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Dr. Heidi Knoblauch is Senior Director of Entrepreneurship Development at Empire State Development (ESD). She has held roles in the public and private sectors and has worked with entrepreneurs from innovation to stabilization. In her role at ESD, Heidi coordinates efforts to accelerate emerging company growth by connecting entrepreneurs to NYSTAR's program portfolio, which covers over 70 innovation ecosystem assets. Her previous positions include Venture and Growth Banking Relationship Manager at a regional bank, where she worked with emerging technology companies to secure debt and equity financing. She is a specialist in government backed lending programs and mixing public and private capital sources to fuel growth. She is on the Finance Committee at the Community Foundation for the Greater Capital Region where she helps steward \$100 million of private capital. Heidi is passionate about helping underrepresented founders gain access to resources and is the Board Chair of the Hearst Media's Women@Work. She teaches entrepreneurship in the School of Business at the University at Albany. Heidi holds a B.A. from the University of Rochester and a Ph.D. from Yale University.