



Building
Communities
of Innovation™

The University of Arkansas & University of Arkansas Technology Development Foundation to Host AURP 2024 International Conference

AURP's International Conference, Nov. 11-14, 2024, to spotlight the dynamic innovation and entrepreneurial ecosystem of the University of Arkansas and the Northwest Arkansas region

Tucson, AZ, and College Park, MD, March 26, 2024 – The Association of University Research Parks (AURP), a global nonprofit membership association serving university and institutional research communities and innovation districts, today announced the University of Arkansas (U of A) and University of Arkansas Technology Development Foundation (UATDF) will host the AURP 2024 International Conference (IC2024), November 11-14, 2024, in Bentonville and Fayetteville.

The Northwest Arkansas region will welcome 300+ leaders from universities, innovation districts, and tech hubs plus master planning, architectural and development firms, to network and engage in best practice sharing on a range of relevant topics, including: placemaking and workforce development strategies, innovation district planning and design plus university-led economic development and innovation ecosystems.

AURP's IC2024 will showcase U of A's research and innovation infrastructure, including tours of the Institute for Integrative and Innovative Research (I³R); the Arkansas Research and Technology Park (ARTP) expansion in South Fayetteville; and The Collaborative in Bentonville.

Conference sessions will take place at The Ledger in downtown Bentonville, home to the world's first bikeable building, along with access to Bentonville's Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art. Invited guest speaker includes Walmart heir Alice L. Walker, founder of the Heartland Whole Health Institute and Alice L. Walton School of Medicine and Health Sciences.

"On behalf of our global AURP community, we are thrilled to gather our vibrant Community of Innovation at the University of Arkansas for our 2024 International Conference," said Erin Koshut, AURP President and Executive Director of Cummings Research Park in Huntsville, Alabama. "AURP aims to highlight the University of Arkansas' burgeoning research and entrepreneurial ecosystem,

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which is swiftly establishing itself as one of the nation's premier hubs for innovation and entrepreneurship. With 226 technologies licensed in the last five years alone and a \$2.2 billion annual impact on the State of Arkansas, the university's contributions are truly remarkable."

The AURP International Conference annually convenes institutional leaders representing university-based research parks and innovation districts from around the world. It serves as a platform for impactful knowledge exchange and community building, engaging with industry-leading experts in place-based innovation. Hosted by AURP member institutions, this annual program offers attendees robust opportunities to firsthand experience their peers' operations and chart their growth trajectories.

"The AURP network is excited to explore the thriving innovation ecosystem and scenic beauty of Northwest Arkansas. With its robust research and development infrastructure and a strong workforce pipeline offering a competitive edge for the innovation community, the University of Arkansas and University of Arkansas Technology Development Foundation are perfect hosts for our 2024 International Conference," said Vickie Palmer, AURP Chief Executive Officer. "The conference agenda will showcase the economic and entrepreneurial vitality propelling significant impact within the Northwest Arkansas region and beyond. This momentum is further fueled by the presence of Walmart Corporation headquarters, which supports nearly 1,500 innovation and technology-based Walmart suppliers," Palmer added.

"We are honored AURP has selected the University of Arkansas to host its 2024 International Conference," said Mike Malone, Vice Chancellor for Economic Development, Division of Economic Development. "It's a real testament to the innovation and research facilities that we have on our main campus at the University of Arkansas, at the Arkansas Research and Technology Park and at The Collaborative in Bentonville that we've been given this opportunity to host 300+ research park leaders, investors, and developers from around the world."

The U of A has received the highest classification of research activity from the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, earning the prestigious designation of "Research 1" – Doctoral University: Very High Research Activity. With annual research expenditures exceeding \$164.4 million, the U of A is part of the elite 3.7 percent of U.S. institutions classified with "Very High Research Activity."

About the University of Arkansas:

The University of Arkansas provides an internationally competitive education for undergraduate and graduate students in more than 200 academic programs. The university contributes new knowledge, economic development, basic and applied research, and creative activity while also providing service to academic and professional disciplines. The Carnegie Foundation classifies the University of Arkansas among fewer than 4% of colleges and universities in America that have the highest level of research activity. U.S. News & World Report ranks the U of A among its top

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American public research universities. Founded in 1871, the University of Arkansas comprises 10 colleges and schools and maintains a low student-to-faculty ratio that promotes personal attention and close mentoring. Learn more: <http://www.uark.edu/>

About the University of Arkansas Technology Development Foundation:

The University of Arkansas Technology Development Foundation (UATDF) handles all affiliate, faculty research, communications, partnerships, and marketing inquiries for the Arkansas Research & Technology Park (ARTP), as well as leasing and building maintenance inquiries for the Enterprise and Innovation Centers. The mission of UATDF is to stimulate a knowledge-based economy in the state of Arkansas through partnerships that lead to new opportunities for learning and discovery, that build and retain a knowledge-based workforce and that spawn the development of new technologies that enrich the economic base of Arkansas.

About AURP:

AURP, a non-profit international organization with offices in the Washington, D.C. area at the University of Maryland Discovery District; headquarters in Tucson, Arizona, at the University of Arizona Tech Park; and another situated in Northern California; focuses on creating communities of innovation and education for research parks, both operating and planned, plus innovation districts, incubators, accelerators and the businesses that support the research park industry. AURP and its global membership promote research, institute-industry relations and innovation districts to foster innovation and to facilitate the transfer of technology from such institutions to the private sector. Learn more: <http://www.aurp.net/>

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