

The Academic Venture Exchange

A new approach to sourcing entrepreneurs for
university start-ups

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Observation

- Universities rarely have the deal flow to maintain an entrepreneurial network big enough to resource their deal flow

Idea

- Pool entrepreneurial rolodexes and deal flow to create a matching market
- Value proposition to universities: can attract a much bigger pool of entrepreneurs
- Value proposition to entrepreneurs: can see a wide array of deal flow in one place



Founding Universities



Progress to Date

- > 100 ventures
- > 125 entrepreneurs
- > 50 entrepreneurs-in-residence at venture funds
- > 200 matching conversations
 - ~ 30 “high value conversations
 - ~ 10 “near miss” matches
 - 2 promising match conversations
 - 2 entrepreneur-venture matches made

Observations

- Difficulty of getting good collateral for ventures
- Key Points – Make them!
 - Who are the faculty?
 - What's the backstory to the work?
 - What's the best data?
 - Why is this a more promising approach?
 - What has been the trajectory of the project?
 - Has there been any business work-up? (iCorps, POC funding?...)
 - What does venture and industry say?
 - Clarity on needs
- Video helps

More Observations

- Universities' CRM problem: there is no rolodex
- Many failure modes even after getting to first conversation
- Importance of trial periods
- Entrepreneur match is not enough
- Scale needed for effectiveness
- Sustainability model

But This Works

- Challenges are in execution only
- More to follow....