

USU Tech Startup Wins First Place at 2026 Utah Business Innovation Awards

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In 2016, Bedri A. Cetiner founded a company that enabled the talent of Utah State University students to drive engineering innovation. Ten years later, commercialization efforts of their work have led to a major award.



Bedri A. Cetiner's Utah State University-backed startup, i5 Technologies, won first place at the 2026 Utah Business Innovation Awards.

Cetiner's USU-backed startup, i5 Technologies, won first place in the Industrial Manufacturing, Materials & Construction Tech category at the 2026 Utah Business Innovation Awards.

USU teams create the antennas of various wireless communication systems, enabling users to provide more service with less energy, power or battery. I5 Technologies is currently commercializing these solutions.

"I didn't plan to be on the commercialization side of my academic work, but then I realized how fun and exciting it was," said Cetiner, an electrical and computer engineering professor. "For us to take first place was a big accomplishment we weren't expecting."

These antennae are developed by Cetiner's research group at i5 Technologies, as well as graduate students, some of whom join the company after finishing their studies.

"Seeing the reward for that hard work in the form of a real-life product is an amazing experience," said Cetiner. "We're developing next-gen technologies, like quantum communication, and I'm also trying to instill that innovation into my students through my teaching at USU."

While students are contributing to the success of the startup, Cetiner said the work also benefits their learning.

"You need to keep updating teaching material in this very fast paced world," said Cetiner. "This startup process helps, because it shows you need to be competitive in the commercial domain and keep pushing the pedal to develop technologies that can be incorporated into teaching."

Cetiner hopes the collaboration between i5 Technologies and USU's Technology Transfer Services and Integrity and Compliance Office serves as an example of jointly managing conflict of interest, academics, and commercial environments for faculty to pursue their innovative ideas.

"This is a critical management skill to translate your university work into real-life applications," said Cetiner. "If your hard work is combined with integrity, everyone benefits from the innovation."

Since winning the award, Cetiner said i5 Technologies has received growing attention and visibility. With USU as a company stakeholder, he hopes to propel more student and faculty startups that will achieve commercial success and show what USU-born companies are capable of.

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