

[University of Florida News](#)

UF announces plans to build new life science, technology incubator

Filed under [Research](#), [Business](#), [Sciences](#) on Friday, November 30, 2007.

GAINESVILLE, Fla. — [The University of Florida](#) has reached an agreement with an internationally recognized developer to create up to 160,000 square feet of life science- and technology-related laboratory and office space on the UF campus, [President Bernie Machen](#) announced today.

The project, to be known as The Innovation Center, will be developed by Alexandria Real Estate Equities Inc. — the largest dedicated life science property and innovation specialist worldwide. Alexandria's business model involves the creation and growth of science clusters in close proximity to strong academic, medical and research institutions.

Alexandria owns and operates approximately 12 million square feet of office/laboratory properties, including such distinguished destinations as Technology Square @ MIT in Cambridge, Mass., and Mission Bay/UCSF in San Francisco. It also has more than 7 million square feet of office/laboratory space currently under various stages of development, including East River Science Park in New York City and The MaRS Centre in Toronto.

"The Innovation Center is precisely the kind of boost we need to keep our stellar technology transfer program on the right trajectory," Machen said. "With this, everyone comes out ahead: the university, the city of Gainesville, Alachua County, the state of Florida and really anyone who will benefit from the science that will happen here."

Alexandria, based in Pasadena, Calif., will now start planning for the first of two proposed buildings on a site south of UF's Cancer & Genetics Research Building near the intersection of Archer Road and Gale Lemerand Drive. The proposed approximately 80,000-square-foot building will include Alexandria's unique range of state-of-the-art facilities and proprietary products and services designed to foster the development of the broad and diverse life science and technology sectors. The Innovation Center, expected to be completed in 2010, also will offer highly flexible and adaptable space for more established entities and key university-related functions. A second similar building is expected to be constructed within several years.

"We believe there is a unique opportunity in aligning ourselves with the University of Florida to help further the development of a highly focused science and technology engine in Gainesville," said Joel S. Marcus, chief executive officer of Alexandria. "We were attracted to University of Florida because of its proven success and outstanding track record of moving technology from the laboratory to the marketplace. In building this unique Innovation Center, we will be providing much more than space. Our proprietary models bring managerial and business expertise together with the financial resources and talent necessary to build successful 21st century science-driven commercial enterprises. This effort will complement the strong research community that already exists at University of Florida and in the Gainesville area."

[UF's Sid Martin Biotechnology Incubator](#) has been named one of the nation's best, but the entrepreneurial spirit has been so strong around the university that there is a waiting list for entry to the incubator, said David Day, director of [UF's Office of Technology Licensing](#). In addition, the area has a shortage of next-stage space for companies that grow too big for the Sid Martin facility, which is located in Progress Park in Alachua.

"We have really reached a critical mass in terms of technology transfer and new company development," said [Win Phillips, UF's vice president for research](#). "By partnering with Alexandria, the university can offer our own spin-off companies and others premier laboratory and office space close to our most valuable campus resources — faculty and graduate students."

The University of Florida, one of the nation's largest and most comprehensive research institutions, garnered more than \$583 million in research awards in 2006-07, including more than \$260 million in the life sciences. Alachua County is also home to numerous companies spun off from university technology, including Regeneration Technologies Inc., Oragenics, AGTC and Xhale.

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Credits

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