

Institute for Life Science Entrepreneurship Gets Grant to Expand Biotech Hub

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The Institute for Life Science Entrepreneurship (ILSE-Website: <https://ilsebio.com/>) was awarded a \$100,000 planning grant with Union Township to expand its outreach to life science entrepreneurs and its University programs.

A Union Township proposal to expand ILSE, located in Kean's STEM Building, received one of nine New Jersey Economic Development Authority (NJEDA) Innovation Challenge awards. The ILSE incubator, as it is called, is a facility that currently supports eight startup life science businesses by providing physical space, shared equipment, and experienced support and consultation on the challenging issues facing entrepreneurs.

"We anticipate an expansion to house another 20 companies or more and up to 100 researchers, creating a nexus of innovation at Kean for industry research, faculty

collaboration and student educational opportunities," ILSE President Thomas Richardson said.

The Township of Union applied for the grant with ILSE as a strategic partner to generate economic development, commercial activity and jobs in the municipality.

"We are very excited to be awarded this grant and look forward to the cumulative effort, which will in turn help Union," said Mayor Suzette Cavadas.

ILSE also plans to create education programs with Kean that provide real-world, hands-on experience for students, such as internship or training programs that prepare students to climb the career ladder in the life sciences industry, Richardson said.

"This is part of the Innovation Challenge grant — to work with faculty on creating meaningful programs," he said.

As part of the grant, ILSE and Union Township will identify additional space to house and support startup life science companies.

"Ultimately, an expanded incubator will allow ILSE to increase the density of life science innovation and job creation in Union and on Kean's campus, and promote entrepreneurial dynamism and student success," said Keith Bostian, dean of Kean's New Jersey Center for Science, Technology and Mathematics and ILSE's chief executive officer.

Under the enhanced ILSE plan, Kean students will get practical experience with startup companies, develop technology, and address current problems in health care.

The work will include laboratory experience in research and development, building students' specific skills in a variety of technical disciplines and exposing them to data collection, record keeping, analysis and reporting, and other areas.