

March 19, 2019

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 \$23.5 million in Fiscal Year 2019.

We recipients of RI awards, who are working in our communities to support innovation and entrepreneurship, ask you to provide increased funding support as you develop the Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies Appropriations bill for Fiscal Year 2020. 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. RI awards throughout the country have enabled organizations to:

- Provide assistance to hardware startups in Southern New York, which have raised \$53 million and earned \$7 million in revenue;
- Assist more than 200 startups, which have created 317 jobs and raised \$2.7 million in capital along the central Oregon coast;
- Capitalize Puerto Rico's first seed fund, which has deployed \$600,000 across ten startups to date;
- Bolster 26 startups to create 55 new, hardware products in conjunction with Southwest Pennsylvania manufacturers;
- Increase sales by nearly 2x and investments by 3x for 30 companies graduating from the central California Valley Ventures accelerator;
- Launch a new manufacturing development space in Illinois, which has seen client companies generate \$48 million in revenue and receive 250 patents;

- Mentor and otherwise assist 539 supply chain-focused startups in Northwest Arkansas;
- Create a suite of services that have supported 250 central Florida companies over six years, creating more than 1,400 jobs;
- Support water technology startups in Southwest Ohio with subject matter experts in data analytics, AI, sensors, and more;
- Catalyze a new seed fund in Texas that has raised more than \$19 million to invest in women-led startups; and,
- Establish a \$5 million seed fund in Alabama that is mentoring early stage ventures and targeting follow-on funding of \$1 million per company.

Demand for RI Program funding is strong, far outpacing the current funding. The EDA has received more than 1,000 applications from all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico. In 2018 alone, more than 230 applicants requested \$120 million in funding and pledged \$165 million in matching funds. To date, EDA has made 180 awards totaling \$78 million.

As you develop the Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies appropriations bill for FY 2020, 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.

Sincerely,

Alabama

Innovation Depot, Inc.

Arizona

Greater Phoenix Economic Council

Arkansas

Startup Junkie Foundation

California

Cleantech San Diego

Fresno State Foundation

UC Davis Institute for Innovation and
Entrepreneurship

Colorado

Exponential Impact

Telluride Foundation

Florida

Tampa Bay Wave

Georgia

Georgia Institute of Technology

Hawaii

XLR8UH

Idaho

North Idaho College

Illinois

mHUB

Indiana

Elevate Ventures

Northeast Indiana Innovation Center

Kansas

Kansas State Institute for Commercialization

Kentucky

Tri-County Economic Development Corp.

Louisiana

Louisiana Tech University
New Orleans BioInnovation Center
Research Park Corporation

Maryland

Maryland Technology Development
Corporation (TEDCO)

Massachusetts

ACTION Innovation Network, Inc.

Michigan

Ann Arbor SPARK
University of Michigan Medical School

Mississippi

Innovate Mississippi

Missouri

BioGenerator
BioSTL

Nevada

StartUpNV

New Mexico

New Mexico Angels & NMA Ventures

New York

Rev: Ithaca Startup Works
The Koffman Southern Tier Incubator
Village Capital

North Carolina

Joules Accelerator

Ohio

JumpStart Inc.
Lorain County Community College
Northeast Ohio Medical University
University of Cincinnati

Oklahoma

Oklahoma Manufacturing Alliance

Oregon

Regional Accelerator & Innovation Network
VertueLab (formerly Oregon BEST)

Pennsylvania

Ben Franklin Technology Partners
Idea Foundry, Inc
Innovation Works, Inc.

Puerto Rico

Grupo Guayacán, Inc.
Puerto Rico Science Technology Research
Trust

South Carolina

South Carolina Research Authority

South Dakota

Governor's Office of Economic Development

Texas

Goodcity
Medical Center of the Americas Foundation
Texas Tech University
True Wealth Ventures

Virginia

The Launch Place
Virginia Tech

Washington

WA Department of Commerce

Wisconsin

The Water Council