

Small Farm and Community Regeneration Engine
(the “Regeneration Engine”)
DRAFT 3/14/2025 - C.Hopper

Purpose and Mission

The Regeneration Engine is an expansion of North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University (NC A&T)’s [Small Farm Research and Innovation Center](#) (SFRIC)’s existing cooperative efforts with [Open Future Coalition’s](#) (OFC) [Center for Regeneration](#) (CFR) to better connect and resource small, beginning, diversified, and veteran farmers and ranchers (SBDVFRs) with public, private, and in-kind partners to grow regenerative understanding, behavior, infrastructures, and relationships that grow community and environmental health, resilience, and prosperity in perpetuity.

Convening Efforts Locally and Nationally

Through generous public, private, and philanthropic contributions of [Cisco Foundation](#), CFR’s founding partners, [Open Future Coalition](#), the United States Department of Agriculture, the [U.S. National Science Foundation](#) (NSF), the State of North Carolina, and others, the Regeneration Engine convenes and supports community resilience efforts, locally in East Greensboro and the Piedmont Triad, statewide in North Carolina, regionally with other Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and the [Association of 1890s Research Directors](#) (ARD), and nationally with other CFR Partners and Land Grant Universities (LGUs). Using shared physical and digital social, technical, and financial resources and infrastructures, people, groups, and projects envision, model, and resource agriculture, business, community, educational, and environmental efforts to grow resilience in people, communities, and nature.

The Regeneration Engine convenes and supports communities of practice, projects, and efforts through visioning, planning, development, resourcing, implementation, monitoring, and with ongoing coordinative, technical, and reporting support. N.C. A&T was selected as the first LGU to model the [Open Impact](#) digital platform state-wide and convene local projects to fill resource gaps with national partners. The initial areas of focus are:

1. Community Planning, Development, and Empowerment
2. Cooperative and Collaborative Development Infrastructures
3. Small Farm, Food, and Agricultural Businesses and Entrepreneurship
4. Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Technologies, Innovation, and Research
5. Workforce Development and Cooperative Extension Services
6. Family, Community, and Public Health and Wellness
7. Public, Social, and Environmental Investment

The Engine convenes pipelines of partners and projects for each area of focus to envision and grow their futures. These groups build on and support each other and existing community, marketplace, and natural momentum. The communities include socially, economically, and ideologically diverse stakeholders and viewpoints from farm to final consumer through many product, business, and community efforts and points in their lifecycles. The Engine and shared

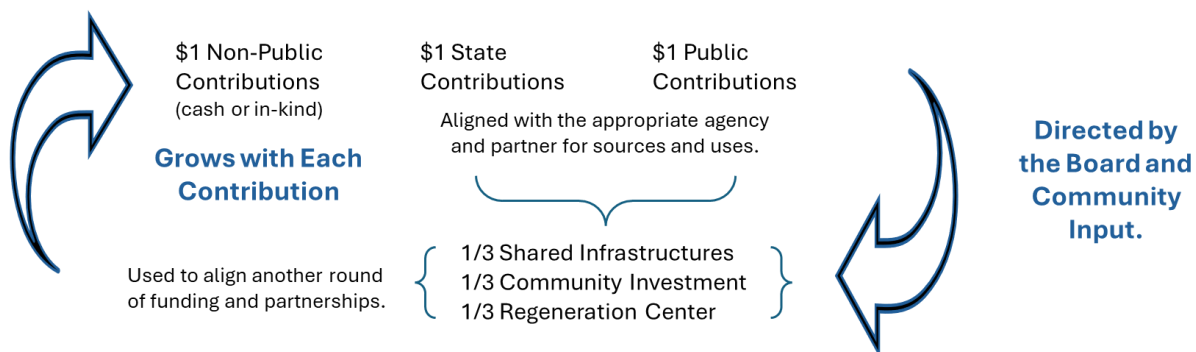
infrastructure empower multi-disciplinary and -organizational people, groups, and projects to coalesce around shared visions while fulfilling individual needs and goals.

Using proven and tested technology transfer and collaborative management processes, Engine partners resource, regenerate, and grow resilience in their local communities, natural environments, and themselves. Including the community in crafting their long-term vision, organization, governance, and operations solidifies their commitment to their success. The team has prototyped these methods with the Center for Regeneration (CFR) for over two years.

A Digital Commons

The Regeneration Engine is cooperatively resourced by a blend of national, state, local, public, private, philanthropic, and in-kind sponsors. As topical and bioregional activity hubs emerge, the Engine convenes and supports the efforts in [Open Impact](#), OFC's Enterprise Resource Program (ERP). Combined, these resources create a common of shared contributions and equity to unlock public, private, and philanthropic funds for cooperative structures. This financial innovation reconciles physical inequities in land-grant services using the formula that created them (below). This formula deployed the LGUs, utilities, railroads, and state highway systems to settle America. The Regeneration Engine provides a guidance system for the formula to grow resilience.

Engine Financial Model



Designed to work and grow like a digital Land-Grant University.

Regeneration Center Partners

North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University (NC A&T)

[Small Farm Research and Innovation Center](#) (SFRIC) - research, education, cooperative extension services, university research farms, and agricultural experiment stations in North Carolina dedicated to growing successful small farms.

Open Future Coalition

[Open Future Coalition's Center for Regeneration](#), founded in partnership with SFRIC, leverages public-private partnerships to convene communities with the social, technical, and financial tools they need to address coordinative and funding challenges. By facilitating cooperative models and shared infrastructure, CFR aligns private and public resources to bridge research and practice, provide contexts for shared learning, and enable communities to identify, resource, and govern their futures. The digital infrastructure, community of partners, projects, member organizations, and CFR support each other. The Regeneration Engine has grown out of this partnership.

The Association of 1890 Research Directors

[The Association of 1890 Research Directors](#) (ARD) is the federation of the nineteen (19) autonomous 1890 land grant universities. It coordinates research initiatives among member Historically Black Land Grant Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) in cooperation with federal, state, and private partners. Mirroring CFR's structure with national partners, ARD connects its members as one to overcome barriers and allows them to engage with Regeneration Engine partners quickly, deeply, meaningfully, and reciprocally.

Sponsorships and Partnerships - Growing from Existing Efforts

A coalition of sponsors supports the Regeneration Engine partners, including SFRIC, [Open Future Coalition](#) (OFC), and the [Center for Regeneration](#) (CFR). In January 2024 and again in 2025, the [CISCO Foundation](#) awarded OFC funding to support efforts globally, including the Regeneration Engine to help serve HBCUs and their partners with a digital global resource library, workspaces with enterprise management tools, partners, and best practices for regeneration and resilience. For 2025, [NoVo Foundation](#) committed additional support for the effort to OFC.

The partnership also receives support from the [National Science Foundation Innovation Engines](#), the [USDA 2501 Program](#) for underserved farmers, ranchers, and foresters, and the State of North Carolina. [N.C. A&T Cooperative Extension](#) also receives support from the [USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture](#).

The Center for Regeneration also represents over 20 founding partner organizations, connecting over 300 local and global organizations working with OFC to support these efforts and global climate, community, and environmental regeneration and resilience.