

February 27, 2020

The Honorable Jerry Moran
Chairman
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice,
Science & Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations

The Honorable Jeanne Shaheen
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice,
Science & Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations

The Honorable José Serrano
Chairman
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice,
Science & Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations

The Honorable Robert Aderholt
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice,
Science & Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations

Dear Chairmen Moran and Serrano and Ranking Members Shaheen and Aderholt:

Thank you for your continued support for the Regional Innovation (RI) Program within the Department of Commerce and for funding the program at \$33 million in Fiscal Year 2020.

As recipients of RI awards, we are working in our communities to support innovation and entrepreneurship. We ask you to provide increased funding support as you develop the Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies Appropriations bill for Fiscal Year 2021. Annual funding through the RI Program enables dozens of communities throughout the country to help fully unleash American innovation, supporting entrepreneurs as they increase sales and boost job growth, and transforming ideas into new products and solutions in sectors as diverse as manufacturing, bio sciences, energy, and agriculture.

The RI Program encourages and supports regional innovation strategies by funding flexible awards that we have matched greater than 1:1 with non-federal funds. The program is a unique and critical source of support for impactful regional efforts. Organizations throughout the country are achieving impact through RI awards, including the following:

- Composite Recycling Technology Center in Washington has supported six entrepreneurs in keeping more than 400,000 pounds of carbon fiber out of landfills;
- Grupo Guayacán developed Puerto Rico's first seed fund, which has already invested in 10 companies and attracted nearly \$2.5 million in total investment;
- In Ohio, Lorain County Community College and its partners have helped early-stage companies pursue 59 patents and \$5 million in sales;
- mHub in Illinois has worked with 350 manufacturing-focused startups, which have generated \$105 million in revenue and created more than 1,000 jobs;

- New Orleans BioInnovation Center in Louisiana has helped 270 entrepreneurs, who have raised nearly \$50 million in private investment; and,
- Tampa Bay Wave in Florida has assisted more than 300 companies, which have gone on to raise more than \$230 million and create 2,000 jobs.

Demand for RI Program funding is strong, far outpacing the current funding. The EDA has received 1,200 applications from all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico. In 2019 alone, more than 180 applicants requested funding through the program. To date, EDA has made 224 awards totaling \$101 million.

As you develop the Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies appropriations bill for FY 2021, we ask you to prioritize the Regional Innovation Program. Increased resources for the RI Program will ensure that more regions can leverage innovations to cultivate entrepreneurship, grow startups, and bring new products and ideas to market—efforts that are crucial in building and maintaining the U.S. competitive edge.

We thank you again for your continued support and consideration.

Arizona

Arizona State University

Arkansas

Startup Junkie Foundation

California

City Innovate Inc
 Cleantech San Diego
 UCLA Biodesign

Florida

Tampa Bay Wave

Georgia

Georgia Institute of Technology

Hawaii

XLR8UH

Idaho

North Idaho College

Illinois

mHUB

Indiana

Elevate Ventures

Kansas

Kansas State Research Foundation
 Pittsburg State University

Louisiana

Louisiana Tech University
 New Orleans BioInnovation Center

Maryland

BioHealth Innovation Inc.
 Eastern Shore Entrepreneurship Center (dba
 F³ Tech Accelerator)
 University of Maryland, College Park

Massachusetts

ACTION Innovation Network
 Upshift Innovation

Michigan

Ann Arbor SPARK
 University of Michigan - Michigan
 Biomedical Venture Fund

Minnesota

Red Wing Ignite

Missouri

BioGenerator

BioSTL

Entrepreneur Startup Business
Development Corporation

Nebraska

Invest Nebraska

New Mexico

NMA Ventures

New York

Launch New York, Inc.

North Carolina

Joules Accelerator

Social Venture Circle

Ohio

Brummet Life Sciences Consulting, Inc.

JumpStart Inc.

Lorain County Community College

University of Technology

Pennsylvania

Ben Franklin Technology Partners

Idea Foundry, Inc.

Peurto Rico

Grupo Guayacán

South Carolina

South Carolina Research Authority

University of South Carolina

Tennessee

AgLaunch Initiative

Vibrant Memphis Inc DBA Epicenter

Texas

Austin Technology Incubator @ UT Austin

Texas Tech University

True Wealth Ventures

Virginia

REaKTOR Business Technology Innovation
Center

The Launch Place

Washington

Composite Recycling Technology Center

Port of Benton

Wisconsin

The Water Council