

# EDGE History

## Get More for Oklahoma

EDGE – Economic Development Generating Excellence – began as a grass-roots organization with one goal: to identify a few bold actions to strengthen Oklahoma’s economy. Beginning in the fall of 2003, 23 teams of state-wide experts from both the public and private sectors, with more than 2,400 Oklahomans participating through public forums and online discussions, identified research and education as the first building block to progress in today’s information-based, global economy, and recommended the goal of transforming Oklahoma into the “Research Capital of the Plains.”

In early 2004, the EDGE Action Plan recommended establishing an endowment to support promising science and technology in the state. The action plan stated that earnings from the endowment would fund key actions to allow Oklahoma to become a center of powerful research to support a vigorous economy.

Gov. Brad Henry and the Oklahoma State Legislature launched the initiative in cooperation with the Oklahoma Department of Commerce and the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education. The legislature made an initial investment of \$150 million in 2007 as the first installment of an endowment targeted at \$1 billion.

EDGE investments are specifically directed toward Oklahoma-based projects that have the potential to expand the number of researchers, technicians, support services and related activity within the state; increase the formation and growth of advanced technology companies; leverage additional funding through federal research grants or private investment; and improve the health and quality of life for Oklahoma people.

EDGE uses the following process to identify the most qualified applications. Pre-proposals are reviewed by peer technical leaders in their respective fields from across the United States. The EDGE Advisory Committee recommends those applications with highest merit to the Policy Board. The Policy Board invites a select number of applicants to submit full proposals and present to the Policy Board for final selection. The Policy Board determines the number and size of awards. The EDGE Endowment Fund is managed by a legislatively mandated Board of Investors that certifies the amount of funds available each year.