

Karl R. LaPan
Director, UF Innovate | Accelerate



In May 2021, Karl R. LaPan was appointed director of **UF Innovate | Accelerate**, where he oversees two world-class business incubation facilities unified under one entrepreneurial support organization. Operating one of the top Super Hubs in the United States, he leads the management and operation of a nine-time award-winning entrepreneurial support organization comprising the 97,000-sf mixed-use Hub facility and the 32,500-sf rural Sid Martin facility. In 2021, UF Innovate | Accelerate was designated one of 20 InBIA Soft Landings programs.

From 2000 to 2021, he was the first President and CEO of the NIIP/NIIC in Fort Wayne, Indiana, where he led the globally award-winning entrepreneurial support organization and launched tech-based economic and entrepreneurial programs to serve the under-represented segments in Northeast Indiana. In 2020, the NIIC won one of the two top industry awards – the InBIA Dinah Adkins Award and the Entrepreneur Center of the Year: Mixed Use Award. Under LaPan’s direction, entrepreneurs through the NIIC launched 499 products, applied for 196 patents (most were granted), created over 2,351 jobs at an average wage rate of \$55,994 per FTE, and secured over \$100.4 million in grants and investments.

From 1994 to 2000, he served as the President and CEO of an advanced biometric identification company, NBS Imaging Systems headquartered in Fort Wayne, IN. However, his career started in 1986 at General Electric where he worked in six different strategic business units of GE, including Aircraft Engines, Power Systems, Marine Services, Appliances, Corporate Headquarters, and Financial Services. He is also a program graduate of GE’s prestigious Financial Management Program (FMP).

Karl is an active advisory board member of the College of Business (COBAB) at his alma mater Franklin Pierce University, the current President of the Florida Business Incubation Association (FBIA), and an adjunct instructor in Entrepreneurship at Franklin Pierce University. He also serves on the board of BioPoly LLC, an orthobiologics early-stage company. Additionally, he is a community advisory board member for the InBIA Ecosystem Builder Leadership Project (EBLP).

Karl’s professional interest areas are healthcare, innovation/entrepreneurship, and customer experience. Previously, he was an associate faculty member in the MBA program at IPFW, and an Executive-in-Residence/Adjunct Faculty member in the MBA program at Taylor University. Additionally, he served on the Taylor MBA Business Advisory Board, IPFW Doermer School of Business Advisory Council & IPFW ETCS Industrial Advisory Board, Manchester University President’s Leadership Council, and the IU School of Medicine-Ft. Wayne Advisory Board. After 18 years of service, Karl retired from the Board of and Secretary of Physicians Health Plan (PHP), a physician-owned and managed not-for-profit HMO, and, before its sale, a former board member of IAB Financial, a \$1B community bank, where he chaired the Bank’s Enterprise Risk Management Committee. Additionally, he served on the board of directors of the Indiana Chamber and was on an advisory board for the Ball State University Entrepreneurship Center. He is the recipient of the IPFW Chancellor’s Award and the InBIA President’s Award of Excellence.

LaPan received his Bachelor of Science, Business Management, Summa Cum Laude from Franklin Pierce University. He obtained his Master’s Degree in Human Resource Development from American University in Washington, DC, and is a member of the Pi Alpha Alpha Honor Society. He has completed extensive, executive education programs in non-profit leadership, entrepreneurship, and innovation at Stanford University, Harvard University, Babson College, the University of Notre Dame, and the Disney Institute.

Karl is a frequent trainer and speaker in the incubation industry. He is the co-author of InBIA’s publication **Best Practices in Action**. His latest book was published in 2021, **Entrepreneurial Hacks: Practical Insights for Business Builders**. Together with these two books, he has published five books in total.