

VPR Rosowsky interview with Wyatt Thompson, 2/21/23

Comments by David Rosowsky, Vice President for Research, Kansas State University

On February 21, 2023, prior to tip-off of the men's basketball game, Wyatt Thompson (Voice of the Wildcats) interviewed VPR Rosowsky sitting courtside at Bramlage Coliseum. K-State went on to beat Baylor that evening.

Wyatt asked the VPR to talk about three exciting initiatives at K-State: (1) Ag Innovation construction plans, (2) the GRIP program for transdisciplinary research, and (3) the Edge District.

Rosowsky on Ag Innovation:

K-State, with help from the state, is investing \$125M to replace aging agriculture teaching and research facilities across our campus.

Agriculture is the largest economic driver in our state, with a total contribution of \$76 billion to the Kansas economy.

Our facilities for agriculture teaching and learning, research and discovery were in tough shape. We were being outpaced by neighboring land grant universities that also have strong ag programs. And we were losing great Kansas students to other states.

K-State has made it a top priority to take down old buildings that are no longer state-of-the-art or able to serve our students' needs and replace them with entirely new facilities that look to the future, that excite and engage our students, and that create opportunities for real innovation around agriculture.

As you know, K-State has embarked on a bold, ambitious Economic Prosperity Plan to create 3,000 new jobs and bring \$3B of new investment into the state by 2030. Ag innovation is one of three areas of focus in our Economic Prosperity Plan, for obvious reasons. Kansas IS agriculture, and it's critical that we remain at the leading edge. Ag is poised for revolutionary change, from what we grow to how and where we grow it. It's about precision agriculture and digital agriculture now, and K-State will lead the way in teaching, research, and outreach to Kansas farmers, cattlemen, and growers – helping to make Kansas agriculture more productive and sustainable.

K-State's commitment to ag innovation is strong. And these new facilities will place us among the very top programs in the nation, not only for agriculture but for innovation, interdisciplinary research, and industry partnerships. We want to keep our best students right here in Kansas. That means world-class education, access to both farms and to industrial partners, training in advanced technologies, and creating the tools and technologies that will create jobs in Kansas and keep our economy strong.

VPR Rosowsky interview with Wyatt Thompson, 2/21/23

Comments by David Rosowsky, Vice President for Research, Kansas State University

Rosowsky on GRIP:

GRIP stands for Game Changing Research Initiation Program. This is a really exciting program we launched earlier this year at K-State to build teams of faculty, from across the university, to conduct research on “grand challenges” – the most complex, most challenging, and most important problems of our time. Think food, energy, water, infectious disease, and biosecurity.

K-State is investing \$3M to fund three teams of GRIP researchers for three years. Teams must include faculty members from multiple departments and colleges. They are also required to demonstrate the potential to attract significant additional funding, either from industry or from federal funding agencies. And finally, they must demonstrate the potential, even in the long term, for economic impact in the state.

The goals of the GRIP program are two-fold: First, to position groups of K-State faculty to be competitive for very large grants, in the \$10-20 million range. And second, to begin to transform K-State’s culture around research and discovery to one that both values and invests in transdisciplinary work.

We know that finding solutions to the greatest challenges we face as a people and a planet will only be possible by bringing together researchers from different fields. We also know that the federal funding landscape is moving toward larger, multidisciplinary grants that require teams of investigators to demonstrate they can work effectively together. Our GRIP program will help to build that capacity, create those teams, and demonstrate that ability.

The interest in the GRIP program far exceeded our expectations. We received pre-proposals from 36 teams of faculty, far more than we anticipated. From that list, we have invited 10 teams to submit full proposals later this spring. We anticipate announcing the teams selected for GRIP funding by early June.

Rosowsky on the Edge District:

The Edge is a new development being constructed by the KSU Foundation, just north of Kimball. Think of this as K-State’s innovation district, a place where K-State students and faculty collide with industry partners, a live-work-play district that captures the energy and spirit of the university’s main campus, the athletics campus, the Agronomy District (home of our agronomy farms and research facilities, the International Grains Program, the Wheat Innovation Center, and more), the new Animal Sciences Gateway, and the rapidly growing biodefense and biosecurity nexus forming at K-State (with the Biosecurity Research Institute, or BRI; the College of Veterinary Medicine, NBAF, and soon Scorpius Biomanufacturing, Scorpion Biologics’ new name).

VPR Rosowsky interview with Wyatt Thompson, 2/21/23

Comments by David Rosowsky, Vice President for Research, Kansas State University

We are attracting companies to Manhattan that want access to K-State, our students, our researchers, and our state-of-the-art facilities. By locating companies adjacent to our main campus, we can create internship and employment opportunities for our students that can help to prepare them for jobs, or even turn into jobs after graduation.

You've already seen some of the new buildings in the Edge, the Foundation's office building and the building next door to that, 1880 Kimball which houses several companies. And ground will be broken next month on the third building right next door. Already, the Foundation has tenants ready to move in. And very soon ground will be broken on a new hotel and restaurant district in the Edge, right across from Bill Snyder Family Stadium. Plans are also underway to entirely refresh the athletics fields across Kimball to include improved playing surfaces and lighting, as well as running paths and picnic areas. This will become an important element of the Edge District, and of course a great space for our students.

The Edge District, which runs along Kimball Avenue from College to North Manhattan, also includes NBAF, the new Animal Sciences Gateway which will include a new ag competition complex now in the final planning stages, and the university's research park, where Stormont Vail's new Manhattan campus is being constructed.

The Edge District is going to be game-changing for K-State and for Manhattan. It will help us attract students, companies, and families to our community. Stay tuned, this is going to be very exciting.

Office of the Vice President for Research
Kansas State University