Manufacturing Innovation Locally: Navigating the Ecosystem, Product Stories, and Impacts

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Bio: Laura is an Executive Director at FORGE, a 501(c)3 nonprofit helping innovators navigate the journey from physical prototype through to commercialization and impact at scale. FORGE focuses uniquely on providing manufacturing-focused resources, education, and connections to regional supply chains. The 430+ startups supported by FORGE to date boast an incredible survival rate of over 90%, and FORGE’s work has led to over $31 million in known contracts and purchase orders to make innovative products locally. Laura’s background includes several years of leadership in innovation and impact-oriented organizations. Prior to joining FORGE, she served as Executive Director at the Boston chapter of TiE - the largest global, not-for-profit network dedicated to fostering entrepreneurship. Laura holds an M.B.A from Boston University. She currently serves on the Board of Directors for ClimateXChange, as well as advisory boards for Net Impact Boston, WBUR, and SXSW Pitch.

Abstract

Hear about the challenges and rewards of making innovative physical products, the resources available right in our backyards in Massachusetts, and the origin story of FORGE, the nonprofit sister organization of Greentown Labs (the largest climate tech incubator in North America) and go-to in the ecosystem for manufacturing support for startups.

This talk will highlight innovative success stories across sectors including medical device, energy, and the frontline fight against COVID-19. It will also serve as an opportunity to learn about the benefits of localizing supply chains including: risk management strategy in the face of global supply chain disruptions, building resilient regional economies, reducing carbon footprint associated with shipping, and more.