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## WKU to benefit from statewide partnership

By AARON MUDD [amudd@bgdailynews.com](mailto:amudd@bgdailynews.com) 1 hr ago

Western Kentucky University expects to benefit from a new partnership among the state's public universities that will help bring new ideas and innovations to the marketplace.

"I think the impact is especially going to be strong from the regional comprehensive universities," said Cheryl Davis, the associate provost for research and creative activity at WKU.

Through the new Commonwealth Commercialization Center that Gov. Matt Bevin recently announced, universities will share resources to help translate intellectual property and innovations into market-ready products and startups, a news release said.

Businesses also stand to gain from the network, which will act as a hub for both startups and corporations interested in working with universities and the talent they can offer to help fuel economic growth, the release said.

In the release, Bevin described the partnership as a way to position Kentucky as a leader in the commercialization of university research.

“The cutting-edge research being conducted at our institutions of higher learning can compete with any state in the nation. C3 enables all of our colleges and universities to share resources to support commercialization, to mobilize capital and to transform that research into fuel for economic growth,” Bevin said.

Led by the Cabinet for Economic Development’s Kentucky Innovation office, the University of Kentucky and the University of Louisville, C3 aims to provide a wide variety of resources to the state’s public universities and colleges. That includes help with developing new innovations, intellectual property protection and marketing and promotion, among many other services.

The effort is being funded in part by a \$1.2 million grant from Kentucky Innovation. C3 was created during a summit held in August among several university presidents and research administrators, the release said.

The University of Kentucky and the University of Louisville, the state’s two top research universities, have offered their commercialization offices to lead the effort. Kentucky’s regional universities and community and technical college system helped develop C3’s framework.

Ultimately, the partnership is meant to help plug gaps in the services required to bring research and development to the marketplace.

Davis said WKU in particular stands to gain from the partnership. While the university already helps innovators develop their ideas and get them protected legally, it faces some limitations in getting those ideas market-ready.

Davis said the C3 initiative could help WKU break through that barrier and take its commercialization efforts to new heights.

“It really will allow us to take it to the next level,” she said.

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## **Aaron Mudd**

Education reporter. Covers education and related issues, focusing primarily on the Bowling Green and Warren County public school districts and Western Kentucky University.