

# WARF Champions the Journey from Discovery to Impact

*Greg Keenan, Jeanine Burmania and Katie Rice highlight the challenges facing academic commercialization and the bold steps WARF is taking to overcome them.*

MADISON, WI, UNITED STATES, September 18, 2025 / EINPresswire.com/ -- The [Wisconsin Alumni Research Foundation \(WARF\)](https://www.wisconsin.edu/warf) is reaffirming its century-long commitment to transforming university research into real-world solutions. In a recent op-ed titled Beyond the Breakthrough: [Transforming University Inventions into Everyday Innovations](#), WARF's Greg Keenan, Jeanine Burmania and Katie Rice highlight the persistent challenges facing academic commercialization and the bold steps WARF is taking to overcome them.

Since pioneering university technology transfer in 1925, WARF has helped shape national policy and supported thousands of University of Wisconsin-Madison researchers in bringing their ideas to market. Yet, as the op-ed notes, many promising inventions still stall due to structural and cultural barriers within academia.



Transforming university inventions into everyday innovations.



Greg Keenan

"Universities are engines of invention," says Greg Keenan, Partner, WARF Ventures. "But turning

those inventions into innovations that change lives requires more than great ideas—it demands execution, investment and partnership.”

WARF is tackling these challenges head-on:

- **WARF Accelerator:** Launched in 2009, this program strategically funds and guides high-potential UW-Madison technologies, helping researchers derisk both the science and the business case. To date, WARF Accelerator has supported over 190 technologies, resulting in 55 licenses, 32 startups and more than \$340 million in follow-on funding.
- **WARF Ventures:** As one of the Midwest’s most active institutional investors, WARF Ventures provides seed and growth capital to UW-Madison startups. With over \$1 billion in total investment attracted to its portfolio companies, the program also connects founders to talent, advisors and commercial partners.
- **WARF IP & Licensing:** By streamlining its technology transfer process and launching the Startup Advantage program in 2024, WARF has dramatically reduced licensing timelines and lowered barriers for inventor-founded startups. The new model offers deferred costs, simplified agreements and faster paths to market.

Together, these efforts reflect WARF’s integrated approach to innovation—one that bridges the gap between academic discovery and societal impact.

“Our goal is simple,” says Jeanine Burmania, WARF’s Senior Director of Intellectual Property and Licensing. “To ensure that university inventions don’t just sit on a shelf, but become the foundation for new companies, new solutions and new sources of revenue.”

Throughout the year, WARF will publish additional essays from various thought leaders, each offering unique perspectives on the impact of university research on global challenges. These



Jeanine Burmania



Katie Rice

essays, available at [warf.org/WisconsinIngenuity](https://warf.org/WisconsinIngenuity), will highlight the importance of long-term investments in university innovation and the transformative potential of academic-industry partnerships.

#### About WARF

Celebrating a century of service in 2025, the Wisconsin Alumni Research Foundation (WARF) patents and licenses discoveries from UW-Madison research, manages an investment portfolio generated from licensing and investment proceeds, and provides annual grants to the University of Wisconsin-Madison and the Morgridge Institute for Research to support further scientific investigation and research. By driving collaborations among researchers, investors, industry and entrepreneurs, WARF commercializes innovations from campus through various initiatives. WARF Accelerator improves the commercialization potential of university intellectual property through industry engagement and investment in proof-of-concept milestones to validate market potential, demonstrate commercial value and de-risk technology. WARF Therapeutics partners with UW-Madison and Morgridge Institute researchers employing an industry-focused approach to improve the value propositions of drug candidates. WARF Ventures is an early-stage venture fund that invests in startups based on UW/WARF technologies. Learn more at [warf.org](https://warf.org).

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