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**Benedum Funding to Support Tech Transfer Activities**

**Charleston, WV** – TechConnectWV has received $50,000 in grant funding from the Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation to establish an Innovation Transfer Consortium to provide technology transfer services to West Virginia’s smaller colleges and universities. The eighteen smaller colleges and universities in the state, both public and private, could potentially be partners in the initiative.

The West Virginia Innovation Transfer Consortium will connect researchers at the state’s smaller institutions of higher education with private sector partners to assist them in research collaborations and commercializing new products, services, and technologies. The consortium will provide a mechanism for addressing intellectual property protection issues and tech transfer operations, while also enhancing students’ experiences in the classroom.

The Benedum Foundation previously provided $30,000 in funding to TechConnectWV to conduct a needs assessment survey of these higher education institutions, which identified demand for such a consortium.

“We are grateful to the Benedum Foundation for committing resources to this important project, which will help to strengthen the state’s innovation ecosystem,” said Anne Barth, executive director of TechConnectWV. “This consortium will enhance research opportunities, accelerate technology transfer, and leverage innovation in the marketplace,” she added.

TechConnectWV will work closely with the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission to assist in providing in-kind services and will engage strategic partners and stakeholders throughout the state to provide expertise to the consortium. “Innovation can occur in many places within our institutions of higher education where we strive to create an environment for knowledge creation,” said Dr. Paul Hill, Vice Chancellor for Science and Research at the Commission. “This consortium will work to bring viable ideas for commercial product development and jobs to the marketplace,” he added.

A professional with technology transfer experience and strong connections to the business sector will be recruited to lead the Innovation Transfer Consortium.

***About TechConnectWV***

TechConnectWV is a non-profit coalition with broad representation from private industry, the public sector, and higher education. TechConnectWV works to enhance awareness, spur collaboration, and raise the discussion of issues surrounding technology-based economic development. Its goals are to diversify the state’s economy, promote economic prosperity, and create high-paying jobs. For more information, visit [www.techconnectwv.com](http://www.techconnectwv.com).

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