



Briefing on Academic Excellence and Economic Development Working Group (AEED)

Purpose and Goals of AEED

The Academic Excellence and Economic Development Working Group (AEED) of the Oregon State Board of Higher Education was convened in early 2004. Chaired by Kirby Dyess, Vice President of the OSBHE, the working group’s goals were to identify and gain support for 2-5 economic development initiatives that build on the academic excellence within our postsecondary institutions, and that—

- Show a measurable return on investment over 20 years, with interim results at earlier intervals.
- Collectively, touch every part of Oregon.
- Build on existing or emerging momentum.
- Draw on and reinforce excellence in academic programs.
- Offer opportunities that are both exciting and easy to conceptualize.

Process: Economic Development Opportunity Areas

AEED researched and addressed 11 potential areas (see box) in which to identify and develop initiatives that build on the program excellence in Oregon’s universities and colleges, and merged or prioritized them down to 6. The six selected areas are: **Nanoscience and Microtechnologies; Sustainability and Natural Resources; Neuroscience and Biomedical research; Engineering and Information Technology; Healthcare Workforce; and Education.**

In its initial phase, the AEED collected a broad base of information on the opportunity areas, in as much depth as possible, through two vehicles: **visits to OUS campuses** as well as to OHSU and Clackamas Community College; and **subcommittee analysis**. Subcommittees for each of the 11 opportunity areas were assembled to develop brief white papers assessing the need for, barriers to, and potential initiatives in each area. The subcommittees were composed of a small number of postsecondary, governmental, and private sector experts in those respective fields, and all presented their findings to the AEED in 2004. For summaries of the subcommittee reports and additional information, see the AEED website at http://www.ous.edu/workinggroups/AEED/group_AEED.htm

AEED Opportunity Areas	
1.	Nanoscience & microtechnologies
2.	Neuroscience & biomedical research
3.	Information technology & analog mixed signal
4.	K-12 education
5.	Natural resources: Agriculture, forestry, fisheries, food and wine production
6.	Sustainability & renewable energy
7.	Healthcare workforce: supply of medical personnel
8.	Arts & creative services
9.	Leisure, recreation, and sports
10.	Keeping top students in Oregon
11.	China & Pacific Rim

Recommendations

The AEED presented the following recommendations to the Oregon State Board of Higher Education (OSBHE) on July 15, 2005, including recommendations for merging or prioritizing opportunity areas and recommendations for Board long-range planning consideration:

1. Support 3 opportunity areas that **connect strong academic and research programs directly to existing or emerging industry clusters**:
 - **Nanoscience and micro-technologies (ONAMI)**, as a long-term economic driver and the technical underpinning of the sustainability area, with Oregon InC serving as lead organization.

- **Sustainability and natural resources**, with an emphasis on applications employing ONAMI technology. The OSBHE (in coordination with OUS campuses) will provide leadership in the sustainability area; Oregon State University will lead in natural resources.
 - **Neuroscience and biomedical research**, with a focus on addressing technology transfer capital and early stage business and technical talent. The University of Oregon and Oregon Health & Science University will lead in these areas.
2. Support 3 other opportunity areas that **support the infrastructure** to ensure a vital economy:
- Increase degrees awarded and research conducted in **engineering and information technology**. The Engineering and Technology Industry Council (ETIC) will provide leadership in partnership with OUS campuses.
 - Assure an adequate **supply of healthcare professionals**, focusing on the preparation of nurses and allied health personnel, and building on the collaborations across postsecondary education institutions and sectors currently being coordinated through the Governor’s Healthcare Workforce Initiative, OIT and OHSU. AEED recommends that this area be developed under leadership of the Governor’s Office, with active participation of the Board of Higher Education.
 - Create a more robust **education system** through greater coordination. AEED recommends bringing the Education subcommittee recommendations into Joint Boards of Education planning.
3. Consider proposals in the following areas for **Board long-range planning**:
- Develop a **top-ranked cooperative MBA program**.
 - **Recognize and advance the research function** at all OUS campuses.
 - **Encourage interdisciplinary, inter-institutional, and cross-sector collaboration**.
 - **Market more effectively** the excellence and impact of Oregon’s postsecondary institutions.

AEED recommends strengthening industry infrastructure to ensure that industry clusters grow:

- Coordinated P-20 Process & Excellence
- Research Faculty & Facilities
- Smooth Tech Transfer
- Federal Funding

Future Issues for AEED

- Streamline the technology transfer review process at the state level.
- Address “valley of death” issues.
- Explore models of research commercialization support for small universities.
- Develop initiatives for the sustainability opportunity area.
- Facilitate development of a top-ranked cooperative MBA program, building from the current Oregon Executive MBA.
- Further explore the China and Pacific Rim opportunity area.

AEED Working Group

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