

## The TechBelt Initiative Receives Excellence in Economic Development Award from the International Economic Development Council (IEDC)

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**(PITTSBURGH)** Oct. 16, 2013 - A multi-state, economic growth accelerator, the [TechBelt](#) initiative has been recognized with a Bronze Excellence in Economic Development Award from [the International Economic Development Council \(IEDC\)](#). Presented on Oct. 8 at the 2013 IEDC Annual Conference in Philadelphia, the award honors this virtual organization in category of “Regionalism & Cross-Border Collaboration” in communities with populations of greater than 500,000.

The TechBelt initiative is a network of technology and innovation stakeholders collaborating to accelerate economic growth in northeast Ohio, western Pennsylvania and northern West Virginia – states with contiguous borders and complementary industrial and academic assets. TechBelt members are broad-based, representing the economic development organizations, foundations, researchers and chambers of commerce within the “mega region.”

“TechBelt is one of the leading initiatives in the industry for innovation, creativity and successful strategies,” said IEDC Chair Paul Krutko, with regard to the award.

Encouraging collaboration across state borders, TechBelt creates – in targeted industry sectors such as advanced manufacturing, energy and life sciences – new products, technologies, companies and prosperity. It also positions the tri-state region as global center for public and private investment, research, innovation and manufacturing. TechBelt’s success is a reflection of the high level of engagement, commitment and cooperation of all its partners.

“Each region that makes up the TechBelt has made tremendous progress over the last several years, but even more significant economic turnaround can be possible when we combine and leverage resources and assets around strategic projects that offer advantages to several regions and states,” said Dewitt Peart, co-chair of the initiative and president of the [Pittsburgh Regional Alliance](#), the economic development marketing affiliate of the [Allegheny Conference on Community Development](#), which is one of the [collaborating organizations](#) that helped to launch TechBelt. “As a mega region, the Tech Belt would be the fourth largest industrial/technology region nationally, with a potential economic impact of more than \$1 billion in annual academic R&D.”

Most recently, the initiative has made an impact by bringing a total investment of \$69M to the tri-state region with the [National Additive Manufacturing Innovation Institute](#) (NAMII), located in Youngstown, Ohio. TechBelt launched the partnership that was awarded \$30M in federal funds and attracted an additional \$39M in matching dollars. NAMII is the pilot institute for the National Network for Manufacturing Innovation and opened in September 2012. Institutes, such as NAMII, will serve as regional hubs of manufacturing innovation and aim to be known as world-class centers for applied research, technology incubation and commercialization.

IEDC’s Excellence in Economic Development Awards recognize the world’s best economic development programs and partnerships, marketing materials and the year’s most influential leaders. These awards honor organizations and individuals for their efforts in creating positive change in urban, suburban and rural communities

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