



THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA
**CENTER FOR
INNOVATION**



THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA
Biosphere 2

Contact:

Jessa B. Turner, Director of Communications
Tech Parks Arizona / UA Center for Innovation
Phone: 520-405-8262
Email: jbturner@uatechpark.org

DRAFT For Release:

April 12, 2022

University of Arizona Launches Incubator Outpost at Biosphere 2

TUCSON, Ariz.- The University of Arizona Center for Innovation held a grand opening today to celebrate its new startup incubator at Biosphere 2, which will support renewable energy and sustainable tech startups.

UACI at Biosphere 2 was launched with three startups, all of which will go through UACI's structured 27-point road map that takes them through a continuum of education provided by mentors, advisers and community collaborators. Entrepreneurs will use various physical spaces at Biosphere 2 that allow them to test and demonstrate the tech in specific environments.

At today's ribbon-cutting ceremony, University of Arizona President Robert C. Robbins was joined by government officials, business leaders, innovators, community members and other senior UArizona leaders.

Biosphere 2 serves as a laboratory for controlled scientific studies, an arena for scientific discovery and discussion, and a far-reaching provider of public education. Its ability to combine varying scales, precise manipulation and fine monitoring together in controlled experiments provides scientists with the unique opportunity to explore complex environmental questions.

UACI is Arizona's leading startup incubator network with 68 companies in the program and locations across Southern Arizona. UACI offers leaders of science and technology startups the benefit of connections with UArizona experts, incubation programs and the office and lab space needed to turn ideas and inventions into scalable and sustainable businesses that ultimately provide high-paying jobs and fuel Southern Arizona's economy. UACI and Biosphere 2 united to provide the ideal partnership to translate research into impact.

UACI at Biosphere 2 offers interconnected spaces intentionally designed and constructed to accommodate different types of users as well as bring together resources needed to advance

technology. A proposed expansion includes developing a tech park that would allow corporations to collaborate directly with the research and innovation occurring at Biosphere 2.

As a Research 1 institution, the University of Arizona is a leader in research in renewable energy, sustainability, water resource management, space and defense, mining technology, biotech and optical sciences.

“The research expertise at the University of Arizona contributes to the worldwide effort to develop a more sustainable future. The inventions and innovation spurred from the university’s research drive a robust startup scene, and co-locating research and startup support services together will only build on this success. This future-focused environment, dedicated to moving innovations forward, provides the ideal platform for technology advancements and business growth,” Robbins said.

“Academic research and innovation may begin in a lab setting, but, through units like UACI, we ensure that our work reaches far beyond the university, enriching life for all,” said Elizabeth “Betsy” Cantwell, UArizona’s senior vice president of research and innovation. “UACI has done an incredible job helping startups from the university and tech community realize their commercial market potential. Uniting these organizations will allow us to accelerate the translation of research to real-world impact.”

“It’s been nearly fifteen years since the University took over Biosphere 2. It has been a time of incredible growth and evolution from when the Biosphere 2 was simply known as home to the world-famous, closed-system experiment of the 1990s. I am so excited about the new University of Arizona Center for Innovation collaboration that will build on the solid research foundation the University has advanced at Biosphere 2. Together, we will advance companies who focus on improving impacts on the environment, food safety and security, fit-for-purpose water, water access, and energy security,” expressed Joaquin Ruiz, UArizona vice president for global environmental futures and director of Biosphere 2.

“As an internationally designated soft-landings incubator location, UACI can now provide unmatched testing and demonstration opportunities to businesses across the globe,” said Carol Stewart, UArizona associate vice president for Tech Parks Arizona. “The synergy between UACI and Biosphere 2 is vast and we intend to explore options to give startups a vantage point.”

###

About the UA Center for Innovation

[The University of Arizona Center for Innovation](#) (UACI) is a startup incubator network with outposts across the Southern Arizona region. For nearly two decades, the program has directly served over 200 companies and impacted thousands of entrepreneurs. This is done by providing access to people, programming, and places that help entrepreneurs take their

companies from idea to market. Startups go through a structured program that takes them through a continuum of education provided by mentors, advisors, and community collaborators. UACI also provides access to service providers, industry cluster groups, interns, and connections to potential customers and strategic partners. Entrepreneurs utilize various physical spaces that include offices, wet and dry labs, meeting rooms, a prototyping center, collaboration areas, and the infrastructure to support these spaces. [Tech Parks Arizona](#) directs the UA Tech Park, the UA Tech Park at The Bridges and the University of Arizona Center for Innovation.

About Biosphere 2

The mission of [Biosphere 2](#) is to advance our understanding of the natural and human-made environment through unique research and experimentation, interdisciplinary science training and education, and leadership in initiatives that address the grand challenges to sustaining Earth systems and quality of life.