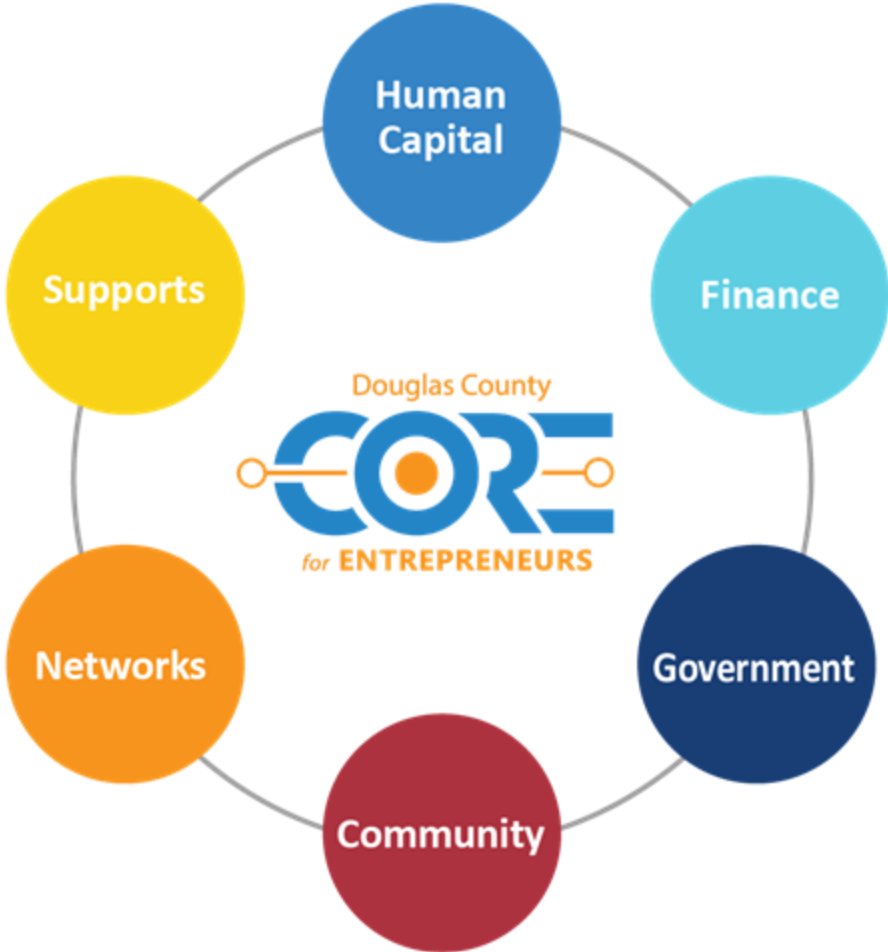


# Douglas County Entrepreneurial Ecosystem Blueprint

Version 1.0  
June 25, 2021



## **Background**

This document is an inventory of the components required to strengthen our entrepreneurial ecosystem, but it is merely a starting point. CORE will work with all interested parties to improve this model throughout 2021 and beyond. As our community's needs evolve, we can add / remove / enhance pieces as we see fit.

The OECD has found that it is important to take a comprehensive approach to ecosystem building. Addressing one piece of the puzzle without considering the rest will likely have little impact.

“...initiatives are likely to be ineffective if introduced in isolation. For example, increasing the supply of venture capital is unlikely to be effective if there is no deal flow. Encouraging more people to create start-ups is likely to have little impact if many occur in low growth areas. Introducing entrepreneurship education will be ineffective if graduates move to more conducive entrepreneurial environments. Policy implementation has to be holistic.”

~ [Entrepreneurial Ecosystems and Growth-Oriented Entrepreneurship](#). OECD, 2014

Therefore, a comprehensive investigation of these components is required. We will seek to inventory our assets, identify gaps and fill these gaps in the coming months and years. We will experiment, learn and adapt as we build new capabilities within our ecosystem.

## **What We Need**

- Your input and support. Please get involved and recruit others. Your input is vital to our success.
- An open, honest dialog. There are no silly questions or ideas. As a group, we need to document and discuss all ideas.
- A sense of urgency to make progress blended with long-term, strategic thinking.

Together, we can strengthen our community and economy. Thanks for your support.

~ The Founding Members of CORE

# Entrepreneurial Ecosystem Components

## **1. Human Capital**

### **a. Entrepreneurial Talent**

- i. Local Business Owners
- ii. Technology Entrepreneurs
- iii. Serial Entrepreneurs
- iv. Multi-Generation Family Businesses
- v. Wannabe Entrepreneurs
- vi. Innovators
- vii. Equity, Diversity & Inclusion

### **b. Workforce**

- i. Skilled Labor
- ii. Unskilled Labor
- iii. Early Employees for Tech Startups

### **c. Education & Training**

- i. K-12 Education
- ii. Universities
- iii. Technical Schools & Adult Education

### **d. Experiential Programs**

- i. Professional Development Programs
- ii. Tech Startup Incubators
- iii. Tech Startup Accelerators
- iv. Skill-Building Bootcamps
- v. Pitch or Business Plan Competitions
- vi. Startup Weekends
- vii. Entrepreneurship Workshops

## **2. Supports**

### **a. Connectors**

- i. Resource Connectors
- ii. Relational Connectors

### **b. Service Providers**

- i. Business Plan Development
- ii. Legal Services
- iii. Accounting, Payroll & Tax Services
- iv. Employment Agencies & Recruitment Services

### **c. Support Organizations**

- i. Chambers of Commerce
- ii. Other Entrepreneurial Service / Support Groups

### **d. Infrastructure**

- i. Internet Service Providers

- ii. Utilities (Water, Gas, Electric)
- iii. Commercial Real Estate
- iv. Coworking Spaces
- v. Makers Spaces
- vi. Bioscience & Chemical Laboratories
- vii. Modular Manufacturing Facilities
- viii. Clusters
- ix. Opportunity Zones

### **3. Finance**

#### **a. Funding Sources**

- i. Traditional Lending Institutions
- ii. Micro-Loan Programs
- iii. SBIR, STTR, NSF & Other Government Grants
- iv. Innovation Funds
- v. Pre-Seed Venture Capital
- vi. Seed & Growth Capital
- vii. Angel Investors
- viii. Friends & Family

#### **b. Deal Makers**

- i. Deal Makers (Lead Angel Investors)
- ii. Angel Investor Education

### **4. Networks**

#### **a. Relationship Groups**

- i. Local Business Networks
- ii. Tech / Biotech Startup Networks
- iii. University Alumni Associations
- iv. Social & Business Connections

### **5. Government**

#### **a. Elected Representatives**

- i. City Governments
- ii. County Government
- iii. KS State Government
- iv. US Federal Government

#### **b. Regulatory Agencies**

- i. KS Department of Commerce
- ii. US Department of Commerce
- iii. Securities and Exchange Commission
- iv. US Patent and Trademark Office
- v. USDA & FDA

## **6. Community**

### **a. Entrepreneurial Culture**

- i. Tolerance of Risk, Mistakes & Failure
- ii. Social Status of Entrepreneurs
- iii. Ambition & Drive

### **b. Quality of Life**

- i. Nature / Outdoors
- ii. Affordability
- iii. Arts & Entertainment
- iv. Suitable for Young Families
- v. Multiple, Large Companies with Local Headquarters

### **c. Storytelling**

- i. Visible Entrepreneurial Success Stories
- ii. Recent Wins with Demonstrated Wealth Generation
- iii. Reinvestment of Capital into Local Community & Entrepreneurship
- iv. Local News Media

### **d. Reputation**

- i. Statewide
- ii. Regional
- iii. National
- iv. International

### **e. Entrepreneurial Ecosystem Leadership**

- i. Entrepreneurial Ecosystem Strategy
- ii. Community & Institutional Buy-In
- iii. Community Roundtable
- iv. Sense of Urgency
- v. Unequivocal, Team-Based Approach