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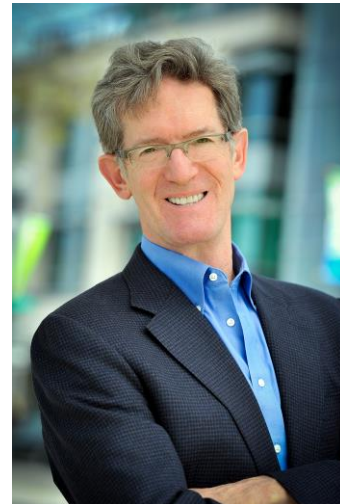
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Rick Hood Joins SOREDI as New Venture Catalyst

Medford OR - Southern Oregon Regional Economic Development, Inc. (SOREDI) is pleased to announce that Frederic (Rick) Hood will be assuming the role of Venture Catalyst. Hood will be building on the work done by the previous Venture Catalyst, Tim Root.

Hood has been an active part of entrepreneurial support activities in the region for some time. Hood was a deal-lead for finalist companies at each of the Southern Oregon Angel Conferences and has served on the Southern Oregon Angel Investor Network Steering Committee, the LAUNCH Steering Committee and is an active supporter for Angel Investor and entrepreneurial activities.



Hood has a strong background in new business formation and revenue enhancement. He was a founding team member of nascent Wells Fargo Insurance Services and Schwab Bank, both start-ups that have grown to become thriving enterprises that contribute material bottom-line impact for Wells Fargo and Charles Schwab & Co. Hood also brings a long history of investment experience to this position, including time spent as an Investment Advisor at Rogue Credit Union, a Wealth Management Advisor with Bay Area firm, Savant Investment Group LLC, a Director of Finance/Product Management/Marketing for Managed Account Services and Funds at Charles Schwab & Co., Inc., and a Senior Financial Consultant and Operations Manager at Wells Fargo Bank & Wells Fargo Insurance Services.

Perhaps most importantly for this role, Hood brings great passion and enthusiasm for the success of local start-ups. "I have participated as a volunteer in this effort for some years, but the opportunity to dig in and work directly with local companies and investors regularly is very exciting," says Hood. "I think we are really on the brink of some changes in the entrepreneurial investment space. Entrepreneurial support at the local level has become a priority for the State of Oregon and I've met many bright, new companies that are ready to take advantage of every chance they are being given," he continues. "I can't wait to start making these connections and helping them leverage their opportunities."

SOREDI's Executive Director, Colleen Padilla comments, "Rick has all the fundamental skills necessary to build on what has been accomplished over the last several years and make it a much more cohesive ecosystem for entrepreneurs in Southern Oregon. More importantly, he has the passion necessary to come alongside startups and help them reach their vision." Padilla continues, "We are highly enthusiastic about this regional opportunity that promises to synchronize statewide efforts across the state to make Oregon one of the top states in the nation for entrepreneurship – and we are confident Rick's expertise will help us get there."

Hood's first official day at SOREDI is Tuesday, April 4. To schedule time for him to consider your business proposition and make recommendations for your success, visit the SOREDI website and fill out a Sounding Board Application, here:
<https://soredi.org/launch/sounding-board/sounding-board-application/>

SEP SOREDI is a private, membership-based, non-profit organization, governed by a 28-member board of directors. Its seven-person staff is charged with local business expansion and new business recruitment efforts, financial assistance to start-up companies through its business loan fund, and management of Enterprise Zones in Jackson and Josephine Counties. The agency was formed as a regional economic development agency in 1987.