

POWERING THE

INNOVATION

economy

BUILDING A MORE
VIBRANT, CONNECTED,
AND INNOVATION-DRIVEN
FUTURE FOR GREATER
AKRON AND OHIO

2025 annual report

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BOUNCE
INNOVATION HUB

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A MESSAGE TO OUR *community*

On behalf of Bounce Innovation Hub, I am proud to share our 2025 Annual Report. This past year was one of focused execution, meaningful growth, and continued momentum as we advanced our role as a central driver of innovation and entrepreneurship in Greater Akron and Northeast Ohio.



Jessica Sublett
Chief Executive Officer

In 2025, we moved from planning to performance. Guided by our strategic framework of **Programming, Convening, and Place**, we deepened our impact across each pillar and strengthened the systems that support entrepreneurs from idea to scale.

Our programming continues to evolve to meet the needs of founders in high-growth industries. Through initiatives like Kinetic, Synthe6, and Flywheel, we are delivering targeted, sector-specific support for startups in MedTech, advanced materials and polymers, and software. In 2025 alone, companies participating in our core programming raised more than \$40 million in third-party capital. These programs are not only helping companies grow but also positioning our region as a leader in innovation-driven economic development.

At the same time, our role as a convener has never been more important. Bounce is proud to serve as a connector across the entrepreneurial ecosystem by bringing together founders, industry leaders, investors, and institutional partners to align resources, close gaps, and create opportunity. This work is essential to building a more coordinated, inclusive, and high-performing innovation economy.

Our physical space continues to reflect and reinforce this momentum. In 2025, we increased building occupancy by more than 10 percent, alongside growing engagement throughout our facility, including the continued success of our expanded Generator space. Bounce is more than a building. It is critical infrastructure for innovation, providing the environment, energy, and connections that help companies grow and thrive.

None of this work happens without the strength of our team and the support of our partners. Our staff continues to lead with expertise, passion, and a deep commitment to our mission. We are equally grateful to our board, funders, and community partners who believe in this work and invest in its success.

As we look ahead, we are building on a strong foundation. The opportunities in front of us, particularly in advanced materials, healthcare innovation, and technology commercialization, are significant. Bounce is well positioned to meet this moment, and we remain committed to ensuring that entrepreneurs in our region have the support they need to succeed.

Thank you for being part of this journey. Together, we are not only supporting startups. We are shaping the future of our regional economy.



The launch of the **Synthe6 Materials Accelerator** marked a defining moment for Bounce and for the region's innovation economy. Developed by the Bounce team, Synthe6 was created to solve a long-standing challenge: the lack of tailored support for hard tech founders in polymers and advanced materials. This one-of-a-kind accelerator connects entrepreneurs with the technical infrastructure, industry insight, and commercialization expertise needed to bring breakthrough materials technologies to market, while aligning with and strengthening the broader goals of the Polymer Industry Cluster. The year-long accelerator is designed to collectively advance companies across investment, technology, and manufacturing readiness levels, and in its first year, welcomed its inaugural cohort of 9 startups.



Producing asphalt additives made from recycled materials that improve adhesion and durability. Their solution helps infrastructure and roofing manufacturers reduce reliance on imported petroleum-based resins.



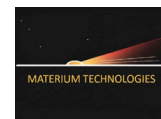
Developing a bio-based wound dressing that actively heals while detecting and preventing infections. It helps tackle the high costs and complications of chronic and acute wound care.



BioVerde combines large-scale renewable conventional natural-gas fermentation with chemical conversion to provide a superior alternative to petroleum-based and agricultural products a superior alternative to petroleum-based and agricultural products.



Developing a filter material that removes PFAS, or "forever chemicals," from drinking water down to the US EPA mandated levels. Its design allows for longer use with high selectivity and easy regeneration, addressing the limits of today's water treatment systems related to PFAS.



Creating recyclable nanocomposite coatings that can be applied at room temperature using standard spray or roll-to-roll methods. Their nanosheet structure provides powerful barrier, dielectric, and optical properties, for example, keeping out moisture and oxygen in electronics, or improving performance in clean energy devices.



Recycling polypropylene using biodegradable oils to create high-quality material equal to new plastic. This innovation tackles the lack of effective recycling options for one of the most widely used plastics.



Developing a portable system that converts mixed plastics and old tires into usable fuels. This technology addresses the growing challenge of plastic and tire waste by creating a cleaner recycling option.



Developing a novel process to salvage and upcycle commingled plastic waste into value-added materials using only supercritical water. This new and enabling technology provides a fast and environmentally friendly means of producing valuable plastics that would otherwise end up in landfills.



Producing ballistic protection products, including lightweight ballistic shields and medical stretchers using advanced polymers and inflatable technology. These products reduce blunt-force injuries and make protection easier to transport and deploy.



In our first cohort, Synthe6 attracted a New Jersey-based company to set up an Ohio location to participate in cohort programming.

Synthe6 startups collectively raised over \$12.8M in 2025 and have innovated 12 distinct product offerings in 2025.

Advancing Entrepreneurs Across Industries

Bounce's programming continues to evolve to meet founders where they are, delivering targeted support across industries and stages of growth.



Our partnership with NEOMED through Kinetic: Healthcare Innovation in Motion continued to expand in 2025, strengthening a comprehensive support system for healthcare and MedTech entrepreneurs. Building on this momentum, we launched Kinetic Shift, a new program designed to support early-stage companies as they refine their ideas, validate market opportunities, and prepare for commercialization.



Flywheel remained focused on helping companies accelerate revenue growth by supporting founders as they build strong sales strategies, refine their go-to-market approach, and convert opportunities into traction. This continued emphasis on sales ensures that companies are not only building great products, but also developing sustainable, scalable businesses.



Through the Northeast Ohio Student Venture Fund (NEOSVF), Bounce continues to engage the next generation of venture talent while supporting startup growth. In 2025, NEOSVF engaged 40 students in hands-on venture education, conducted due diligence on 9 companies, and ultimately made two investments in promising early-stage startups. This work provides students with real-world investment experience while expanding access to capital for emerging companies in the region.



Bounce also continued to expand access to entrepreneurship through the Beyond Startup Workshop Series, delivering 28 workshops and serving 161 entrepreneurs throughout the year. These sessions provide practical, accessible education for founders at all stages, helping them build the skills and confidence needed to move their businesses forward.



ECONOMIC *impact*

2025 DIRECT CLIENT COMPANY OUTCOMES

\$47.1M
REVENUE
GENERATED

\$21.3M
PAID IN PAYROLL

\$43.3M
INVESTMENT
RAISED

286.8
JOBS CREATED/
RETAINED

Program Outcomes

74
CORE PROGRAMMING
CLIENTS SERVED

37
SOFTWARE
CLIENTS

12
POLYMER/ADV.
MATERIALS CLIENTS

462
INDIVIDUALS PROVIDED
DIRECT EDUCATION/
MENTORING

28
HEALTHCARE
CLIENTS

161
SERVED VIA
BEYOND STARTUP

14,971
HOURS SPENT SERVING
CLIENTS

CUMULATIVE IMPACT

2018-2025 Direct Client Outcomes

\$362M
REVENUE
GENERATED

\$172M
PAID IN
PAYROLL

\$135M
INVESTMENT
RAISED

1,000+
JOBS CREATED/
RETAINED

41
CLIENTS
EARNED
REVENUE

9
CLIENTS
EARNED
\$1M+ IN
REVENUE

18
CLIENTS
RAISED
THIRD
PARTY
CAPITAL

CLIENT SUCCESS *stories*



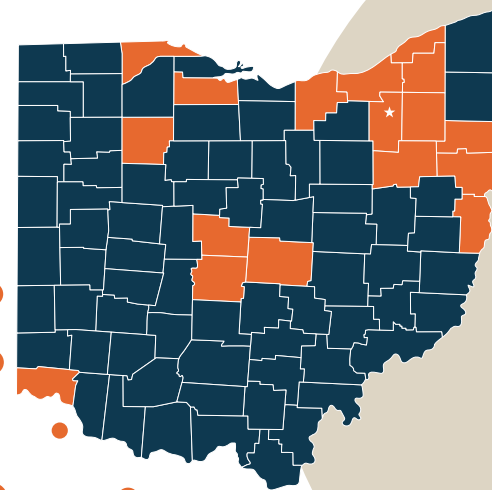
Harmoni experienced a breakout year, tripling both revenue and team size while successfully closing its Series A round to fuel continued growth.



USALCO, a leader in clean water solutions, acquired Bounce-supported startup and incubator tenant Fontus Blue, an innovative digital solutions provider for water utilities.



Auxilium Health successfully raised funds for continued growth and development, including an oversubscribed \$1.5M seed round and nearly \$500k more from state and federal funding.



Bounce serves as statewide innovation infrastructure, supporting entrepreneurs across Ohio. Our growing reach reflects a commitment to ensuring founders, regardless of location, have access to the resources, networks, and support needed to grow and scale.





CONVENING *our Community*

Bounce continues to play a central role in strengthening the regional innovation ecosystem through intentional convening and partnership. Through our leadership and engagement with the Polymer Industry Cluster, we are helping align industry, research, and entrepreneurial resources to advance innovation in polymers and advanced materials.

Through Elevate Greater Akron, Bounce leads Spark Akron, convening nearly two dozen entrepreneurial support organizations each month to identify ecosystem gaps, align resources, and better serve founders. In 2025, this work helped address the direct needs of nearly 50 entrepreneurs through coordinated support across the network. We also hosted our first Spark Akron conference in alignment with the Beyond Startup Workshop Series, expanding access to resources, connections, and community for entrepreneurs across the region.

ElevateGreaterAkron
SPARK
Convene. Connect. Collaborate.

COMMUNITY *impact*

These metrics reflect Bounce's role as a central hub for connection and activity in the region, bringing thousands of people together each year to collaborate, learn, and build within a vibrant and growing innovation community.



20,894 ANNUAL VISITORS



450+ BOUNCE COMMUNITY MEMBERS



359 EVENTS HOSTED



6,789 MEETING HOURS BOOKED

68

NEW COMPANIES STARTED USING THE GENERATOR

421

DAY PASSES PURCHASED FOR THE GENERATOR

21

TECH STARTUPS JOINED BOUNCE COMMUNITY

BOUNCE WAS PROUD TO HOST MANY COMMUNITY EVENTS FOCUSED ON MAKING AKRON A VIBRANT PLACE TO LIVE AND WORK, SUCH AS THE ARTSNOW PLACEMAKING CONFERENCE, TRANSJOY DAY OF VISIBILITY, AKRON BLACK ARTIST GUILD CREATIVE EXCHANGE, AND MANY OTHERS!

A PLACE FOR *growth*

Bounce's space continues to serve as a critical engine for innovation, where shared infrastructure, energy, and community come together to help companies launch and scale. In 2025, we welcomed 8 new companies into the building and celebrated 3 graduates, alongside more than 10 percent growth in overall incubator occupancy and 115 percent growth in Generator utilization.

More than just a workspace, Bounce functions as shared capital for entrepreneurs, providing access to resources, connections, and an environment designed for growth. This momentum is not only driving company success, but also contributing to a more vibrant and dynamic downtown Akron.



ANY MEANS NECESSARY
FIND COMFORT IN DARKNESS

Any Means Necessary made licensing a focus in 2025 and landed rights with Invincible, Attack on Titan, and Gloomy Bear while growing revenue by \$300K, their most profitable year yet. They're now releasing two drops a month and intentionally expanding into several new brands, including a fitness line, to build a more diversified business that isn't solely dependent on one label while continuing to grow their retail footprint.

ADUCATE DIGITAL
PURPOSE DRIVEN DIGITAL MARKETING

Nicole Kurtz selected Bounce Innovation Hub as the home for Aducate Digital, bringing her work building capacity for Akron's creative entrepreneurs into the heart of the city. Her presence reflects the growing demand for practical, strategic support among Northeast Ohio's small business community and the role Bounce plays in helping that work take root and scale

MKV
POLYMERS

MKV Polymers selected Akron and Bounce Innovation Hub for its first U.S. location, bringing advanced materials innovation directly into the region. Their presence underscores the strength of Northeast Ohio's polymer ecosystem and the role Bounce plays in attracting and supporting global companies.



Investing in Lab Infrastructure

In 2025, Bounce launched the next phase of investment in its laboratory spaces to better serve founders developing advanced materials technologies. These upgrades are designed to complement Synthe6 and advance the shared goals of the Polymer Industry Cluster.



Welcome Kabylia Baguette

In October, we welcomed Kabylia Baguette to our facility, providing high quality coffee beverages and food options to our growing community.

Bounce renovated 25 spaces throughout the building to better meet tenant needs and support continued occupancy growth.



2025 FUNDERS & DONORS



PRESENTING SPONSORS



GENERATOR EXPANSION CAPITAL SUPPORT

U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration
City of Akron

Summit County
Burton D. Morgan Foundation
GAR Foundation

CONNECTION SPONSOR



FOUNDATION SUPPORT

Akron Community Foundation
Burton D. Morgan Foundation
GAR Foundation

Thank you to the following donors for securing naming rights to spaces in our facility!

ACRT Services, Inc. / EnviroScience
The Falletta Family Fund
Project MedTech
WesBanco

COLLISION SPONSORS



COLLABORATION SPONSOR



GOVERNMENT SUPPORT

City of Akron
Small Business Administration
State of Ohio, Ohio Department of Development
United States Department of Housing and Urban Development

2025 FUNDERS & DONORS CONTINUED

CORPORATE & CORPORATE FOUNDATION SUPPORT

Akron Innovations	Meaden & Moore
Big Kitty Labs	Narrative Digital Media
Birchwood Supply Co.	Ohio Life Sciences
BLU Jazz+	Project MedTech
Brennan, Manna & Diamond	S3 Technologies
Buckingham, Doolittle & Burroughs	SACS Consulting
CBIZ	SBC Small Business Consulting
Chase Bank	Seven Brothers Distilling Co.
Cigar Lodge	Silverline Consulting, Inc.
Cleveland Browns	Smaltz Insurance a HealthMarkets Agency
Consolidus	Stan Hywet Hall and Gardens
Emerson Thomson Bennett	Summit Construction Company LLC
Frost Brown Todd LLP	Tackett's Professional Cleaning Co.
Greater Akron Chamber	TeamNEO
Hand and Stone Massage and Facial Spa: Fairlawn	The Goodrich
Hasenstab Architects	The Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company
Huntington Bank	The Law Office of Jason H. Woodruff
Huntington Bank Foundation	TRIAD Communications
Interstate Fusion Ventures	Wave Strategy LLC
Key Bank Foundation	Wonderkiln
Leonard & Terzola	Work Studio LTD
MAGNET	Yip Fitness

INDIVIDUAL DONORS

Laura Bennett	Carlton Ramsey
Joe Brammer	Becky Phillips
Brad Helfman	Suzanne Smaltz
Megan Hershberger	Mary Taylor
	Several Private Donors

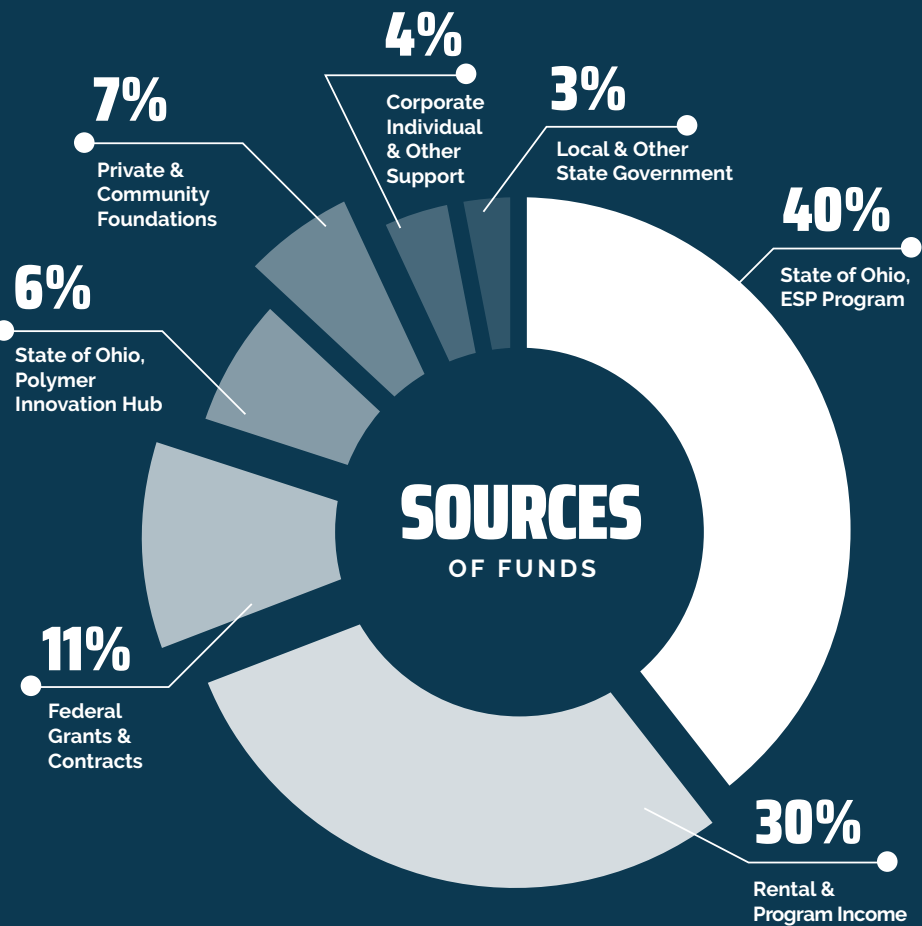
In 2025, Bounce partnered with The Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company to offer a once-in-a-lifetime experience: a ride on the iconic Goodyear Blimp.

Through an online silent auction, this exclusive opportunity generated \$15,100 in support of our mission.

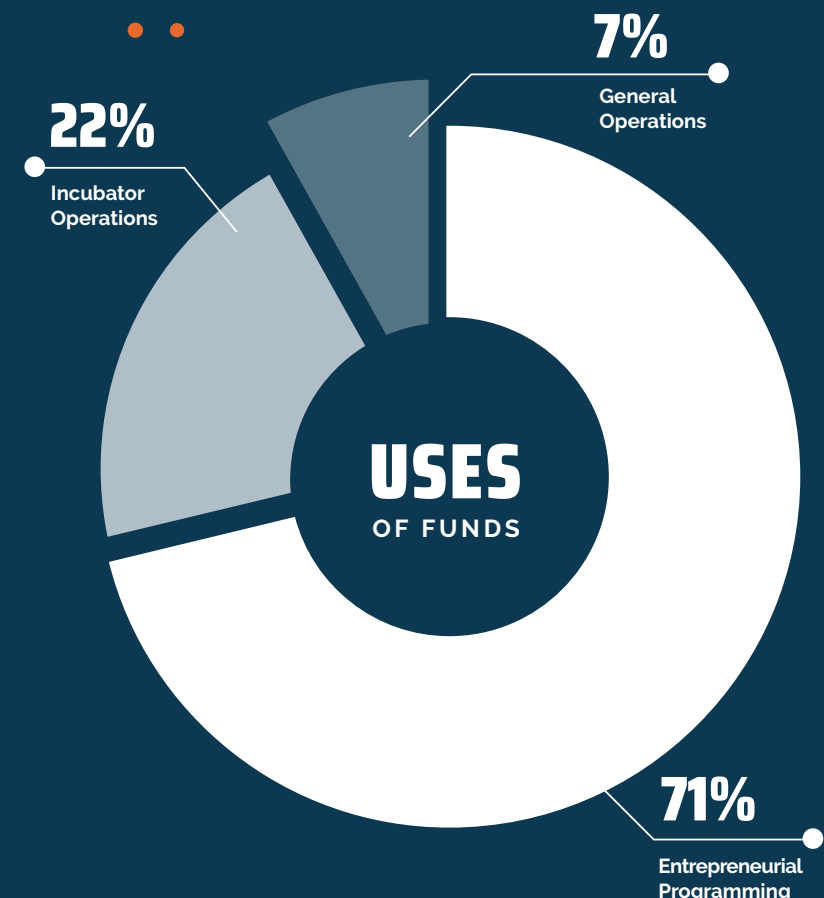
This moment not only reflects the generosity of our partners, but also the creative ways our community comes together to invest in innovation and entrepreneurship.



2025 FINANCIALS



State of Ohio, ESP Program	\$1,791,000
Rental & Program Income	\$1,343,000
Federal Grants & Contracts	\$495,000
Private & Community Foundations	\$326,000
State of Ohio, Polymer Innovation Hub	\$262,000
Corporate Individual & Other Support	\$175,000
Local & Other State Government	\$125,000



Entrepreneurial Programming	\$3,119,000
Incubator Operations	\$968,000
General Operations	\$322,000

BUILDING A MORE VIBRANT, CONNECTED, AND INNOVATION-DRIVEN FUTURE FOR GREATER AKRON AND OHIO





BOUNCE

INNOVATION HUB

bouncehub.org

MISSION

To catalyze entrepreneurship and innovation by providing connections, resources and expertise to build a vibrant community for all.

VISION

Empowering bold ideas and thriving businesses to drive innovation, opportunity and economic growth.

