an ecosystem to help our innovators & entrepreneurs thrive!



Tulane University is participating in a **\$160 million National Science Foundation (NSF) Engines** grant for a 10-year project involving **45 partners**, focusing on energy transition in Louisiana's industrial corridor. **Kimberly Gramm is the Committee Chair for Tech Development & Commercialization. Tulane's Entergy Chair in Clean Energy Engineering, Daniel F. Shantz is FUEL's co-principal investigator** and the interim director of use-inspired research and development. Henry Ashbaugh, Professor of Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering; Pierre Conner, Executive Director of the Tulane Energy Institute; and Eric Smith, Associate Director of Tulane Energy Institute, will also participate in this record-setting award. Learn more at fuelouisiana.org.

What we do and who we support

The Tulane University Innovation Institute supports and catalyzes students, faculty, and community innovators in developing their ideas, launching startups, and attracting resources to fuel innovation.

Tulane
Students

14,500

Tulane
Faculty

2,119

Community
Members

1,237,748
New Orleans
Metro Population

Sources: Tulane University | Office of Human Resources & Institutional Equity (2024); The Data Center analysis of U.S. Census Bureau Decennial Census and Population Estimates 2023.



Our Impact

THE NUMBERS TO DATE

We are just getting started!

\$10M

Launched
Tulane Ventures

6

Licensing and Option
Agreements
(FY24)

5

University Spin Outs
(FY24)

54

Invention Disclosures
(increased 50% YOY)

18

Patents Issued
(FY24)

\$624,824

Total invested in Tulane
and New Orleans start-up
entrepreneurs via the
Provost's Proof of
Concept Fund,
\$50K Demo Day
Pitch Competition,
Open MIC Night and the
Tulane Research
Innovation and Creativity
Summit Innovation Awards
to date (FY23 + 24).

\$1,360,502

SBIR/ STTR grants awarded to Chad Roy, Tulane School of Medicine
(FY23 + 24)

38

of Startup
Companies Served

1,124

Program Participants

10

Programs
Offered

76

GWIN Mentors
have provided
770+ volunteer hours
valued at

\$232K

Faculty Programs & Shout outs

FACULTY INNOVATION GRANTS

The Tulane University Innovation Institute recently awarded **9** Faculty Innovation Grants to **11** faculty members across **6** schools. This initiative aims to integrate innovation and entrepreneurship activities into the curriculum, encouraging a creative and entrepreneurial mindset among students and preparing them for their future careers.

\$22,500 in funding grants provided



FACULTY RESEARCH MIXERS

The Tulane University Innovation Institute hosted two Faculty Innovation Research Mixers in 2024.

These events allowed Tulane faculty to learn about the ongoing research in other departments and schools via three-minute pitches to create meaningful connections and collaborations, encouraging interdisciplinary research and innovation.



100
Faculty
Members
Attended

42
Research
Connections

Tulane's Faculty Innovation Council consists of expert faculty members who are passionate about innovation and entrepreneurship. They represent each of Tulane University's nine schools. Members provide unique perspectives to guide innovation and commercialization at the Institute while acting as champions in their schools to support an innovation culture.

Faculty Innovation Council

Susan Cheng, School of Public Health & Tropical Medicine
Sherif Ebrahim, A. B. Freeman School of Business
Monica Embers, School of Medicine (TNPRC)
Donald Gaver, School of Science & Engineering
Kimberly Gramm, Tulane Innovation Institute (Co-Chair)
Stefan Grant, School of Medicine
Tony Ye Hu, School of Medicine (Co-Chair)
Julia Lang, Taylor Center
Nicholas Mattei, School of Science & Engineering
Michelle Matter, School of Medicine
Vicki Mayer, School of Liberal Arts
Michael Moore, School of Science & Engineering
Michael Naguib, School of Science & Engineering
Kim O'Connor, School of Science & Engineering
Jay Rappaport, School of Medicine (TNPRC)
Chad Roy, School of Medicine
Kenneth Schwartz, School of Architecture and Taylor Center
Eric Ney Smith, A. B. Freeman School of Business
Tihara Richardson Sommers, School of Professional Advancement
Cecilia Suarez, School of Social Work
Juan Terre, School of Medicine
David Thompson, A. B. Freeman School of Business
Elizabeth Townsend Gard, School of Law

Tulane Faculty Innovation Ambassadors help promote the Institute's mission, exposing students to innovation and entrepreneurship.

Faculty Innovation Ambassadors

Assaf Abdelghani, School of Public Health & Tropical Medicine
Thomas Beller, School of Liberal Arts
Gregory Bix, School of Medicine
Mahir Bilen Can, School of Science & Engineering
Stephanie Cheng, A. B. Freeman School of Business
Laura Duval, School of Liberal Arts
Charles R. Figley, School of Social Work
Tracy Fischer, School of Medicine (TNPRC)
Loren Gragert, School of Medicine
Cordula Roser Gray, School of Architecture
Vijay T. John, School of Science & Engineering
Jay Kolls, School of Medicine
Rob Lalka, A. B. Freeman School of Business
Noshir Pesika, School of Science & Engineering
Wayne F. Reed, School of Science & Engineering
William Rials, School of Professional Advancement
Harish Sujana, A. B. Freeman School of Business
Adarsh Vijay, School of Medicine
Arthur Wang, School of Medicine
Dawn Wesson, School of Public Health & Tropical Medicine
William Wimley, School of Medicine
Huanbin Xu, School of Medicine

Faculty Inspiration



Tulane Professor Matthew Escarra and his team of students innovate new solar technology

Blooming high atop Tulane University's Donna and Paul Flower Hall— innovation turns into 'eco-vation' via a futuristic-looking solar energy conversion system named the "Sunflower Receiver," which successfully harvests sunlight to generate electricity and heat. Professor Matthew Escarra originally developed the Sunflower Receiver in collaboration with Professor Daniel Codd at the University of San Diego, building on the technology they jointly developed with a \$3.3M Department of Energy ARPA-E grant.

Last year, the project was propelled even further with funding awarded by the **Tulane Innovation Institute Provost's Proof of Concept fund**. This award enabled the team to initiate a pilot plant demonstration of the technology in partnership with Bernhard, Tulane's energy-as-a-service partner.

This required moving the testbed from San Diego to New Orleans, installing it on the roof of Flower Hall, and integrating its energy outputs directly into the building for daily use.

Escarra and a team of four senior Engineering Physics majors (Owen Harris, Timothy Keegan, Thalia Koutsougeras, and Axel Nielsen) and Sid Padmanabha, a Materials Engineering PhD student, designed, prototyped, and tested their system to enable the building-integrated pilot plant, with the assistance of Bernhard.

In addition to funding, the **Tulane Innovation Institute is committed to helping Escarra find industry partners for this technology**. "We have identified potential customers primed to be early adopters of our technology," Escarra stated.

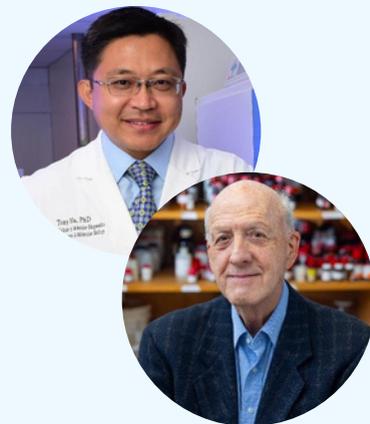
As the world races to find new energy sources while training the next generation of scientists and engineers, this project exemplifies the Tulane Innovation Institute's commitment to innovation and sustainability while underscoring how student involvement can drive real-world impact.



Tulane professors are leading the way in research, innovation, IP development, and startups.

Tulane faculty acknowledged as the most influential innovators in the United States

Nominees for the National Academy of Inventors include Tulane University researchers **Tony Hu**, Weatherhead Presidential Chair in Biotechnology Innovation, and **David Coy**, Research Professor of Medicine, Endocrinology, both named Fellows by the National Academy of Inventors for their innovative work in biotechnology and peptide-based drug development. Hu focuses on advanced diagnostics for personalized medicine using nanotechnology, while Coy is known for developing peptide-based drugs for various medical applications. They were inducted into the prestigious academy on June 18, 2024, highlighting their significant contributions to improving healthcare through research and innovation.



Recognizing Academic Achievement through the IP Innovation and Entrepreneurship Awards

The Office of Research at Tulane University held its Research, Scholarship, and Artistic Achievement Awards in November 2023, honoring exceptional scholars. Among the accolades were two new featured awards, the **Entrepreneurship Award** and the **IP Innovator Award**, presented by the Tulane Innovation Institute.

Wayne Reed, Murchison-Mallory Professor in the Department of Physics and Engineering Physics, received the Entrepreneurship Award for his sustained commitment to entrepreneurship and new venture creation. **Dawn Wesson**, Associate Professor in the Department of Tropical Medicine, was honored with the IP Innovator Award for her groundbreaking work developing patentable intellectual property to rear genetically modified mosquitoes to control mosquito-borne diseases.

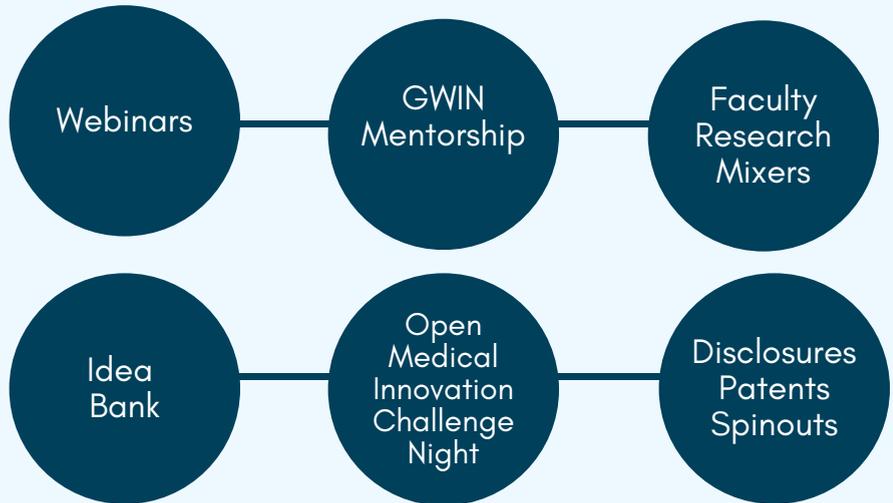




How we do it

STARTUP SERVICES & IDEA / FOUNDER DEVELOPMENT

The Tulane Innovation Institute offers comprehensive support to emerging companies and technologies, including complimentary programs, educational resources, and professional mentorship. After evaluating market potential and helping startups build viable companies, we further assist with raising capital and connecting them to Tulane's network.



FUNDING



PROGRAMS & EVENTS

The range of services we provide continues to expand and is tailored for individuals at any stage of their entrepreneurial journey.

THE IDEA BANK

New business ideas are submitted to the Tulane Innovation Idea Bank, with one-on-one sessions scheduled to guide aspiring entrepreneurs in bringing their ideas to life. innovation.tulane.edu

EDUCATIONAL WEBINARS

Topics include startup marketing, business legal structure, IP protection, funding, and more. innovation.tulane.edu/webinars

GREEN WAVE INNOVATION NETWORK (GWIN) MENTORSHIP

Mentor expertise spans from business acumen to finance, tailored to your specific industry. We provide both Ad-Hoc mentoring and an annual Startup Team mentoring program. innovation.tulane.edu/gwin

PITCH COMPETITIONS

Pitch competitions organized by the Tulane Innovation Institute provide innovators with access to prize money, an audience of experts and investors, and connections to fellow innovators in the broader NOLA entrepreneurial ecosystem to connect and grow ideas. innovation.tulane.edu/demo

TULANE RESEARCH, INNOVATION AND CREATIVITY SUMMIT (TRICS)

This event, produced in partnership with the Tulane Office of Research, showcases the best research, innovation, and creativity from disciplines, departments, units, and schools across Tulane University. research.tulane.edu/trics

OPEN MIC NIGHT

Open MIC (Medical Innovation Challenge) Night allows participants to pitch idea-stage concepts for solving human health and wellness challenges. innovation.tulane.edu/mic

PROVOST'S PROOF OF CONCEPT FUND

Offered twice a year, this grant provides up to \$50,000 in funding to help advance promising ideas and technologies to become market-ready. innovation.tulane.edu/ppoc

FACULTY INNOVATION GRANTS + MIXERS

We support Tulane faculty in integrating innovation and entrepreneurship activities into their curriculum. The team also fosters an innovative mindset by assisting faculty in cross-collaborating on their research across domains. innovation.tulane.edu/fig

PATENTS, LICENSING AND SPINOUTS

Our team works with researchers and innovators to transform their ideas into partnership-ready innovations. We also prepare innovators to launch investable companies through a comprehensive end-to-end commercialization process. research.tulane.edu/oipm

EDUCATIONAL WEBINARS FOR STARTUPS & ENTREPRENEURS

TOPICS INCLUDE

- Art of Customer Discovery
- Bootstrapping & Grant Writing
- Business Model Canvas Essentials
- Cashing in on Connections: Friends, Family, and Angels
- Copyright Unveiled
- Drug Development Patents & Filing Strategy
- Entrepreneur & Founder Spotlight
- Exit Strategies Revealed: IPO or Private Equity
- Machine Learning & AI Software Patents
- Patent Law, Part One & Two
- Patent Searching 101
- Series A, B, and Beyond
- Trademark & Branding
- Venture Capital 101

486
participants

28
experts

21
webinar hours

(FY23 + 24)

Webinar Host Spotlight



Trivia Frazier, CEO of Obatala Sciences, hosted the Money Matters webinar on Bootstrapping and Grant Writing. Attendees learned how to self-fund their businesses, master grant applications, and secure early-stage funding without investors. The session provided essential insights for solo founders and small teams to fuel their startup journey without relying on external funding sources.

A 3-day event, hosted by the Office of Research and the Tulane Innovation Institute, featured poster sessions, panels, pitches, and awards to help further develop ideas.

TRICS

TULANE RESEARCH, INNOVATION AND CREATIVITY SUMMIT

APRIL 23 - 25, 2024



TULANE UNIVERSITY
OFFICE of the VICE
PRESIDENT for RESEARCH

289
posters presented

\$5,500
4 societal impact awards
4 technology development awards

INNOVATION AWARDS

For the first time, the Tulane Research, Innovation, and Creativity Summit (TRICS) had a new innovation component, launching the inaugural Innovation Poster Awards: the **Societal Impact Award** and the **Technology Development Award**.

The **TRICS Innovation and Societal Impact Award**, a \$1,000 prize (\$500 for honorable mention), recognized posters demonstrating significant societal impact as defined by the National Science Foundation's broader impacts criteria.

Huiyun Wu, Postdoctoral Fellow— School of Public Health & Tropical Medicine (1st place)
Garrett Bartoletti, PhD Student— School of Science & Engineering (1st place)
Shelby Olin, PhD Student— School of Public Health & Tropical Medicine (Honorable Mention)
Rebecca Solch-Ottaiano, Instructor of Neurology— School of Medicine (Honorable Mention)

The **TRICS Innovation and Technology Development Award** recognized the poster with the most potential for successful commercialization with a \$1,000 cash prize (\$500 for honorable mention).

Dylan Lucia, PhD Student— School of Science & Engineering (1st place)
Melika Esmaeili Rad, PhD Student— School of Science & Engineering (Honorable Mention)
Eman Toraih, Faculty — School of Medicine (Honorable Mention)
Huiyun Wu, Postdoctoral Fellow— School of Public Health & Tropical Medicine (Honorable Mention)

innovation.tulane.edu/tricsawards



Our \$50K Demo Day

PITCH PERFECT AT NOEW



The \$50K Demo Day pitch competition (which became \$55K) showcased the work of 10 local innovative startups. The event was held during the New Orleans Entrepreneur Week (NOEW) Third Coast Venture Summit. The Tulane Innovation Institute supported these startups through various programs, including mentorship, educational webinars, and pitch competitions. Before the contest, the ten finalists received guidance from accomplished entrepreneur Aaron Foss. This event is a testament to Tulane's commitment to fostering an ecosystem of access and resources to boost entrepreneurship in the region.

1st Place - \$25,000

Informuta

A healthcare company with a mission to provide next-generation diagnostics, tracking, detection, and treatments for antimicrobial-resistant infections.

*Founders: Kalen Hall & Leo Williams
(Tulane Students and Trainees; Tulane Alumni)*

2nd Place - \$15,000

EqualHealth

Software designed to automate the health insurance appeal process through the power of AI.

*Founder: Claire Romaine
(Tulane Student and Trainee)*

Third Place - \$10,000

Cantaloupe AI

A startup with a mission to transform the hiring process in the service industry.

*Founders: Rich Simmerman, Connor Gleason, Joshua Anderson & Lane Degenhardt
(Tulane Students and Trainees)*

Honorable Mention - \$5,000

Tugs

Pioneering the first commercial solution to alleviate tender head pain when styling hair.

*Founder: Howard Moore
(Community)*



IceJack

A revolutionary product designed to cool drinks within seconds, featuring active chilling beverage technology.

Founders: Adam Mefford & Sunay Patel (Community)

RhinoBVM

Creator of a new ventilation mask for the healthcare industry, addressing the issue of ill-fitting standard masks.

Founder: Derek Isenberg (Tulane Alumni)

Thrivvy

A user-friendly app designed to help users find better grocery store pricing across New Orleans.

Founders: Cenzo Cardonna & George Walker (Community)

In Ceremony Productions

A woman-owned, locally based production company committed to fiscally responsible content funding that employs Louisiana residents.

Founders: Sky Hardison & Fallon Goodson (Community)

Levisonics Inc.

A medical device startup focused on developing a novel platform for blood coagulation analysis and measuring the flow of fluids in the body.

Founders: Nithya Kasireddy, Damir Khismaltullin & Glynn Holt (Tulane Alumni)

Wav RC

An online design and manufacturing platform that allows anyone to easily create their own unique remote-controlled plane.

Founders: Samuel Liu & Maggie Lai (Tulane Students and Trainees)

“It was exciting to see these new founders' creativity, determination, and ingenuity. We proudly support the university's efforts to nurture the next generation of entrepreneurs and shape future leaders in innovation and technology. We wish all of the participants much success, and we look forward to following the progress of these innovative companies.”

— Shannon and Mike Acks (TIE Council)



Partnerships

Open MIC Night, an exciting 3-minute pitch event!



The Tulane University Innovation Institute, in partnership with the Tulane School of Medicine John W. Deming Department of Medicine, has hosted three Open MIC (Medical Innovation Challenge) Nights since its 2023 inception. These vibrant and high-energy events provide a platform for developing solutions that promote human health and wellness. It is open to all Tulane faculty, staff, students, PhD candidates, postdocs, residents, fellows, and recent alumni. Participants pitch their innovative ideas for addressing a range of medical and wellness challenges. The panel of judges evaluates the feasibility and impact of each proposal and continues to mentor promising ideas for more funding.

\$24,000 AWARDED

27 IDEAS PITCHED AT 3 EVENTS

“*When Nassir Marrouche and I brainstormed how to support the bubbling ideas of our students and faculty on campus, we didn’t know how exciting this program would be. Seeing these Tulanians invent the next big idea is incredibly special.*”

-Kimberly Gramm, MBA, PhD
The David and Marion Mussafer
Chief Innovation and
Entrepreneurship Officer



Partnering with Provost Robin Forman to support innovators through the **Provost's Proof of Concept Fund**



The Tulane Innovation Institute is excited to partner with Provost Forman, awarding more than a half million dollars to eleven projects as part of the Provost's Proof of Concept Fund (PPOC). PPOC grants support research at Tulane by funding new discoveries that will eventually positively impact society by advancing their technology readiness level.

The PPOC fund is a pathway for early-stage research and technology development that demonstrates a viable market application and the potential for a feasible business model. These grants advancing innovation cover various expenses, from studies and consulting, customer discovery efforts, detailed IP analysis, and prototype development, all aimed at bringing research to life.

PPOC proposals are evaluated based on activities and project milestones relevant to addressing fundamental commercialization questions such as: Does it work as intended? Do we know who is likely to use or license it?

Up to \$50,000 can be awarded to grantees, and the program is available to Tulane faculty, staff, and trainees.

11 PROJECTS

\$540,324 AWARDED

\$2.5M REQUESTED



MEET OUR 'SWEET 16' STARTUP TEAMS

In the fall of 2023, we selected 16 promising entrepreneurial teams with high growth potential that will benefit New Orleans and society. Each team receives guidance and mentoring from trained mentors and industry experts in the Green Wave Innovation Network to propel the advancement of innovative ideas and business goals.

ATLAS

Atlas provides a streamlined solution for personal trainers, freeing up time for client care and expanding income potential by reducing administrative tasks.



As seen in the
The New York Times

Glass Half Full collects and processes regional glass into sand and gravel at their New Orleans facility, primarily for coastal restoration, using paid pickups and a drop-off program.



BioPhoundry develops custom bacteriophage at clinical scales using bacteria protein synthesis machinery, advancing phage therapy for personalized treatment of antibiotic-resistant infections.



In Ceremony Productions
The Sacred Art of Storytelling

In Ceremony Productions is a local, female-owned company fostering a sustainable film industry in Louisiana by empowering women filmmakers through responsible content creation.



ArthroTech develops plant-based solutions for rearing *Aedes aegypti* mosquitoes, replacing animal blood products to address biological and ethical concerns without affecting profitability.



DAWn Audio facilitates real-time collaboration for music artists across different Digital Audio Workstations (DAWs), eliminating compatibility issues and streamlining the creative process.



Informuta uses machine learning and proprietary data analytics platform to provide clinicians with precision diagnostics for antibiotic-resistant infections.

Levisonics

Levisonics is revolutionizing coagulation analysis by providing safer and more comprehensive blood coagulation diagnostics using a minimal finger-prick blood sample, catering to pediatric and vulnerable patients.



Pynk Media empowers local entrepreneurs by spotlighting their stories through content creation and PR support. It addresses underrepresentation in traditional media and fosters positive community change.



ReCoast aims to repurpose glass into sand products for coastal restoration, leading a national movement in recycling for restoration with a focus on ecological safety and regional research to mitigate land loss.



Renuva is building an AI-powered SaaS platform that helps health professionals create research-backed social media content that aligns with their brand, voice, and image.



RhinoBVM

RhinoBVM is a nasal resuscitation mask designed for single-rescuer use. It offers easier sealing, versatility for both adult and pediatric patients, and improved usability for rescuers with smaller hands compared to traditional full-face masks.



Rudra Health provides a telehealth mobile app using augmented reality for movement disorder care. The app offers objective metrics and therapeutic interventions at patients' homes, addressing rising incidence rates and healthcare access challenges.



Thrivvy is an affordable grocery app that integrates multiple retailers. It offers transparent pricing without markups and real-time comparisons and helps stores optimize pricing based on consumer habits.



Tugs is a patent pending topical solution to solve the issue of "tender head pain" a common yet traditionally highly overlooked issue in the Black and Latino community.



VagiPlug

The VagiPlug acts as a barrier during bathing or showering to prevent pH-altering substances from entering the vaginal canal, reducing the risk of infections caused by fragranced soaps.

Thank you!

Green Wave Innovation Network Mentors

Ken Arnold
Sergio Blanco
Ali Boolani
Andrew Brain
Kevin Bratcher
Lee Chedister
Kelly Culbertson Cahn
Paul Daitz
Jacqueline Daspit
Alan DeCorte
Dain DeGross
Justin Dagna
Jeff Emery
Dan Engel
Larry England
Leslie Evans
Roberto Facundus
Erin Firreno
Kevin Francis
Grant David Gillham
Jeffrey Goldman
Monique Goodwin
Allen Graber
Will Hales

Terrance Henderson
Peter Hitt
Malliron Hodge
Lin Hymel
Scott Intagliata
Jennifer Jeansonne
Harris Jones III
Shyam Kakar
Joel Kanter
Sarah Kerin
Debra Kissen
David Kronlage
Thomas Lee
Michael Lisse
Allyson Mackay Dombey
Jesse McClure
Charles McFadden Ellison
Camilla Medeiros
Evan Nicoll
Ken Odom
Sam Olmsted
Gary Owens
Bill Palumbo
Sindhu Pandit

John Paolini
Nicki Parr
David Pruner
Steven Ralff
Megan Reamer
Scott Reamer
Jeremy Reimann
Blake Restel
Jonathan Rich
Mike Rosenthal
Andrew Schneider
Michael Schornstein
Viqar "Viq" Shariff
Jerome Stewart
Dean Teffer
David Tulman
Richard Vaughn
Kelly Venable Carroll
James Vitrano
Giffen Weinmann
Andrew Wetzler
Dave White
Darlene Wolnik
Jura Zibas
Mei Wang

386
pro-bono
mentorship
hours provided
to our
16 startup
teams



Green Wave Innovation Network (GWIN) mentors offer fundamental resources and mentorship to our entrepreneurial community, helping transform ideas into successful businesses.

John Paolini *Tulane Innovation Institute “rockstar,” and GWIN Mentor*

“ I am passionate about giving back to the Tulane community by mentoring students and faculty as they advance their science and build companies with meaningful products that can help patients in need. I hope to clarify the scientific and business path forward, foster their entrepreneurial spirit, and support their innovations.

John F. Paolini, a cardiologist and alumnus of Tulane University (BA, BS '86), is a member of The Tulane School of Science and Engineering Board of Advisors and actively supports the Tulane Innovation Institute. With over 25 years of experience in the bio-innovation industry, he brings a wealth of expertise in biological and medical sciences, clinical development, and regulatory strategy for small molecules and biologics.

Paolini has held prominent positions in the field, including serving as the head of clinical research at Pfizer's Cardiovascular and Metabolic Diseases Research Unit, Chief Medical Officer at Cerenis Therapeutics in France, and clinical development roles at Merck & Co. and Bayer. Currently, he serves as the Chief Medical Officer at Kiniksa Pharmaceuticals. Throughout his career, Paolini has made significant contributions to research and clinical development programs, regulatory submissions through approval, and product launches. He has participated in two initial public offerings (IPOs) and has authored more than 75 peer-reviewed journal articles and abstracts, showcasing his expertise in the field.

Paolini has generously offered his time and guidance to **BioPhoundry** and additional startup companies in the past two years. Additionally, he has served as a reviewer for the **Provost's Proof of Concept Fund**, a semi-finalist judge for **\$50K Demo Day** and played a pivotal role in the Institute's **Technology Advancement Committee**. The Tulane Innovation Institute greatly appreciates the invaluable contributions of Paolini and others who have supported the Institute's mission.



Founder Spotlight

Alan Colowick Innovation Postdoctoral Fellow and Startup Team



PPOC
Fall
2023

GWIN
Startup
Team

NSF
I-Corps



Interview | Rani Brooks **biophoundry**

Rani Brooks, BioInnovation, PhD, is the Alan Colowick Innovation Postdoctoral Fellow at the Tulane Innovation Institute. Rani supports the Institute in expanding its commercialization efforts while also dedicating attention to his own venture, BioPhoundry. BioPhoundry is a biotech company that utilizes phage therapy to combat antimicrobial-resistant infections. Inspired by the effectiveness of phage therapy, despite the bottlenecks in the drug discovery and manufacturing process, Rani aims to create a solution to make phage therapy more scalable and reach more patients.

How has your fellowship with the Tulane Innovation Institute helped you with the development of BioPhoundry?

The greatest gift has been time. I had done a lot of work during my PhD to lay the foundations for BioPhoundry, but there were limits to what I could achieve with the business when I spent most of my time in the lab. The fellowship has also given me the much needed runway to focus on strategic planning, building a team, and fundraising.

How did your GWIN Mentorship help you with research and entrepreneurship development?

My mentor team (Giffen Weinmann, Jeremy Reinmann, and John Paolini) has been very helpful as a sounding board for business planning and advice built on real-world know-how. You can read all the entrepreneurship books in the world, but nothing beats working with experienced folks who've "been there and done that."

MILESTONES OF SUCCESS & FUNDING

2021

\$10k Tulane Novel Tech Challenge, Grand Prize Winner
\$5k Venturewell Stage 1 Entrepreneurial Grant
\$4k Venturewell Qualcomm Innovator

2022

Startup Team Mentoring (GWIN)
\$20k Venturewell Stage 2 Entrepreneurial Grant

2023

Venturewell ASCEND MedTech Accelerator
\$50k, Provost's Proof of Concept Fund
NSF Northeast Regional I-Corp participant, hosted by MIT

2024

Nucleate Global Activator Accelerator
Science Creates Accelerator



Alan Colowick,
TIE COUNCIL



This startup team is riding the Green Wave of Innovation, receiving **\$122K** in funding from Tulane



Interview | Kalen Hall and Leo Williams

Informuta leverages machine learning and DNA sequencing technology to guide effective treatments for difficult infections and, for the first time, predict drug resistance before it occurs.

How has the Tulane Innovation Institute (TUII) helped Informuta?

TUII has been instrumental in our development from the very beginning. Initially, they inspired us to commercialize our novel technology through a startup, providing essential mentorship and resources. The Open MIC Night competition awarded us \$2,500, which was crucial for incorporation, and winning the PPOC funding was transformative, providing capital to prototype and begin preclinical validation on patient samples. It also funded the proof of concept for our resistance predictions, which is pivotal for obtaining preliminary data for NIH and NSF SBIR/STTR applications. Success at the TUII Demo Day further supported our commercial product development, necessary legal work, and establishment of our first office. With TUII's support, we've advanced significantly since our inception in January 2023.

What was the GWIN Mentorship Program's Impact on Informuta?

The TUII Mentorship program has been incredibly beneficial. We were fortunate to be paired with mentors Dean Teffer, Larry England, and Jura Zibas. Dean and Larry provided invaluable guidance on product development, machine learning model training, cybersecurity, and software infrastructure. Jura has been an excellent resource for our intellectual property strategy and is available for legal consultations. The mentorship program also boosted our confidence in investor discussions. Our product development strategy, roadmap, and cost structure are significantly more robust.

MILESTONES OF SUCCESS & FUNDING

March 2023

- \$15k, Lepage Pitch Friday Grand Prize
- \$50k, Provost's Proof of Concept Fund
- \$2.5k, Open MIC Night

October 2023

- Startup Team Mentoring (GWIN)
- Technology Option from Tulane

January 2024

- One of 31 Teams Chosen for Equalize

February 2024

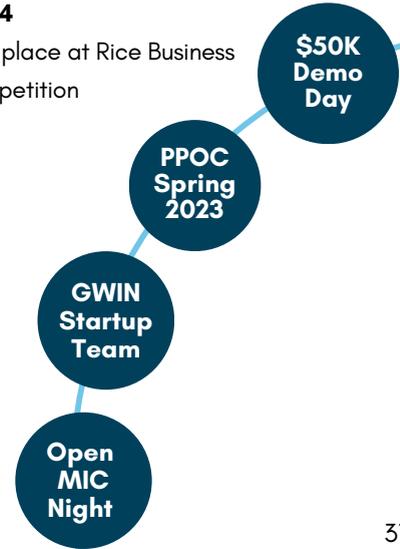
- \$250k Closed Pre-Seed Angel Investor Round

March 2024

- \$25k, 1st place at "TUII \$50k Demo Day"
- \$30k, 2nd place at Tulane Business Model Competition

April 2024

- \$70k, 4th place at Rice Business Plan Competition



Tulane University's Innovation Institute launches a **\$10M** venture fund to support Louisiana startups

TULANE VENTURES



Tulane University's Innovation Institute was awarded \$5 million from the state of Louisiana through the U.S. Small Business Credit Initiative. These funds are part of a new statewide match program to support the region's small business owners and entrepreneurs.

Tulane Ventures, \$10M Seed Fund, supports opportunities for underrepresented, early-stage ventures in Louisiana. These entrepreneurs have traditionally faced barriers to accessing capital, markets, and networks essential for growing their businesses. The fund will invest in Louisiana-based ventures in the health/medical, climate/energy, and artificial intelligence/technology sectors.

The companies selected to participate will receive consulting, mentoring, guidance, and partnership opportunities from the Innovation Institute's extensive network of resources to help them grow and scale in Louisiana.

tulaneventures.com

Our First Venture



nesthealth.com

Nest Health, Tulane Ventures' first investment, has developed an innovative model to provide in-home and virtual care to families. Founded by Rebekah Gee, former Louisiana Department of Health Secretary, obstetrician-gynecologist, and professor at Tulane School of Medicine, Nest Health is the first value-based healthcare practice built for families.

This startup is transforming the traditional delivery and payment model of family care, addressing common healthcare challenges, and ensuring families can receive care in the comfort of their homes.

Nest Health's comprehensive services include house calls, virtual visits, behavioral, mental, and social support, vaccinations, nutrition support, education, chronic condition management, and specialty care with a team of doctors, family advocates, and mental health specialists. Starting in New Orleans, Nest Health plans to expand to other markets nationwide.

Thank you!

Tulane Innovation Institute Committees & Councils

The Technology Advancement Committee reviews technologies with strong IP and market potential to develop commercialization pathways. These esteemed experts are critical advisors and offer guidance on de-risking strategies, IP protection, company formation, and technology development

Technology Advancement Committee

Kenneth E. Arnold, K Arnold Consulting, Inc.
Robert Casillas, Biomedical Scientist
Lee O. Chedister, Foley Hoag LLP
Alex Cogdill, Daiichi Sankyo
Leigh Cosolito Crabtree, Ochsner Digital Medicine
Leslie Boyer Evans, ScaleHealth
Robert Hinckley (Co-Chair)
Lucas Huntimer, Rumin8
Kimberly Gramm (Co-Chair)
Lisa Lorenzen, Lorenzen Consulere, LLC
Keith Marmer, UVB Capital
Ron Ondechek Jr., South Highland Ventures LLC
John F. Paolini, Kiniksa Therapeutics
Paul Riley, Patent Platform Services
Kiera S. Solomon, Evolv Technology
Jerome B. Stewart, Dynatrace
Katy Stone, Stonez LLC
Jura C. Zibas, Wilson Elser

Technology Advancement, Tulane Ad-Hoc Experts

Elizabeth Abboud, School of Science and Engineering
Victoria Belancio, School of Medicine
Tracy Fischer, School of Medicine (TNPRC)
Vijay John, School of Science and Engineering
Jay Kolls, School of Medicine
Matthew Montemore, Tulane University
Lu Peng, School of Science and Engineering
Wayne Reed, School of Science and Engineering
Chad Roy, School of Medicine

Community Council

The Community Council provides business expertise to support community building entrepreneurship for traditionally disadvantaged businesses in greater New Orleans

Kornelius Bankston, Techplug
Aaron Bloch, Jewish Federation of Greater New Orleans
Elton Bradley, Allied Universal Security Services
Jonathan Everett, Rock of Ages Baptist Church
Julia Lang, Tulane Taylor Center
Lyle Leblanc, Scale New Orleans
Agnieszka Nance, Tulane Center for Public Service
Nyree Ramsey, Ujamaa Economic Development Corporation



How to get involved



Give a Gift to the Tulane Innovation Institute

The Tulane University Innovation Institute is committed to helping innovative individuals bring their discoveries to the market. When a student, faculty member, or community innovator wants to take their big idea to the next level, the Tulane Innovation Institute is prepared to assist and guide them through training, mentorship, proof of concept, seed funding opportunities, and commercialization expertise.

Researchers in fields such as medicine, biotechnology, energy, infectious diseases, and engineering are actively developing new technologies and discoveries to improve lives and make a global impact. The Tulane Innovation Institute provides vital support to help new companies and technologies succeed. These domains are capital-intensive.

For more information about giving opportunities, please visit always.tulane.edu/innovation-institute or contact Katie Acuff at kacuff@tulane.edu.



Become a Mentor

The Green Wave Innovation Network (GWIN) is the heart of the Tulane Innovation Institute's supportive ecosystem. The program provides mentorship and access to essential resources for entrepreneurs' growth.

GWIN is dedicated to supporting early-stage entrepreneurs by sharing their insights, industry expertise, and connections. We need your help to transform promising innovations into thriving business ventures. If you are interested in becoming a mentor, please contact Sharon Goldsmith at sgoldsmith@tulane.edu.

Join us!



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your idea!**



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Accelerating ideas

innovation.tulane.edu