Synthesizing Perspective and Insights from its Targeted Audience to Inform the Roadmap Forward for the Ohio Innovation Exchange, An Initiative of the Ohio Department of Higher Education

Battelle Center for Science, Engineering, and Public Policy
John Glenn College of Public Affairs
The Ohio State University

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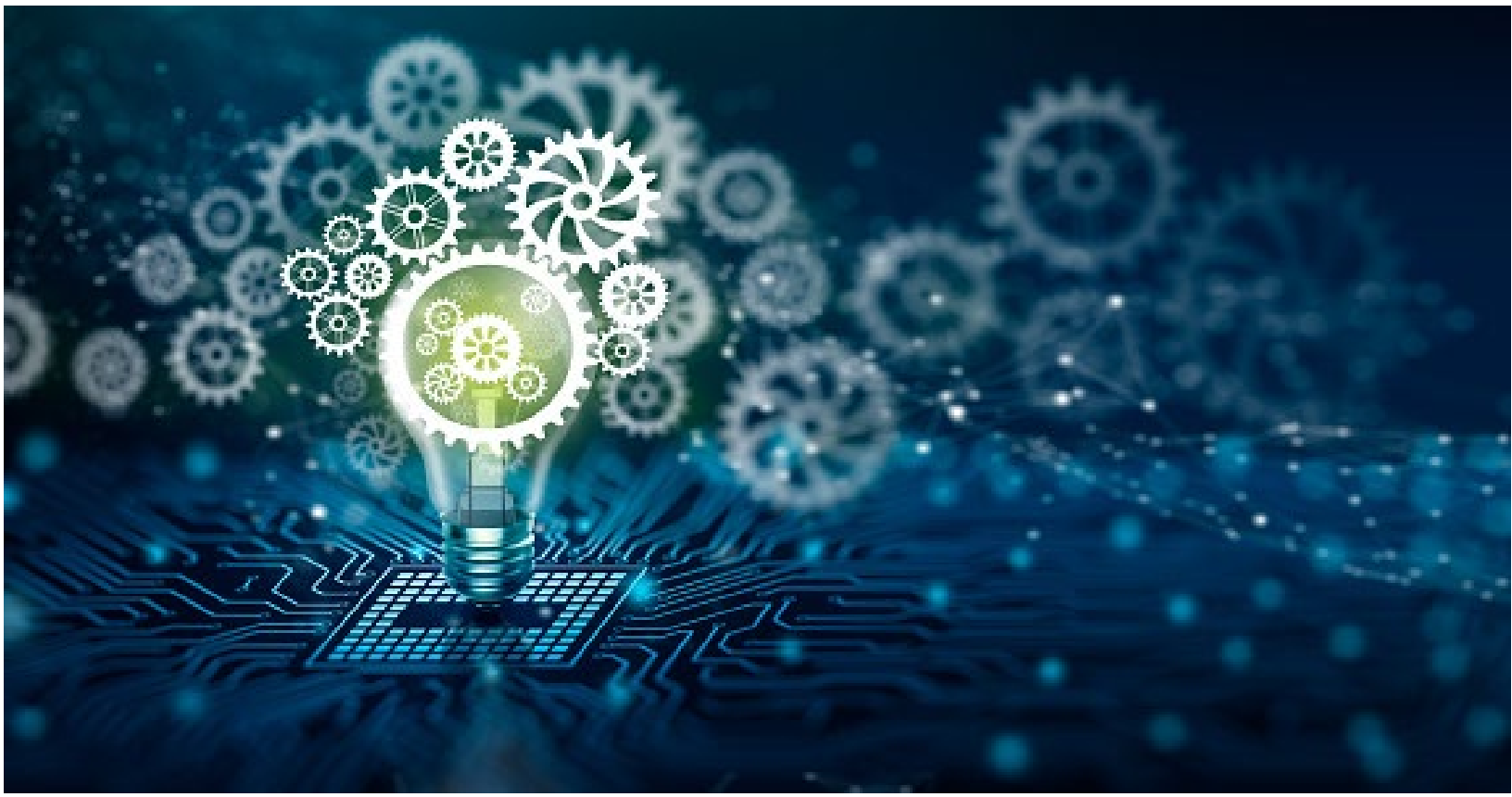

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This project was made possible through the strategic partnership between the Ohio State Battelle Center for Science, Engineering and Public Policy at the John Glenn College of Public Affairs and the Ohio Innovation Exchange (OIEx), with generous support from the Ohio Department of Higher Education through Ohio Third Frontier Research Incentive funding.

We extend our sincere appreciation to Jeffrey Agnoli and Dr. Timothy Cain for their ongoing support, guidance, and vision to elevate OIEx as a vital platform within Ohio's innovation ecosystem.

We are also deeply grateful to the thought leaders from industry, public policy, and higher education who generously shared their time, expertise, and insights through interviews and discussions. Their perspectives were instrumental in shaping a strategic path forward for OIEx and ensuring its continued relevance and impact as a public good.

We acknowledge the efforts of the Rapid Innovation for Public Impact (RIPI) student and faculty consulting team and the staff at the Battelle Center who contributed to stakeholder engagement, data analysis, and the formulation of actionable recommendations.

Finally, we extend our sincere thanks to Joe Shaw, Former Executive, NASA Glenn Research Center, for his insights into the potential alignment between OIEx and Ohio's Advanced Air Mobility (AAM) strategy. His subject matter expertise and thoughtful perspective brought valuable outside validation to our vision for positioning OIEx as the digital backbone of Ohio's air mobility ecosystem.

Together, these collaborative efforts have created a strong foundation for enhancing OIEx's visibility, value, and long-term sustainability across the State of Ohio and beyond.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Battelle Center for Science, Engineering and Public Policy at The Ohio State University was commissioned by the Ohio Innovation Exchange (OIEx) team and the Ohio Department of Higher Education (ODHE) to engage thought leaders across industry, public policy, and higher education in assessing the current and future role of the OIEx. This initiative included stakeholder interviews and resulted in a comprehensive understanding of OIEx's value proposition, impact, and potential as a statewide innovation catalyst.

Key Findings:

- ***Cross-Sector Collaboration*:** OIEx's value in reducing the friction between research and real-world application was affirmed by stakeholders. The platform helps bridge longstanding gaps between higher education and industry by consolidating fragmented knowledge and making expertise more accessible and transparent.
- ***Innovation Acceleration*:** OIEx enables quicker identification of experts, facilities, and licenseable IP aligned with industry needs by centralizing academic research data. This shortens the path from discovery to commercialization—particularly critical for small and mid-sized businesses without dedicated R&D capacity.
- ***Economic and Regional Impact*:** OIEx strengthens Ohio's competitiveness by showcasing the collective capabilities of its universities. It serves as a strategic marketing tool that supports state efforts to attract new business, investment, and federal research funding.
- ***Institutional Collaboration*:** OIEx is also a valuable tool within higher education, helping uncover interdisciplinary and cross-campus collaboration opportunities. This enhances the competitiveness of grant proposals, onboarding new industry engagement and research staff, and supports long-term research synergies.
- ***OIEx as a Public Good*:** OIEx embodies the qualities of a digital public good—freely accessible, non-excludable, and non-rivalrous. It offers equitable access to innovation infrastructure without paywalls or usage restrictions, making it an inclusive resource for researchers, small businesses, and public institutions alike.

Strategic Recommendations:

To enhance OIEx's effectiveness and sustainability, stakeholders identified six core recommendations:

1. Improve search and discovery functionality with user-centered design leveraging capabilities that evolving artificial intelligence technologies now make possible.

2. Continue to promote and socialize the value proposition that OIEx offers by increasing platform advocacy, visibility, and strategic engagment with key audiences.

3. Enhance the current concierge-style support and engagement model with faculty experts and industry partners.

4. Create a multi-directional innovation exchange by exploring platform participation to include federal labs, nonprofits, NGO's and industry partners emphasizing applied research and capabilities.

5. Refine and enhance data submission protocols to decrease known barriers to entry for partners submitting expertise profiles, facility and equipment; explore incentives for university engagement.

6. Establish a sustainable funding model informed and guided by cross-sector governance.

INTRODUCTION

The Battelle Center for Science, Engineering and Public Policy at The Ohio State University has been commissioned by the OIEx and the Ohio Department of Higher Education to engage thought leaders across industry, public policy, and higher education. The purpose of this engagement is to gather diverse perspectives and craft actionable recommendations that will inform near- and long-term strategies for strengthening OIEx.

OIEx is a multi-university knowledge management platform designed to connect researchers, students, and industry professionals across Ohio's higher education institutions. Supported by the Ohio Department of Higher Education, OIEx serves as an early-stage discovery tool that aims to advance the state's innovation ecosystem by decreasing barriers to information, encouraging collaboration, and promoting shared resources across sectors.

Research information management systems are increasingly more common in the U.S. and internationally. And the OIEx continues to lead the nation as one of the top tier state-based system. The European community created euroCRIS (European Current Research Information Systems) to promote cooperation and knowledge-sharing within the research information community, focusing on the interoperability of research data. Its activities also include the global adoption of current research information systems, advancing research information infrastructures, and promoting best practices in system interoperability and standards implementation. The Directory of Research Information Systems (DRIS) is a euroCRIS initiative to map the available research information management infrastructure in Europe and beyond. As of February 2025, it includes close to a thousand five hundred (1,500) CRIS systems – OIEx among them – for institutions, research funders and other bodies in multiple countries.

To better understand OIEx's current value proposition and future potential, the Battelle Center conducted interviews with key stakeholders, including industry leaders, policy experts, and academic professionals. These stakeholders represent a diverse cross-section of industry sectors, including innovation hubs and startups, advanced air mobility and aerospace, biotech, corporate R&D, public policy and education, economic development and venture capital. These conversations focused on:

- The role of knowledge management platforms like OIEx in fostering cross-sector collaboration and driving innovation; and
- The strategies needed to position OIEx as a valued, well-resourced, and sustainable public asset within Ohio's broader innovation landscape.

The insights collected through this process are critical to shaping a strategic roadmap that enhances OIEx's visibility, relevance, and long-term impact. This report summarizes the findings and presents recommendations that can guide the platform's continued development as a cornerstone of Ohio's knowledge-sharing infrastructure.

VALUE PROPOSITION INSIGHTS

OIEx was consistently described as a much-needed solution to the persistent fragmentation of information within Ohio's research and innovation ecosystem. Stakeholders described OIEx as a valuable connector that reduces the friction between research and application. Historically, cross-sector collaboration in Ohio has been hindered by fragmented access to institutional knowledge and a lack of visibility into available research capabilities. OIEx addresses these barriers by consolidating information across more than ten Ohio universities, enabling faster and more strategic connections between academic and external partners.

> *"The value of a platform like OIEx lies in its ability to reduce the friction between research and industry by making expertise and resources easily accessible."*
> — Petr Adamek, CEO, Canberra Innovation Network

This facilitation is not only useful—it is strategic. In a real-world example, a former NASA executive and innovation consultant described a scenario in which incomplete access to academic expertise nearly jeopardized Ohio's bid to attract a major aerospace investment.

> *"If we only knew who [the expert] was, we would have invited them to meet the original equipment manufacturer Since we didn't know, we just missed the opportunity."*
> — Joe Shaw, Former Executive, NASA Glenn Research Center

Accelerating Innovation and Commercialization

Stakeholders emphasized that OIEx's centralized knowledge repository significantly shortens the pathway from research to real-world impact. When businesses can rapidly identify who is working on relevant topics—be it in electric mobility, biotech, or advanced manufacturing—they are better positioned to co-develop products, form partnerships, and bring solutions to market.

> *"When you can clearly map the expertise, the facilities, and the innovation potential in one place, it speeds up commercialization efforts significantly."*
> — J.D. Davids, Managing Partner, Smart Money Ventures

This access is particularly vital for small and mid-sized enterprises that lack the internal capacity to engage in traditional, resource-intensive university outreach. For them, OIEx offers a practical tool to explore potential partnerships without institutional gatekeeping.

Enhancing Regional Visibility and Economic Development

Beyond individual collaborations, OIEx strengthens Ohio's competitive edge by showcasing the collective research and workforce training capabilities of Ohio's higher education systems. This consolidated visibility is instrumental in attracting business development, venture capital, and federal investment to the state.

> *"A centralized platform like OIEx allows regions to effectively showcase their innovation strengths, making them more attractive to external partners and investors."*
> — Ted Angel, Executive Director, National Advanced Air Mobility Center of Excellence

Multiple interviewees indicated that OIEx serves as a strategic marketing tool for the state's innovation assets—particularly in sectors like aerospace, semiconductors, and life sciences—where decisions on location and partnership are influenced by talent availability and proximity to cutting-edge research.

Building Trust and Opportunity Across Institutions

Internally, OIEx catalyzes collaboration across higher education institutions themselves. University leaders expressed enthusiasm about how the platform enables them to identify complementary expertise across campuses, facilitating the formation of competitive, interdisciplinary research teams.

> "It's super important to bring the message of what research does for the United States and the world out into the open… telling those stories is really important."
> — Kevin Gardner, Vice President for Research, Stony Brook University

This capacity is especially valuable in a funding environment that increasingly rewards multi-institutional partnerships. By breaking down institutional silos, OIEx positions Ohio's universities to better compete for large federal grants and strategic research initiatives.

From Missed Opportunities to Scaled Impact

The stakeholder interviews revealed a clear and consistent message: knowledge platforms like OIEx are essential tools for reducing missed opportunities and scaling innovation. Whether helping industry executives identify collaborators, enabling policymakers to

understand the state's R&D footprint, or empowering faculty to form new alliances, OIEx is laying the foundation for a more integrated and impactful innovation ecosystem in Ohio.

> *"I think the more you can bring everything together in one spot — here's the people… here's the projects… here's the capstone stuff… here's the facilities… here's the capabilities — it seems like it would help with the batting average of the number of connections that are made.*
> — Chris Berry, President and CEO, OhioX

The stakeholder interviews affirm that OIEx is emerging as critical digital infrastructure for 21st-century innovation ecosystems. As Ohio continues to grow its position as a national leader in research, technology, and economic competitiveness, tools like OIEx will play an essential role in enabling collaboration, unlocking investment, and catalyzing the ideas that will define the future. Continued investment in its evolution—through improved user experience, expanded partnerships, and strategic outreach—will ensure that OIEx remains a sustainable, high-impact resource for all sectors of Ohio's innovation ecosystem.

OHIO INNOVATION EXCHANGE AS A PUBLIC GOOD

The Ohio Innovation Exchange exemplifies a modern public good in the digital knowledge economy—freely accessible, non-excludable, and non-rivalrous. It facilitates collaboration among researchers, entrepreneurs, and industry leaders across Ohio by providing open access to academic expertise, research capabilities, and shared infrastructure from the state's public universities. This transparent, open access model reinforces collective innovation and equitable economic development.

According to Bergstrom and Goodman (1973), public goods provide communal value without diminishing availability to others. OIEx aligns with this principle: whether accessed by a startup in rural Ohio or a Fortune 500 firm in Cleveland, the platform's core utility remains undiminished. There are no usage restrictions, tolls, or membership barriers—

FIGURE 1 OIEX NUMBERS FROM OHIO'S PARTNER UNIVERSITIES

distinguishing it from proprietary platforms or academic databases locked behind institutional paywalls.

This framing is echoed by Ostrom and Ostrom (2019), who differentiate public goods from common-pool resources and club goods. Unlike common-pool resources, which risk depletion, or club goods, which require access fees, OIEx resists exclusivity and overuse. Its architecture supports voluntary, coordinated engagement—features that Witesman (2016) identifies as essential for mission-driven public value infrastructures rooted in nonprofit and public service logic.

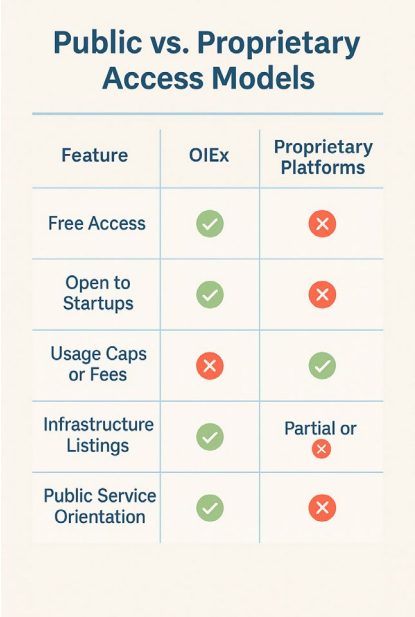

FIGURE 2 PUBLIC VS. PROPRIETARY ACCESS MODELS

While fee-based models can offer financial sustainability, as noted by Yusuf et al. (2014) and Vajdic et al. (2012), OIEx derives its utility precisely from its open access nature. By avoiding monetization, it lowers transactional barriers that often inhibit engagement—especially for early-career researchers, under-resourced institutions, or small businesses.

As Benson (2016) argues, the "ideal-type public good" in today's digital landscape fosters equitable access, maximizes collective benefit, and operates as a connective infrastructure free from rent-seeking or fragmentation. OIEx embodies this vision, demonstrating how public institutions can co-create platforms that expand innovation capacity while remaining grounded in public service and inclusive growth.

STAKEHOLDER INFORMED FUTURE RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are informed by interviews with the stakeholders across industry, public policy, and higher education. These individuals provided critical insight into the current value and future potential of the OIEx. Their feedback reflects a shared recognition of the platform's promise and a collective vision for its continued development as a strategic, state-supported resource.

1. Improve Search and Discovery Functionality with User-Centered Design Leveraging AI

Stakeholders consistently emphasized the need to improve OIEx's ability to deliver more relevant, targeted, and accessible results. Enhancing the platform with AI-driven search tools—such as intelligent filters, academic-to-industry keyword translation, and contextual categorization—will make discovery more intuitive and efficient. These enhancements will help users locate relevant expertise, facilities, and research outputs that align with real-world needs.

2. Continue to Promote and Socialize OIEx's Value Proposition to Increase Platform Visibility and Strategic Outreach

Increasing awareness of OIEx remains essential for broadening its impact. Stakeholders recommended a targeted outreach strategy involving platform demonstrations, regional roadshows, university-hosted events, and integration into state economic development initiatives. Strategic partnerships with JobsOhio, industry associations, and chambers of commerce can help socialize OIEx's value to a wider audience and embed it within Ohio's broader innovation and workforce development agenda.

3. Enhance the Current Concierge-Style Support and Engagement Model with Faculty Experts and Industry Partners

OIEx should continue to strengthen its support model by expanding concierge-style services. Embedding OIEx ambassadors or liaison staff in regional hubs—such as the National Advanced Air Mobility Center of Excellence—was suggested to provide personalized guidance and foster stronger connections between academic and industry partners. This hands-on support is key to enhancing the platform's accessibility and usability across sectors.

4. Create a Multi-Directional Innovation Exchange by Expanding Participation Beyond Academia

To reflect the full breadth of Ohio's innovation ecosystem, stakeholders recommended expanding OIEx to include federal labs (e.g., NASA Glenn, AFRL), nonprofit research institutes, NGOs, and private-sector R&D organizations. Including these new contributors and showcasing applied research and industry-relevant capabilities will make the platform more valuable for external stakeholders. Additionally, providing detailed access information for research facilities and equipment will strengthen OIEx's role as a comprehensive discovery tool.

5. Refine and Enhance Data Submission Protocols to Reduce Barriers and Incentivize University Engagement

Ensuring data quality and coverage across participating institutions is critical to the platform's continued credibility. Stakeholders recommended establishing standardized data submission and update protocols to reduce institutional barriers. Increasing awareness and participation in faculty "industry-engaged" designations and exploring incentives for regular updates and profile maintenance will further improve the platform's functionality and relevance.

6. Establish a Sustainable Funding Model Informed by Cross-Sector Governance

To secure OIEx's long-term viability, stakeholders emphasized the need for a diversified funding strategy that includes continued state investment, university support, and private-sector partnerships. In addition, the formation of a cross-sector governance body was recommended to provide strategic oversight, align institutional interests, and ensure accountability in platform performance and development.

These recommendations represent a collective vision for enhancing the Ohio Innovation Exchange as a vital resource in advancing the state's innovation capacity. By acting on these insights, OIEx can strengthen its role as a statewide connector—bridging institutions, industries, and ideas. Continued investment, collaboration, and strategic refinement will ensure that OIEx remains a valuable, sustainable asset for Ohio's research and innovation ecosystem well into the future.

ENVISIONING A ROADMAP TOWARD 2035:

OHIO'S DIGITAL BACKBONE FOR AIR MOBILITY INNOVATION

"Air transportation systems of the future promise to transform our communities by bringing the movement of people and goods off the ground, on demand, and into the sky..."

— National Aeronautics and Space Administration

[Editor's note: Former NASA Glenn Research Center executive Joe Shaw offered 30+ years of subject matter expertise and perspective on the following case study detailing ways that OIEx can help inform Ohio's Advanced Air Mobility strategy – a pioneering effort that he and senior state officials are crafting.]

OIEx Case Study: A Dynamic Gateway to Ohio's Air Mobility Ecosystem

Ohio is a nationally recognized Advanced Air Mobility (AAM) Leader. As Ohio continues to lead the nation in the development, manufacturing, and testing of advanced air mobility technology, Governor Mike DeWine's 2026-2027 executive budget proposes the creation and adoption of a statewide *Advanced Air Mobility Strategy* that will cement these technologies as a state priority and provide a vision. [Mar 21, 2025].

The State's investment in the rising field of AAM creates an unprecedented opportunity for the Ohio Innovation Exchange (OIEx) to become the state's central knowledge infrastructure, fueling the growth, coordination, and global leadership of Ohio's advanced air mobility (AAM) sector. As the aerospace industry shifts toward electric vertical takeoff and landing (eVTOL) aircraft, drone delivery systems, and autonomous air traffic networks, Ohio is uniquely positioned to lead—with OIEx serving as the engine that connects this vision to reality.

To realize this vision, it's essential to understand how OIEx will function as a dynamic, intelligent gateway to Ohio's air mobility ecosystem.

Properly resourced OIEx could provide real-time mapping and connection of:

- Faculty experts in propulsion, navigation, autonomy, AI, battery technology, policy, and other emerging areas of innovation.
- Research centers and facilities, such as wind tunnels, flight testing corridors, and electric propulsion labs.
- Cross-institutional projects tied to FAA, NASA, Department of Defense , and industry partner priorities.
- Startups, original equipment manufacturers, and tier-one suppliers working on vehicle platforms, airspace systems, and infrastructure.

Building upon this infrastructure, OIEx will foster a unified innovation network that enables seamless collaboration across the AAM sector.

This network will enable frictionless discovery and collaboration. A startup looking for battery researchers, a federal agency seeking insights on air traffic policy, or a university seeking partners for an NSF AAM grant will use OIEx to instantly locate the most relevant expertise, infrastructure, and institutional partners.

Beyond facilitating connections, OIEx will play a pivotal role in promoting equity, efficiency, and economic growth within Ohio's air mobility sector.

Advancing Equity, Efficiency, and Economic Growth

OIEx will also ensure that Ohio's leadership in air mobility is inclusive, strategic, and sustainable. As a public good, it will support:

- Talent access and workforce development, connecting students to internships, fellowships, and career pathways in AAM.
- Resource equity, enabling small businesses and rural institutions to access the same research capacity as larger players.
- Commercialization velocity, shortening time from idea to impact by linking research with prototyping and deployment partners.

These initiatives will position OIEx as a global model rooted in Ohio's rich legacy of aviation and innovation.

By 2035, OIEx will be recognized nationally—and globally—as a replicable model of how digital infrastructure can support real-world innovation. It will serve as a cornerstone of Ohio's identity as the birthplace of flight and the future of air mobility.

Its architecture will be responsive to evolving industry needs, governed by public and private partners, and integrated with federal systems—from NASA Glenn and AFRL to the FAA's drone integration programs.

To measure the success of these initiatives, specific metrics have been identified to track progress by 2035.

Metrics of Success by 2035

- 100+AAM related research projects for which OIEx was recognized as enabling by the participants.
- A statewide air mobility collaboration index embedded in OIEx analytics.
- Formal OIEx nodes embedded in regional hubs (e.g., Springfield's National AAM Center).
- A digital "AAM Map" of researchers, facilities, and projects for use by policymakers and industry.
- Integration of community colleges, four-year institutions, and certification programs to build air mobility talent pipelines via OIEx.

In conclusion, OIEx 2035 will not simply be a platform. It will be a strategic enabler, a policy tool, and an engine for equitable growth. Through continued investment, community co-design, and smart governance, OIEx will help Ohio transform its airspace, economy, and national standing—while ensuring that innovation remains accessible to all.

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APPENDIX

LIST OF INTERVIEWED INDUSTRY USERS AND ACADEMICS

Petr Adamek [Canberra, Australia]
Chief Executive Officer, Canberra Innovation Network
Petr Adamek is the CEO of the Canberra Innovation Network, where he leads initiatives that foster collaboration among startups, universities, and government to drive regional innovation. Adamek is a champion of entrepreneurial ecosystems and brings international expertise to his work in fostering innovation-based economic development.

Ted Angel [Springfield, OH]
Executive Director, The National Advanced Air Mobility Center of Excellence
Ted Angel is the Executive Director of the National Advanced Air Mobility Center of Excellence, where he leads strategic collaborations between academia, government, and industry. His work focuses on advancing research, testing, and implementation of AAM technologies and shaping the future of U.S. airspace mobility.

Phillip Aquino, Ph.D. [Marysville, OH]
Research Engineer, Honda
Dr. Philip Aquino is a Research Engineer at Honda, where he contributes to the development of next-generation mobility technologies. His work involves advanced systems testing, data analysis, and innovation in automotive and aerospace applications, supporting Honda's long-term innovation strategy.

Chris Berry [Columbus, OH]
President and Chief Executive Officer, OhioX
Chris Berry is the President and CEO of OhioX, a nonprofit industry organization advancing Ohio's technology and innovation ecosystem. He brings a policy and communications background to his leadership role, advocating for public-private partnerships and statewide collaboration to position Ohio as a leader in the digital economy.

Marcus Carano [Columbus, OH]

Project Manager, Smart Columbus

Marcus Carano is a Project Manager at Smart Columbus, where he coordinates technology implementation and innovation projects aimed at building a smarter, more equitable city. He plays a central role in cross-sector collaboration, community engagement, and the integration of digital infrastructure solutions.

J.D. Davids [Columbus, OH]

Managing Partner, Smart Money Ventures

J.D. Davids is a venture capital expert with Smart Money Ventures, where he supports early-stage companies in scaling innovative technologies. With a strong focus on financial strategy and startup acceleration, Davids plays a key role in fostering economic growth through strategic investment in high-potential ventures.

Rubén Del Rosario, D. Eng. [Kent, OH]

Director, Center for Advanced Air Mobility, Kent State University

Dr. Rubén Del Rosario is the Director of the Center for Advanced Air Mobility (CAAM) and a Professor at Kent State University's College of Aeronautics and Engineering. He leverages a distinguished career in aerospace, including senior leadership roles at Crown Consulting and NASA, to lead CAAM in shaping the future of aviation. Dr. Del Rosario focuses on real-world experiential learning and research excellence in advanced air mobility systems.

Kevin Gardner, Ph.D. [Stony Brook, NY]

Vice President of Research, Stony Brook University

Dr. Kevin Gardner is the Vice President for Research at Stony Brook University. He brings a strong background in civil engineering and public-private research partnerships to his role, where he leads efforts to expand the university's research enterprise and technology commercialization.

Rich Granger [Columbus, OH]

Managing Director, Workforce and Economic Development, Fly Ohio

Mr. Rich Granger is the Managing Director of Workforce and Economic Development at Fly Ohio, where he leads statewide initiatives to develop talent pipelines for the advanced air mobility industry. He works across sectors to align educational programs with emerging industry needs, advancing Ohio's competitiveness in aviation innovation.

Dave Hudak, Ph.D. [Columbus, OH]

Director, Ohio Technology Consortium, Ohio Supercomputer Center

Dr. Dave Hudak is a Director in the Ohio Technology Consortium where he oversees the Ohio Supercomputer Center. He advances high-performance computing resources and services that support research, education, and industry innovation throughout Ohio and beyond.

Kevin King, Ph.D. [Athens, OH]

Senior Director of Scientific Affairs, QuidelOrtho

Dr. Kevin King is the Senior Director of Scientific Affairs at QuidelOrtho, a global leader in in-vitro diagnostics. King oversees research and clinical affairs, ensuring the scientific rigor and regulatory compliance of QuidelOrtho's diagnostic technologies, including those at the forefront of infectious disease detection.

Charles Layne [Nashville, TN]

Technology Advancement Manager, Launch Tennessee

Charles Layne serves as the Technology Advancement Manager at Launch Tennessee, where he leads initiatives that support startup growth and technology commercialization. He works closely with entrepreneurs, research institutions, and industry partners to accelerate the development and market entry of innovative technologies in Tennessee's high-growth sectors.

Laura Lanese, J.D. [Columbus, OH]

President and CEO, Inter-University Council of Ohio

Laura Lanese is the President and CEO of the Inter-University Council of Ohio, where she advocates for the state's 14 public universities. A former state legislator and policy expert, Lanese works to promote higher education funding, research collaboration, and public good through Ohio's university system.

Tim McCartney [Cleveland, OH]

Executive Vice President, Parallax

Tim McCartney is the Executive Vice President of Parallax, a firm specializing in defense innovation and aerospace systems. With extensive leadership experience in military and private sector operations, McCartney helps guide the company's strategic direction and partnerships in emerging technology sectors.

Eddie Pauline [Columbus, OH]

Chief Executive Officer and President, Ohio Life Sciences

Eddie Pauline leads Ohio Life Sciences as CEO and President, overseeing the organization's mission to advance the state's bioscience sector. A seasoned executive with a background in innovation and strategic partnerships, Pauline works at the intersection of policy, business, and academia to strengthen Ohio's life sciences infrastructure.

T.J. Richardson [Dayton, OH]

Chief Executive Officer, APEX Accelerators

T.J. Richardson serves as CEO of APEX Accelerators, a national network that supports small businesses in navigating the federal procurement process. With a focus on innovation and entrepreneurship, Richardson works to expand access to government contracts and grow the defense industrial base.

Joe Shaw [Columbus, OH]

Former NASA Executive and Aerospace Consultant, The Ohio State University

Joe Shaw is an aerospace consultant affiliated with The Ohio State University, where he lends his extensive experience in aviation systems and aeronautics to strategic research and industry engagement efforts. With a deep background in aerospace engineering and program development, Shaw helps bridge academic innovation with industry needs, supporting Ohio's leadership in advanced air mobility.

Sarah Shumick [Columbus, OH]

University Relations Lead, Battelle Memorial Institute

Sarah Shumick is the University Relations Lead at Battelle Memorial Institute, where she fosters collaborative partnerships between the private sector and academia. She manages outreach strategies to engage universities in research and innovation initiatives, supporting Battelle's mission to advance science and technology for societal benefit.

Stacy Strauss [Athens, OH]

Director, Ohio University Innovation Center

Stacy Strauss leads the Ohio University Innovation Center as its Director, supporting entrepreneurs and startups through incubation, mentorship, and resource access. Her leadership has helped launch numerous successful ventures and has positioned the center as a key hub for innovation in southeast Ohio.

Andreya Veintimilla [Columbus, OH]

Design Research Lead, Smart Columbus

Andreya Veintimilla is the Design Research Lead at Smart Columbus, where she focuses on human-centered design and user experience research for smart city initiatives. Her work bridges technology and community, ensuring that innovations meet the real-world needs of residents and stakeholders.