

417d Small Business – Bridging the Innovation Gap

E. Jennings Taylor, Maria Inman, and Phillip Miller

The nation's technology landscape includes academic institutions, large technology based businesses and small technology based businesses. While the lines of technology demarcation are not clear, some general thrusts for these technology oriented entities can be identified. Academic institutions educate and train our future scientists and engineers and push the frontiers of science and engineering knowledge. Large technology based companies desperately seek technological innovation to meet their customers' needs and remain competitive. Technology based small businesses employ more scientists and engineers than either academic institutions or large businesses and are flexible enough to bridge the innovation gap between these entities. Furthermore, patenting activity by small businesses is very aggressive. This presentation will discuss and illustrate the manner in which small businesses play an important role in facilitating technological innovation.