



IOWA BIOTECH
SHOWCASE & CONFERENCE

Nurturing Iowa's Biotech Ecosystem

March 4 & 5, 2025
Ankeny, Iowa

AGENDA

ABOUT IOWABIO

The Iowa Biotechnology Association (IowaBio), a 501(c)6 non-profit trade association, was founded in 1994 to unify Iowa's bioscience industry, academic research institutions, and economic development organizations. We represent more than 100 members spanning our state, invested in Iowa and in the biotech industry.

SPECIAL THANKS

We would like to thank the following individuals for their time and efforts in helping make this year's conference a success:

Conference Planning Committee

- Emily Fuerst, IowaBio Board Chair, Kemin
- Shawn Baier, Heartland Assays
- Alison Baldwin, Faegre Drinker
- Peter Dube, Boehringer Ingelheim
- Irma Fisher, Bayer
- George Girgis, Nevysta
- Adrienne Greenwald, VentureNet Iowa
- Emily Ibach, Pivot Bio
- Todd Krone, PowerPollen
- Mat Muller, Corteva
- Joe Quinn, Faegre Drinker
- Alicia Rosburg, University of Northern Iowa
- Scott Schultz, Des Moines Area Community College
- Nick Svoboda, CRB
- Tony Vanden Bush, Syntherna Inc.



Jessica Hyland, J.D.
IowaBio Executive Director
jessica@iowabio.org



Mary Lyon, CMP
IowaBio Biotech STEM and
Administrative Coordinator
mary@iowabio.org



Emily Fuerst
IowaBio Board Chair
Kemin R&D Director

TUESDAY, MARCH 4

3:30 PM

IBSC Kickoff Event

Location: Kemin Industries

Sponsored by [Kemin Industries](#)

Pre-Session: Iowa's Research Parks Panel: Innovation in Action

How Iowa's Research Parks are nurturing startups and supporting Iowa's biotech ecosystem.

Opening Remarks

Dr. Chris Nelson, President and CEO, Kemin Industries

6:30 PM

VIP Dinner (Invite Only)

Location: Lucca

Sponsored by [BioConnect Iowa](#)

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 5

7:00 AM

Networking Coffee

Location: Smokey Row Coffee Co.

Sponsored by [Ag Startup Engine](#)

8:00 AM

Registration & Breakfast

Location: Iowa FFA Enrichment Center

9:00 AM

Welcome/Opening Remarks

Jessica Hyland, Executive Director, IowaBio

Emily Fuerst, IowaBio Chair, R&D Director, Kemin

9:10 AM

Biotech Showcase Pitch Competition

Sponsored by [Kemin Industries](#)

11:30 AM

Lunch

Sponsored by [Kemin Industries](#)

Industry Keynote Panel: Investing in Iowa's Biotechnology Ecosystem

Sponsored by [BrownWinick](#)

Dr. Chris Nelson, President and CEO, Kemin Industries

Joshua Witt, Co-Location Manager, Cargill

Biotech Leader Award Recognition

Sponsored by [America's Cultivation Corridor](#)

12:30 PM Breakout Sessions: Part I

Biotech Ventures: Securing the Capital for Scientific Success

Join this insightful panel to hear from experts who transformed a biotech startup into a fully funded success. Discover how they attracted strategic investors, navigated corporate partnerships, and developed collaborative strategies to scale their vision. Gain valuable takeaways on engaging investors, building partnerships, and driving biotech innovation. Ideal for those seeking to drive growth and innovation in this rapidly evolving field!

- Mikayla Mooney, Partner, Ag Startup Engine
- Genvax
- United Animal Health
- Johnsonville

OR

Managing IP Risk for Global

Senior leaders at startups will gain a clearer understanding of intellectual property (IP) risks and actionable strategies to mitigate them effectively. Attendees will leave with key takeaways they can implement immediately as they develop and execute global growth strategies. Featuring a diverse lineup of business executives and legal experts, the session will provide a comprehensive discussion on balancing risk management with growth opportunities, offering valuable insights for navigating the complexities of global expansion.

- Kavi Chawla, Senior Advisor, PowerPollen

1:20 PM Breakout Sessions: Part II

Learn About Iowa's \$96M Investment to Support Iowa Small

Join this panel to learn about how Iowa's State Small Business Credit Initiative (SSBCI) is a \$96 million program designed to stimulate growth and innovation in the state's small business sector. Funded by the U.S. Treasury, it supports startups, manufacturers, and businesses owned by veterans and underrepresented groups. The initiative includes four programs: loans for manufacturers adopting Industry 4.0 technologies, collateral support for businesses facing loan gaps, and two venture capital funds supporting Iowa-based innovation. By fostering investment and offering financial assistance, SSBCI aims to strengthen Iowa's small business ecosystem, driving economic growth and job creation across the state.

- Audra Fisher, America's SBDC
- Tricia Rivas, Coordinator of Customer Relations, America's SBDC Iowa
- Anna Lensing, Innovation Project Manager, Iowa Economic Development Authority
- Kaylee Williams, Investment Director, InnoVenture Iowa
- Adrienne Greenwald, Managing Principal, VentureNet Iowa

OR

Why Not Iowa?

This panel explores diverse startup experiences in Iowa, highlighting new successes and past challenges within the state's entrepreneurial ecosystem. Panelists will discuss unique perspectives, from companies that thrived in Iowa to those that relocated for greater support, such as Athenix, whose founders moved to North Carolina. Join this panel to achieve insights on fostering growth, attracting talent, and building a thriving business ecosystem.

- Todd Krone, Chief Innovation Officer, PowerPollen
- Athenix
- Prasanna Kankanala, Director of R&D, Trace Genomics

2:10 PM

Breakout Sessions: Part III

Scaling a Biomanufacturing Business from Prototype to Profit: A Playbook on How to Jumpstart Growth

Iowa is ideally positioned as a hub for biomanufacturing, offering a strong manufacturing foundation, access to raw materials, efficient shipping routes, and a skilled workforce supported by world-class research centers. However, transitioning from concept to full-scale production remains a significant challenge. This discussion will explore strategies to bridge the gap from prototype to market, addressing critical needs such as funding, scaling operations, and competing with established players. Attendees will gain actionable insights and a proven playbook for overcoming these hurdles, equipping founders with the tools needed to build successful biomanufacturing businesses in Iowa and beyond.

- Tony Moses, At One Ventures

OR

Decarbonizing the Ethanol Industry with Anaerobic Digestors and Algae

Discover how the ethanol industry is leveraging the 45Z tax credit to lower carbon intensity through innovative solutions like integrating anaerobic digesters and algae production at ethanol facilities. This session will explore the value creation, challenges, and potential of this approach, recently awarded a \$7.5 million grant from the US DOE for de-risking. Key project partners include GWT, Xylem, Los Alamos National Lab, NREL, PNNL, Sandia, University of Iowa, and Colorado State University.

- Martin Gross, Gross-Wen Technologies

3:00 PM

Legislative Update

Sponsored by [ADM](#)

Sara Allen, Principal, Cornerstone Government Affairs

Kristin Murphy, Senior Director, Federal Government Relations, BIO

4:00 PM

Policy Keynote with IEDA/IFA Executive Director Debi Durham

Sponsored by [Corteva Agriscience](#)

Debi Durham, Executive Director, Iowa Economic Development Authority (IEDA), Iowa Finance Authority (IFA)

4:20 PM

Showcase Award Winners Announcement

Sponsored by [Kemin Industries](#)

4:30 PM

Reception

Sponsored by [KENT Corporation](#)