Innovation Ecosystem Working Group
July 13, 2020
9:30 - 10:30am

Draft Minutes


Welcome and Introduction:
Farhad welcomed the attendees.

Review the focus of the working group:
The group reviewed the original goals established in January and discussed how the COVID emergency and the creation of the M-ERT might impact the work of the group moving forward.

Previous Goals
1. Better Understand System: Drill down to the next level of Innovation Ecosystem Chart.
2. Industry Input: Form three Roundtables of OEM, SME, and New Ventures. Guiding
3. Start-up User Experience: Discuss start-ups in innovation phase; test and understand process of manufacturing here in MA, does this need intervention?

Suggested Pivot:
1. The work of the M-ERT most overlapped with this working group's focus.
2. Use the M-ERT process as a case study of the effect of the ecosystem as it existed. Include input from all users.

Define the group’s goals/outcomes
What did we learn from M-ERT?

- About 30 firms were able to pivot to change their production during COVID-19. The M-ERT provides lessons learned about what it takes for a company to pivot quickly.
- Analyze the company’s inherent ability to pivot. What support systems made it feasible?
  - Access to testing, support navigating the regulatory process, etc.
- The Working Group’s goals should not be anchored to the M-ERT. The M-ERT can be used as a lens to inform and develop questions around short and medium term needs.
- When we look at our previous goals, at least points 2 and 3 are about getting new products by OEMs or start-ups manufactured in the state (beyond prototyping and piloting).
- Identify M-ERT like resources for innovators to bring critical solutions to market faster.
- For new start-ups/innovators - We need to increase awareness that they can make it here and increase manufacturers willing to work with innovators.
- Lots of manufacturing databases, but what is missing from every database is each companies capabilities. How can we operationalize this data?
I see our goal as promoting innovation in the MA manufacturing base through the innovation ecosystem in the state. There are multiple subsets to this: Lessons from MERT, technology upgrading among our manufacturers, networking and connectivity between manufacturers and R&D (OEMs, SMEs, startups) to enhance manufacturing in the state.

Next Step – Define our goals

- Give group choices about the paths forward. What are the targets?
- Are we missing actors who are not currently at the table?
- What is the right next steps for this group?
- If you have information, please share with us before the August meeting.