Finding Partners for Your Ideas

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A single twig breaks, but the bundle of twigs is strong.

(Tecumseh)
Our success has really been based on partnerships from the very beginning.

— Bill Gates —
Need for Partnerships

- Tribal Colleges Research Grants Program requires applicants to partner with one of the following
  - An 1862 or 1890 land-grant institution
  - The USDA Agricultural Research Service
  - A Non-Land-Grant College of Agriculture
  - A forestry school funded under the McIntire-Stennis Cooperative Forestry Research Program

- This is a requirement in the Farm Bill
Other Benefits of “Good” Partnerships

• Partners may have the physical capacity to conduct the research, education and/or extension, e.g., equipment for research.

• Staff at partner institutions may have the credentials and expertise needed to convince the reviewers that project will be successful.

• Complex challenges likely need diverse partnerships to success accomplish desired outcomes.
Costs of a “Not Good” Partnership

- Only want access to funding
- Only want access to native technology
- Not genuinely interested in capacity building
- Do not treat 1994 staff as equal partners
- Unaware or lack appreciation of the culture, history and social differences among the partners
- Unable to accomplish stated objectives
- Long-term damage to all
Forming Partnerships with Universities

• Acknowledge legacy issues
• Universities can be complex and mysterious places
  – Web-based information – Email, phone, visits
  – Literature on subjects can identify ‘experts’
  – Upper administration-faculty-staff-students contacts
  – Word of mouth
• Face-to-face
  – Alumni, classmates, advisors, conferences, committees, grant panels,
    LEAD21, FSLI, orientations, field days
• 1862/1890 Regional Extension and Research Associations
• John Phillips
• NIFA Admin and NPLs
• Local connections with agencies, industry, NGOs
• State-based higher education units/agencies
Forming Partnerships with Government Agencies

• Use Tribal College Liaisons
• Familiarize yourself with agency policies regarding technology, ownership, etc.
• Some challenges are similar to those with Universities
  – authorship of publications
  – ownership of data
• New opportunities through agencies
  – internships and job placements for students
  – new funding
• May be able to learn and influence policy formulation
Forming Partnerships with Businesses

Partners come in various flavors...

Is there a need, challenge that could be beneficial to two or more parties?

What types of business partners “could you engage and how to engage” to accomplish your mission?
SIX INGREDIENTS FOR A PARTNERSHIP*

- Shared Goals and Responsibilities
- Interdependence and Complementary Skills
- Accountability
- Character
- Commitment
- Authentic Communication

Use your “needs” to define who you can work with:
Small / Mid-sized / Larger Global Enterprises ("Sustainability!")

Is it a Win-win – both/all parties benefits?
- Up front potential (need to be willing to take risks)
- Open and transparent, trusting

- Private industries tend to be more transparent (A-Z)
- Don’t automatically assume value

Low Hanging Fruit

• USDA Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR)

• Opportunities/Partnership areas:

- Air, Water, and Soil
- Animal Production and Protection
- Aquaculture
- Biofuels and Biobased Products
- Food Science and Nutrition
- Forests and Related Resources
- Small and Mid-Sized Farms
- Rural and Community Development
- Plant Production and Protection - Engineering
- Plant Production and Protection - Biology

Off the Shelf technologies allowed in these two topic areas

• What TCU-private Partnerships/Collaborations have worked for you? Why? Model these to increase success.
Discussion

Thank You!