



Donald F. Smith, Jr., PhD

President

Don is a nationally recognized expert in regional economic development, with a wide variety of work experience at the local, regional, state and national levels. With a unique blend of academic and practitioner experience, Don's work has focused on how regions can leverage and complement their innovation institutions.

Lead roles in strategic economic development initiatives has been a hallmark of his career, from serving a lead analyst on the statewide economic development strategy Investing In Pennsylvania's Future in 1987, through work on the Regional Economic Revitalization Initiative, and key roles in the formation of Innovation Works in 1998, The Pittsburgh Digital greenhouse in 1999 and the Life Sciences Greenhouse in 2000.

Don held the nationally unique role of VP of Economic Development for both Carnegie Mellon University and the University of Pittsburgh – the first such collaboration between unaffiliated universities to advance regional economic development.

In 2009 Don became RIDC's 5th President and has led the reformation of RIDC to establish it as the go to developer of real estate projects that support the public interest in Southwest Pennsylvania.

In Pittsburgh, Don is active in a number of boards and community activities, including serving as Vice Chairman of the Redevelopment Authority of Allegheny County, Chair of the Greater Oakland Keystone Innovation Zone and on the boards of NAIOP Pittsburgh, Idea Foundry, City Lab, and the Steering Committee of the Pittsburgh Regional Alliance, as well as teaching in the Economic Development curriculum at Carnegie Mellon.

