TULSA INNOVATION LABS®



Opportunity for all

Tulsa Innovation Labs is building a world-class innovation hub in America's heartland that unlocks opportunity for all.

Our Why

Oklahoma's industries must transition to the innovation economy.

We build on the strengths of these industries to shape them for the future.



Aerospace and Defense

$52.5B GDP | 250K JOBS

Expanding capabilities of autonomous and uncrewed flight



Energy

$37B GDP | 390K JOBS

Driving operational efficiency and sustainability as energy demand and resources evolve



Manufacturing

$24B GDP | 138K JOBS

Facing pressure to automate due to supply chain and technological disruptions

Shaping Oklahoma's economic future

TIL moves beyond traditional approaches to economic development.

DEFINE THE MARKET OPPORTUNITY	UNDERSTAND THE BARRIERS	BUILD AND EXECUTE SOLUTIONS
We track national and global trends to see how technology is reshaping existing industries and creating new markets with a right to win.	We partner with companies to understand the barriers that limit their growth and the opportunities that will shape their future.	We design, fund, and implement the solutions that enable industry to capture new opportunities, driving job and income growth.

Our partners: industry, universities, government, tribal nations, and community organizations.

Oklahoma wins when industry can build, hire, and grow

Core business fundamentals drive the state’s ability to compete nationally and globally.

Infrastructure that enables and accelerates growth

Re-shoring and re-industrialization is creating market opportunities in Oklahoma's core industries. Sites with infrastructure in place lower startup costs, keep businesses globally competitive, and put Oklahoma in a competitive position to rapidly meet growing demand.

A talent pipeline, and a place talent stays

Oklahoma competes for workers as well as projects. Industry-led training ensures Oklahomans build meaningful careers. Investments in quality of life build a state where talent moves and stays – keeping the companies that hire talent here.

Capital to scale, customers to sustain

Companies expand where they can fund growth and find demand. Financing for scaling firms and pathways to new customers keep Oklahoma-built companies growing here rather than elsewhere.

Next-generation aerospace and defense

Our thesis: *Oklahoma's legacy aerospace assets position it to lead the nation in autonomous systems and advanced air mobility.*

OUR RIGHT TO WIN

Industry expertise

250+

aerospace companies in the Tulsa region

Qualified workforce

46,000+

aerospace sector jobs in the Tulsa region

Physical assets

1,200

square-mile Skyway Range with 300+ flying days a year

Aligned research

2

institutes: OSU aerospace and University of Tulsa cyber

Outcome: Manna, an international drone delivery company, selected Tulsa as the base for its U.S. manufacturing operations, citing Tulsa's proactive work to build industry-focused solutions.

A repeatable approach to solutions

Leveraging federal investments and public-private partnerships to remove barriers.

TEST

WHAT WE'RE BUILDING

A 1,200-square-mile flight test range (Skyway) and SAFE-T, a shared airspace data feed for safe commercial drone flights

WHY IT MATTERS

Manna chose Tulsa for U.S. manufacturing, citing SAFE-T (1,000 jobs targeted)

Invested: Skyway ($10.7M), SAFE-T ($9.3M)

CERTIFY

WHAT WE'RE BUILDING

Cybersecurity and Green UAS certification support through the University of Tulsa, plus pathways to defense contracts

WHY IT MATTERS

Direct pathways to customers, and a certification hub for cybersecure technology

Invested: ARC-H, certification pathways ($3.0M)

MANUFACTURE

WHAT WE'RE BUILDING

Supply chain analysis, technical help, and lending, plus a Cherokee Nation Businesses defense partnership

WHY IT MATTERS

Drone makers (OEMs) choose sites where local suppliers can support production

Invested: TARMAC, manufacturing support ($19M); Tulsa Ports ($28.9M)

SCALE

WHAT WE'RE BUILDING

Financing, trained talent, and the Greenwood AI Center of Excellence, staffed with Microsoft experts

WHY IT *MATTERS*

Growth stalls without capital and trained workers

Invested: G-ACE, AI enablement assets ($14.7M), workforce ($31.3M)

What we've learned: four factors shaping industry growth

1 Regulatory ambiguity limits the commercial market

Flying beyond visual line of sight (BVLOS) still needs case-by-case FAA approval, and a standard rule is pending. Competing national, homeland security, and commercial airspace needs add uncertainty.

2 Global security shifts open a major defense opportunity

Rapid shifts in global security have transformed how drone technology is used for defense. In Dec. 2025, the FCC stopped authorizing new foreign-made drones, shifting demand toward U.S. production.

3 Production capacity and ready sites are at a premium

Tulsa-area industrial vacancy has stayed below the U.S. average since 2006, and rents are rising. Ready sites give companies certainty when delivery is a national security matter.

4 Supply chains reflect decades of China's state-led investment

China controls most rare earth processing and drone battery production. Making U.S.-based production viable takes intentional, sustained investment to ensure American-made drones are cost competitive.

How we respond: targeted, deliberate interventions

1 Build the technology for safe airspace

Cities, states, and the country must build the tools that let operators fly drones and advanced aircraft safely. SAFE-T is Oklahoma's contribution, and Manna cited it in choosing Tulsa.

2 Help manufacturers capture defense demand

The defense demand signal is real, and capturing it takes intent. Manufacturers need help earning certifications, winning defense contracts, and financing growth.

3 Make sites ready

Time is money. A ready site gives companies certainty when delivering product is a matter of national security. Tulsa's industrial assets (Tulsa Airport, Fair Oaks, Inola) are valuable but require investment.

4 Invest to make U.S. supply chains viable

China's state-led strategies built these advantages over decades. U.S.-based production needs intentional investment to make the business case work.

How the state can lead

Policy priorities for consideration.

1 Build a clear regulatory pathway

- Streamline state permitting, siting, and coordination, with ODAA as the single front door
- Work with federal leaders to finalize a national framework
- Maintain and increase airspace and advanced mobility funding

2 Capture the new domestic market

- Increase funding for state business incentive programs, particularly those supporting existing industry
- Advocate for efforts that provide an “integration layer” to support Oklahoma-based manufacturers entering defense contracting

3 Invest in site infrastructure

- Identify sites across the state with the greatest opportunity to support industry growth
- Proactively invest in site infrastructure to position Oklahoma as the state where critical production capacity can be scaled with speed

4 Accelerate U.S. supply chains

- Monitor federal investment initiatives designed to unlock critical supply chain constraints, such as the federal investment in USA Rare Earth; assess how state policy can accelerate critical national security goals

Across all four: invest in and empower ODAA as the agency through which policy and funding actions are administered, and build the technical expertise to lead the nation.


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