

# WiSys: Invests in the Winnow Fund, names fund Managing Director Richelle Martin as WiSys 'Venture Capitalist-in-Residence'

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Working with the statewide network of innovation hubs, known as WiSys VentureHomes®, Martin will share her expertise and experience as a venture capitalist with university students and aspiring startup founders throughout the state of Wisconsin.

The move comes as part of WiSys' investment as a limited partner in the Winnow Fund, a fund focused on seed stage startups across the state with an emphasis on sourcing investment opportunities from colleges and universities.

"The Winnow Fund is a valuable partner for WiSys' mission to encourage more entrepreneurial activity across Wisconsin," said WiSys President Arjun Sanga. "As the managing director of Winnow Fund, Richelle's experience in higher education, investor perspective and interest in growing more Wisconsin-based startups align strongly with the goals of the WiSys VentureHome®."

For more than 20 years, WiSys has been dedicated to helping entrepreneurial faculty, staff, students and alumni of the state regional public universities commercialize research, inventions and ideas.

In 2020, WiSys took its commitment to helping the state's innovators further with

the launch of the WiSys VentureHome® program. The goal of the program is to build a network of startup hubs across the state by connecting statewide resources with local initiatives to provide entrepreneurs access to a full menu of startup resources in their local communities.

The first WiSys VentureHome® launched in Eau Claire in 2020, with the second coming online in Green Bay in 2021. Several other hubs are in development for 2022.

These hubs offer entrepreneurs “everything your startup needs under one roof™.” Access to a venture capitalist with a statewide profile is another resource for local entrepreneurs who may not have connections with startup investors.

“Wisconsin’s public higher education system is a powerhouse of innovation, and it benefits every resident to nurture and grow the ideas that come from our own innovators.” Martin said. “I’m excited to work with WiSys to bolster the state’s startup landscape.”

Prior to joining the Winnow Fund, Martin was a leader at UW-Madison’s Office of Industrial Partnerships. The University has an open portfolio of over \$4 billion in research grants and contracts with industrial sponsors, with annual awards of \$1.3 billion. At UW-Madison, Martin negotiated all research contracts with the private sector, giving her significant insight in applied research likely to be translated into products and services.

Martin obtained a B.A. in Art History, Political Science, and Psychology from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. She went on to receive a law degree from the University of Wisconsin Law School.

Martin has experience assisting entrepreneurs, including individuals associated with UW-Madison, in forming companies, including preparation and filing of incorporation documents, and navigating intellectual property matters.

The Winnow Fund is a portfolio fund under the Badger Fund of Funds. The Badger Fund is managed by Sun Mountain Kegonsa, LLC, a partnership between Kegonsa Capital Partners and Sun Mountain Capital. The Badger Fund brings together investment dollars from public and private entities, and has raised over \$35 million, including \$25 million from the state of Wisconsin.

The Winnow Fund's strategy involves making numerous small investments in early stage companies, rather than a few large investments in later stage companies.