



Chancellor May Names George Baxter to New Position of Chief Innovation and Economic Development Officer

University of California, Davis, Chancellor Gary S. May has selected George Baxter to serve in the new role of Chief Innovation and Economic Development Officer, reporting directly to the chancellor and a member of the Chancellor's Leadership Council. Baxter is expected to begin on April 29, 2024.

May created the chief innovation and economic development officer role to manage large and complex programs that impact broad constituencies. Baxter will establish and lead innovation and economic development for UC Davis and UC Davis Health across all internal and external partners, including engaging with industry and communities. He will be responsible for communicating across the university about innovation infrastructure and economic development. He will also lead the new Aggie Square Innovation District in Sacramento, which is under construction with phase one set to open early in 2025.

[Read More](#)

Venture Catalyst Hosts Sixth Annual Biotech Innovation Gallery (BIG) Open House and Showcase in San Francisco

The UC Davis Venture Catalyst Biotech Innovation Gallery (BIG) Open House and Startup Showcase event on January 10 marked the culmination of the sixth cohort of the BIG pre-accelerator program. The BIG program supports a cohort of early-stage biotech startups associated with UC Davis by providing targeted mentoring, dedicated engagement around IP and regulatory strategy, business model and investor pitch coaching, guidance on fundraising strategies, and assistance with developing marketing collateral used when engaging with potential investors and strategic partners. The pre-accelerator program runs annually from September to December.



The open house and showcase were held at the [Chandran Gallery](#) in San Francisco during the 42nd annual J.P. Morgan Healthcare Conference. The event offers a platform for UC Davis innovators and entrepreneurs to showcase their emerging biotech companies and connect directly with industry experts. During the day at the open house, startups took part in one-on-one meetings with industry representatives, potential strategic partners, and investors. At the showcase in the evening, the seven emerging startups below provided short elevator pitches and updates on their achievements, followed by a networking reception.

1. [AmCyt](#)
2. [IllumifyDX](#)
3. [InStatin](#)
4. [Phenotap](#)
5. Neuralenz
6. [T-Nanobio Therapeutics](#)
7. Xenomet

The BIG pre-Accelerator program and showcase were enabled by funding from the [Office of Research](#), with additional support from [Squire Patton Boggs](#).

[Learn More about BIG](#)

UC Davis-associated Startup 3D-OPS Named Comstock Magazine's Startup of the Month



According to Haley Noelle Bergman, CEO and co-founder of [3D Organic Polymer Silk](#), simply applying biology to existing technology was too rigid. Rather than just copying nature's tricks, they wanted to unravel her secrets. "Instead, we asked, 'How can we mirror biology?'"

In 2019, as a second-year cell biology undergraduate, Bergman posed this question to Avery Williamson and Preston Vanderpan, her two mechanical engineering friends. The soon-to-be co-founders took notes, drew sketches and eventually came up with a design that simulates the golden orb-weaver's silk-spinning process. Using principles of biomimicry, they developed technology that turns a spidroin protein solution into fibroin strands to 3D print with spider silk.

[Read More at Comstock](#)

Five UC Davis-associated Startups on the Sacramento Business Journal 2024 List of 'Startups to Watch'

2024 is off to a promising start for UC Davis-associated startups. Only three weeks into the new year, five UC Davis-associated startups have landed on the Sacramento Business Journal's 2024 local Startups to Watch list:

- [Delix Therapeutics](#)
- [Japa](#)
- [Pair Anything](#)
- [Pheronym](#)
- [Ravata Solutions](#)



Read more at the Sacramento Business Journal links above.

Integrative Center for Alternative Meat and Protein (iCAMP) Launches at UC Davis



UC Davis is leading the establishment of a new Integrative Center for Alternative Meat and Protein, or iCAMP. The center will work toward large-scale commercialization and technological advancement of alternative proteins, including cultivated meat (from animal cells grown in large fermentors), plant- and fungal-based foods, and

innovative hybrids that combine conventional meat products with alternative proteins.

Bringing together leading researchers and academic institutions, industry professionals, advocacy groups and food innovators, the center aims to make the global food system more sustainable.

[Read More](#)

NorCal Entrepreneur Hub: Demo and Information Session



NORCAL ENTREPRENEUR HUB

The [NorCal Entrepreneur Hub](#) is a dynamic online platform that enables innovators, startup founders, and small business owners to find and connect with the right resources for their business, including investors, universities, mentoring programs, networking groups, training programs, and more. This FREE regional tool is a great place for any startup founder or small business owner to get started and/or look for resources as you grow. [Register here to join a free online demo and information session](#) on Friday January 26 at 12:30pm PST or click the button below to learn more about the hub.

[NorCal Entrepreneur Hub](#)

Funding Opportunities

UC Cancer Research Coordinating Committee Awards

The UC Cancer Research Coordinating Committee (CRCC) is a systemwide, faculty-directed cancer research program that provides competitive intramural research awards for topics in any discipline that address any aspect of cancer, including its origins, detection, prevention and cure. The maximum award amount for the 2024-25 award year will be \$85,000. [Apply here](#). Deadline: January 24, 2024

Electric Drive Vehicle Battery Recycling and Second Life Applications

Working with EV batteries and looking for funding? TheDOE expects to make approximately \$37M of federal funding available for new awards under this FOA. [Apply here](#). Deadline: February 7, 2024

NASA Space Tech Catalyst Prize

[The NASA Space Tech Catalyst Prize](#) is part of a national engagement strategy under the Early Stage Innovations and Partnerships (ESIP) Research & Development portfolio as part of a commitment to enhance outreach efforts and attract high-quality proposals from a diverse pool of innovators competing for NASA space technology R&D awards. [Apply here](#). Deadline: February 8, 2024

Berkeley SkyDeck Batch 18 Applications Open!

Startups selected for SkyDeck's Cohort program will receive a \$200,000 investment (for 7.5% equity), access to a network of 500+ advisors/mentors, and the opportunity to pitch to a network of investors on Demo Day. Startups are eligible if they have a team member (founder, employee, advisor) that is either affiliated with any of the 10 University of California campuses **OR** is an international founder. [Apply here](#). Deadline: February 14, 2024

Agriculture and Food Research Initiative - Foundational and Applied Science Program

To meet the growing population's food needs, we must develop innovative, safe, and sustainable management strategies for livestock, crops, and critical underlying resources. Applications that address climate change, food and nutrition security, expanding markets for producers, indigenous traditional ecological knowledge, and equity for underserved producers are welcome. [Apply here](#). Deadline: December 31, 2024

SBIR Grants for Women

By awarding \$200+ million in research and development (R&D) funding to about 400 startups each year, in three phases, through 11 federal bodies. Grantify helps you apply for funding from one such body, the National Science Foundation (NSF). [Learn more](#).

Growth Factory - Accelerating Venture-Backable Startups

The goal of this local startup accelerator is to help founders of pre-seed to seed stage venture backable companies located in the Greater Sacramento Region rapidly achieve product-market fit, positioning them to raise funds and achieve revenue of \$1M in ARR within 18 months. Applications are open on a rolling admissions basis. [Apply here](#).

AgFunder

AgFunder is a new kind of venture capital firm built on proprietary technology and a global ecosystem of over 85,000 subscribers. We invest in exceptional and bold founders who are committed to building the next generation of agrifood technology companies that will transform our food system. We are one of the most active agrifood tech investors in the world. [Apply here](#).

Tech Coast Angels

If your company has a strong team with a great defensible idea, early traction, and is set to grow, TCA is ready to invest up to several million dollars individually or with our syndicate partners. TCA looks at investments in the United States and Canada. [Currently accepting applications](#).

Open SBIR/STTR Grant Topics

Federal Research/Research & Development with the potential for commercialization. [Learn More](#).

UC Davis Office of Research - Links to Funding Sources

Browse the listings of funding announcements provided by sponsoring agencies and other pertinent information about obtaining critical research funding. [View the complete list here](#).

Educational Opportunities

Developing Medical Devices with CROs - Webinar

Join Diane Earp, an expert in regulatory affairs and quality assurance in the development of medical devices. Diane will answer common questions about how strategic partnering with a CRO/CDMO can benefit your product and what you can expect as you integrate these efforts into your overall product development life cycle. [Register here](#). Date: January 26, 2024 | 9:00am PST

Think.Do.Discover. | The Courage to Create: Building a Company and Life by Design

Venturing into the unknown requires more than just an idea -- it calls for the courage to create. In this invigorating talk, Sadie St. Lawrence will challenge you to seize the reins of your destiny by founding a company and architecting a life that aligns with your deepest aspirations. [Register Here](#). Date: February 6, 2024 | 5:00pm PST

Working with VCs on Life Science Company Formation at Universities - Webinar

Starting companies out of universities is a complex endeavor, but startups can get a head start when

done in conjunction with a company formation investor. Join OUP to hear from three company formation investors in the life sciences. [Register here](#). Date: February 7, 2024 | 9:00am PST

Lean Startup Bootcamp

Learn the tools and mindsets you need to bring your idea to reality in this fast-paced two-day bootcamp presented by the Carlsen Center at CSU Sacramento. [Learn more](#). Dates: March 15-16, 2024

CSU Sacramento Carlsen Center Hivemind Cohort Spring 2024

The Hivemind Cohort is for students (and recent graduates) who are working on launching their startups. By being an active member of the cohort, the program will connect you to valuable resources, teach important entrepreneurial methods, and facilitate peer interaction and accountability. [Register here](#).

Startup Pitch Workshop - Monthly

Three startups present their pitch for advice and feedback from a panel of experts. Organized by StartupSac, Startup Folsom and NCID. [Apply here](#). Date: 4th Wednesday of every month.

On-Demand Virtual Entrepreneurship Toolkit Series

The new On-Demand Toolkit Series is a resource of past recordings as well as slides and tools taught throughout the 5-week series. After a short application, you will have access to five recordings and subsequent resource tools. [Apply now](#).

Regional Events

Carlsen Center Startup Challenge

The Startup Challenge is a crazy-fun, high-energy competition where you get in a room with creative people for an entire weekend, and experience what it's like to launch a startup from just an idea — by actually doing it. It's not a weekend of talk. It's a weekend of DOING. [Learn more here](#). Info session: January 30, 2024 | 12:00pm PST

Startup Happy Hour

Come join for a fun evening at Bear & Crown British Pub in Old Sacramento! Network, relax, and connect with fellow startup enthusiasts! Featuring guest speaker JAPA Co-founder and CEO Mathew Magno. [RSVP here](#). Date: January 30, 2024 | 5:00-7:00pm PST

CBCC Business Mixer

Network and grow your business at the upcoming CBCC Business Mixer on the first Friday of every month! Get the chance to win a generous Visa Card, a week's worth of radio spots to promote your business, and more! [Learn more here](#).

1 Million Cups

Present your early-stage company to your peers. Or just grab a coffee and listen.
Date: [Every Wednesday](#)

Business Casual: Get Your Creative Biz Together

Every fourth Saturday of the month, Atrium's mentorship team will be hosting a free business basics discussion group. Growing your creative business can seem like a daunting task. Atrium is here to help take your ideas from the drawing board to the boardroom with free "get started right" business workshops for creative startups. Come with a laptop and a ready-to-grow mentality. [Register now](#). Date: Ongoing

Sacramento State Carlsen Center for Innovation & Entrepreneurship Events and Workshops

[Learn More](#). Date: Ongoing

California Life Sciences Institute FAST Advisory Program

Get the coaching you need to perfect your business model. [Apply now](#). Date: Ongoing

Bay Area NSF Innovation Corps Immersive Short Course

Join the weeklong immersive course for university researchers and early-stage startup founders. [Apply now](#). Date: Ongoing

Industry Events

Seed Central - The Essential Networking Event

Networking social and student & postdoc research poster session with Hedgerow Farms, featuring guest speaker Professor Susan Harrison, Chair of the Department of Environmental Science and Policy, UC Davis. [Register here](#). Date: February 8, 2023

CEO & Investor Conference

Biotech executives and investors have joined the [BIO CEO & Investor Conference](#) Advisory Committee, sharing their insights to create timely, impactful sessions and panel discussions on the latest investment trends, therapeutic innovations, and policy developments. [Register here](#). Date: February 24-26, 2024

TechCrunch presents: StrictlyVC @ Los Angeles

StrictlyVC events are cocktail parties with killer content from top VCs and entrepreneurs and other industry leaders who readers want to hear from in a more intimate setting. Past speakers include Alfred Lin (Sequoia Capital), Mercedes Bent (Lightspeed Venture Partners), Sam Altman (Open AI), and Emily Weiss (Glossier), among many others. [Buy tickets](#). Date: February 29, 2024

Science2Startup Symposium

This one-day symposium in Cambridge, MA will feature presentations from top therapeutics researchers to a curated audience of experienced biotech venture capitalists, entrepreneurs at leading biotech startups, and senior executives at large pharma companies. [Learn more](#). Date: April 10, 2024

World Summit AI Americas

The world's leading AI summit for the Americas will return to Montréal and bring together global AI leaders from enterprise, big tech, startups, academia, law, government and investment to hear the world's brightest AI brains deliver innovative, cutting-edge, topical content, tackle the most burning AI issues and set the global AI agenda. [Learn more](#). Date: April 24-25, 2024

TechCrunch Early Stage

At this one-day founder summit, you'll get actionable advice and takeaways from top experts, meet other entrepreneurs taking similar journeys, share your own experiences, and build the confidence to take the next steps towards growing your business. [Learn more](#). Date: April 25, 2024

About Venture Catalyst

UC Davis Venture Catalyst supports the development of new UC Davis-associated ventures fueled by university research and technology. Venture Catalyst offers several innovative programs that bridge the gap between early-stage research and commercialization and provide entrepreneurs the resources, support, and connections needed to successfully form and grow technology-based startups. With a focus on accelerating technology-led economic development in the Davis-Sacramento region, Venture Catalyst also works closely with partners in the regional innovation and economic development ecosystems.

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