



## Innovation Center Advisory Panel

Meeting Date: July 14, 2026

Agenda Item: Memo re Advisory Panel

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### BACKGROUND

(Enter the who, what when, where, why)

At our April meeting, we discussed the idea of expanding the Innovation Center Advisory Panel. Expansion allows for inclusion of diverse skill sets—entrepreneurship, venture capital, higher education, industry, workforce development, and government. This diversity leads to more informed decision-making and stronger strategic guidance.

A larger, more representative panel ensures that the Innovation Center remains responsive to evolving industry needs, particularly in high-growth sectors such as technology, advanced manufacturing, and startups. A well-rounded advisory panel with recognized leaders enhances the Innovation Center's reputation, helping attract tenants, partners, and potential funding opportunities.

Including members from regional partners (universities, businesses, economic development organizations) strengthens collaboration and positions Whitewater more competitively within the broader innovation ecosystem. Possible new members:

- Dr. Russ Kashian - Professor of economics/ Director of the Fiscal and Economic Research center, UW-Whitewater
- Megan Mathews, Senior Lecturer, College of Business & Economics, UW-Whitewater
- Chad Eschler, Vice President – Business Development, Findorff

The current MoU between the City of Whitewater and the UWW will need to be amended if the advisory panel expands.

### PREVIOUS ACTIONS – COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

(Dates, committees, action taken)

- N/A

### FINANCIAL IMPACT

(If none, state N/A)

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### STAFF RECOMMENDATION

- Discussion and possible action

### ATTACHMENT(S) INCLUDED

(If none, state N/A)