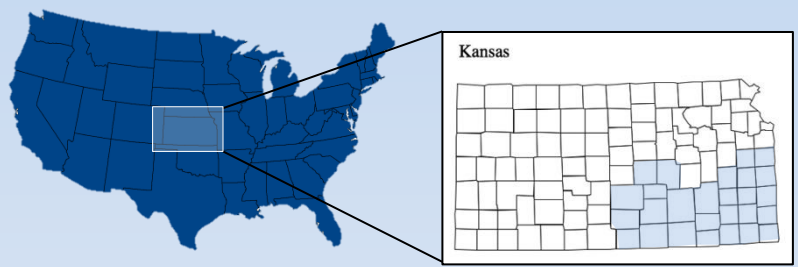


# Investing in Manufacturing Communities Partnership

## South Kansas Manufacturing Community



### The Community

South Kansas is, as the Brookings Institution terms it, “the most manufacturing-specialized” region in the United States with over 30% of regional jobs in manufacturing, more than half of which are engaged in making some of the world’s most sophisticated aircraft. The region is focused on deepening its innovative capacity through increased investment in research and development, greater support for local research institutions, and enhanced linkages between research and workforce and supply chain development. South Kansas is poised to be a global leader in advanced materials and their application in sophisticated aircraft.

### The Vision

South Kansas has been building aircraft for nearly as long as humans have mastered flight. Decades of production have built a comprehensive network of more than 350 precision machine shops, tool and die shops, and subcontract manufacturers with some of the most specialized equipment in the world for metal and composites manufacturing. To grow or even maintain its competitive edge, the region has identified a need to deepen its innovative capacity. In particular, the region has crafted a strategy centered on developing university centers of excellence and industry-driven curriculum to support manufacturers in flexible design, advanced materials development, automation, and prototyping

### The Strategy

**Workforce and Training:** South Kansas has identified 11,000 workers who could be up-skilled to fill jobs in aerospace manufacturing open today or coming open because of impending retirements. In addition to expanding existing partnerships to train the long-term unemployed for jobs in emerging fields and programs with stackable credentials in manufacturing, South Kansas is launching a new WSU Innovation Campus (IC), which will give students the opportunity to gain first-hand experience by working directly on manufacturing R&D projects.

**Supplier Networks:** With aerospace manufacturing as an anchor for a diversified manufacturing sector, South Kansas has identified a common need to better disperse innovations in advanced materials out into its supply chains. To build supply chain capabilities stretching from materials formulation through to full fabrication, South Kansas has proposed the creation of industrial parks and centers of excellence focused on supply chain integration around these critical technologies.

**Research and Innovation:** Five existing manufacturing research centers in South Kansas are collaborating on strategies to integrate research with workforce. In addition, South Kansas has proposed creating shared facilities for research and start-up incubation, including a new WSU Innovation Campus. Today, WSU is ranked first in the nation for business co-investment in aviation research.

**Infrastructure:** The region has created a searchable, web tool – “LocationScout” for businesses looking for “implementation ready” sites for new manufacturing investments, with over 20,000 hits a year. The region has strong freight, rail, and air connections.

**Trade and International Investment:** Nearly 30 percent of the South Kansas economy depends on export with transportation equipment and machinery accounting for the bulk of its exports. South Kansas is currently developing an export through the Brookings Global Cities Initiative that will include providing manufacturers with export assistance and developing strong trading relationships through missions and case management.

**Operational Access and Capital Improvement:** South Kansas manufacturers’ priorities are to reduce their production costs by reducing waste, enhancing efficiency, promoting resilience, and establishing mechanisms for firms to minimize life-cycle costs. The region needs new public-private services to address financing gaps for small manufacturers.

### **The Partnership**

**Employers:** Aerospace Systems and Components; Allen, Gibbs & Houlik, L.C.; Carbon Fiber Remanufacturing; Dassault Systemes Fairmount Technologies; Galaxy Technologies; Globe Engineering Company; JR Custom Metal Products; Mid-Continent Composites; Momentum Wheels; Premier Processing; Spirit AeroSystems; AGCO Corporation; Birdseye Holdings; Buffco Engineering; Case New Holland; Grail Engine Technologies; Great Plains Industries; Kaman Composite Structures; NAI Martens; Nitride Solutions; Ocianna International; Park Aerospace Technologies; The Bradbury Group; The Murdock Companies; Youngers and Sons

**Educational:** Wichita Public Schools; Career and Technical Education; Wichita Area Technical College; Hutchinson Community College; Independence Community College; National Center for Aviation Training; Wichita State University; College of Engineering; Center for Innovation and Enterprise Engagement; Center for Entrepreneurship; Center for Economic Development and Business Research; National Institute for Aviation Research; Kansas State University’s Advanced Manufacturing Institute; Pittsburg State University

**Government Entities/Civic Organizations:** Governor’s Office; KS Department of Commerce, Division of Workforce Development and Division of Business Services; Sedgwick County; Regional Economic Area Partnership; Kansas Global Trade Services; U.S. Small Business Development; Kansas Small Business Development Center; Mid-America Manufacturing Technology Center; Wichita Metro Chamber of Commerce; Visioneering Wichita

**Industry, Trade, and Professional Organizations:** Wichita Manufacturer’s Association; Society of Women Engineers; Great Plains Robotics Alliance; Wichita Technology Corporation; Manufacturing Institute

**Existing Regional Organizations/Local Economic Development Groups:** Greater Wichita Economic Development Coalition; South Central Kansas Economic Development District; Project 17