

UW-Green Bay, New North, Inc.: New \$1M consortium positions Northeast Wisconsin as statewide leaders in innovation

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UW-Green Bay and New North team up to fuel startup growth

Green Bay, Wis.— In a demonstration of regional collaboration, the University of Wisconsin–Green Bay and New North, Inc. are proud to announce their joint leadership in the Cheese Wedge Consortium, a major entrepreneurship initiative supported through a dedicated \$1 million Ignite Wisconsin grant for Northeast Wisconsin.

This award specifically fuels the region’s unique strategy to accelerate high-growth startups, expand innovation capacity and strengthen the entrepreneurial ecosystem across the 18-county New North region. The consortium—led by New North, Inc.—builds on the organization’s longstanding leadership in Northeast Wisconsin and leverages the future Phoenix Innovation Park’s deep integration with UW-Green Bay.

“Entrepreneurship cultivates the innovation and curiosity needed to solve real-world problems,” said New North President and CEO, Patti Habeck. “When strong partners come together with shared purpose, we don’t just support startups — we build a resilient, thriving regional economy.”

This unified platform will connect universities, corporations, investors and service providers to create an energized and coordinated pipeline for entrepreneurship.

“Supporting the community’s economic needs and driving entrepreneurship for everyone in the region are at the core of who we are,” said UW-Green Bay Chancellor Michael Alexander. “This consortium amplifies our commitment to working collaboratively, advancing statewide education and economic development, and ensuring learners of all ages have access to the skills they need to succeed.”

Driving Results for the Region

UW-Green Bay and New North have collaborated for years to advance economic growth, workforce development and innovation across Northeast Wisconsin.

The consortium’s design leverages:

- New North’s established network of regional partners and deep expertise in convening business, community and government leaders.
- UW-Green Bay’s emerging Phoenix Innovation Park, positioned to serve as a dynamic hub connecting universities, corporations, investors and service providers.
- National accelerator gener8tor, which will deliver programming and mentorship directly to founders.

This joint platform is intentionally region-first, ensuring Northeast Wisconsin receives the strategic focus and resources needed to strengthen its entrepreneurial brand, talent pipeline and business competitiveness.

The Cheese Wedge Consortium will support:

- Accelerator programming tailored to regional needs
- Pre-seed bootcamps
- Corporate innovation and engagement
- Equity investments for startups
- Legal and housing stipends for relocating founders
- Co-working space and community-based outreach

In its first year alone, the consortium is projected to support 21 startups, engage 42 participants, fund 18 companies directly, create 46 new jobs and generate \$3.4 million in regional revenue. These outcomes reflect the consortium’s commitment to building a high-impact, high-visibility entrepreneurship engine for Northeast Wisconsin.

UW-Green Bay's participation demonstrates its growing leadership as the region's access-driven university and as a driver of lifelong learning and talent development. The partnership with New North strengthens:

- The university's role in solving regional challenges
- Opportunities for students, entrepreneurs and industry to collaborate
- Access to applied research and faculty expertise
- The development of in-demand workforce skills

Driving Wisconsin's Entrepreneurial Future — Starting in the New North Region

Gov. Evers' Ignite Wisconsin initiative invests more than \$3.5 million statewide across four consortiums to strengthen high-growth startup sectors. The Cheese Wedge Consortium is uniquely positioned to elevate Northeast Wisconsin's innovation profile and accelerate high-potential startups that will directly impact the region's economy.

New North and UW-Green Bay leadership will continue working closely with WEDC and local partners to ensure this investment strengthens the region's entrepreneurial ecosystem and draws attention to Northeast Wisconsin as a destination for talent, capital and opportunity.

About New North, Inc.

New North, Inc., is a 501(c)3 non-profit, regional economic development corporation fostering collaboration among private and public sector leaders throughout the 18 counties of Northeast Wisconsin, known as the New North region. The New North brand unites the region both internally and externally around talent development, brand promotion and business development, signifying the collective economic power behind the 18 counties. The counties include Brown, Calumet, Door, Florence, Fond du Lac, Green Lake, Kewaunee, Manitowoc, Marinette, Marquette, Menominee, Oconto, Outagamie, Shawano, Sheboygan, Waupaca, Waushara and Winnebago. www.thenewnorth.com

About UW-Green Bay

The University of Wisconsin-Green Bay is a school of resilient problem solvers who dare to reach higher with the power of education that ignites growth and answers the biggest challenges. Serving 11,500 undergraduate, graduate, and doctoral students as well as 101,000 continuing education learners annually, UW-Green Bay offers 200 academic degrees, programs, and certificates. With campuses in Green Bay, Manitowoc and Sheboygan, and a theatre in Marinette, the University's access mission welcomes all students who want to learn, from every corner of the world. Championing bold thinking since opening its doors in 1965, it is a university on the rise – Wisconsin's fastest growing UW. For more information, visit www.uwgb.edu.