GO Virginia Region 2, Council Meeting

July 30, 2020, 1:00p.m.- 3:00p.m.

- Introductions (1:00-1:05)
- Financial Report (1:05-1:10)
- Proposal Review and Action (Tate, 1:10-1:50)
  - ELITE Internship
  - Amherst LYH Site Readiness
  - New River/Mount Rogers Workforce Development
  - NRV Business Continuity Team
  - PHRE Mobile App
  - Virginia SBDC
- Staff Updates
  - Project Evaluation (Travis, 1:50-2:00)
  - Proposal Pipeline (Tate, 2:00-2:05)
  - Council Minutes 2/4, Council Minutes 5/6, Executive Committee Minutes 7/16 (Jones, 2:05-2:10)
  - Other Business (Provo, 2:10-2:20)

Public comment is welcome in writing. Please submit to Region 2 staff, John Provo, jprovo@vt.edu or Rachel Jones, rachelcj@vt.edu by 7/29 at 3:00p.m.

Region 2 Allocations   7/24/2020

FY 19 Per Capita			FY 19 Capacity Building		
Balance transfer of $239,326.00 to FY 20 Per capita			Balance transfer of $101,550.54 to FY 20 Per Capita		

FY 20 Per Capita			FY 20 Capacity Building		
Transfers from FY19	$	340,876.54	Original allocation	$	250,000.00
Original allocation	$	1,550,032.00	Support org services	$	(214,350.16)
CV Training Center	$	(100,000.00) **ECB**	Marketing services	$	(21,500.00)
Regional Entrep (VIC)	$	(299,995.00)	**Current Balance**		**$14,149.84** *(Transfer eventual remainder to FY 21)*
Advancemnent F 2.0	$	(180,000.00)			
Classroom to Careers	$	(180,000.00)			
Roanoke Region Part	$	(100,000.00) **ECB**			
Final Balance	**$**	**1,030,913.54** *($50,000 remaining on ECB cap)*			

FY 20 Special ERR Program		
Allocation		$1,000,000
Fralin testing 1.0	$	(100,000.00)
Ramp&PIVOT	$	(97,200.00)
Fralin tetsing 2.0	$	(500,000.00)
NRV Business CT 1.0	$	(100,000.00)
Final Balance		**$202,800**

FY 21 Per Capita			FY 21 Capacity Building		
Transfers from FY 20	$	1,030,913.54	Original allocation		$250,000.00
Original allocation		$1,545,403.00	Support org services		($166,000.00)
Current Balance		**$2,576,316.54** *($250,000 ECB Cap)*	**Current Balance**		**$84,000.00**

FY 21 Special ERR Program		
Transfers from FY 20		$202,800.000
Current Balance		**$202,800.00**

Applications Under Consideration 7/30/20

	Per capita		ERR	
PHRE App (VT ICTAS)	$	63,500.00		
RBTC ELITE	$	299,000.00		
NRV Busines CT 2.0	$	47,200.00	$	202,800
Amherst-LYH Sites	$	365,572.00		
PICKS TM (Wkrfce Board)	$	100,000.00 **ECB**		
Totals	$	875,272.00	$	202,800.00
Balances if all approved	**$**	**1,701,044.54**	**$**	**-**

State competitive fund, No region 2 funds allocated

Virginia SBDC network	*$1,620,235.00*

Region 2 GO Virginia Council

Project Title: Experiential Learning in Tech Employment (ELITE) Internship Program
Applicant: Roanoke-Blacksburg Technology Council
Localities covered: Counties of Alleghany, Bedford, Botetourt, Craig, Pulaski, Montgomery, and
                       Roanoke, and cities of Salem, Roanoke, Lynchburg, Radford and Salem; and
                       Towns of Dublin, Blacksburg, and Clifton Forge
Growth & Diversification Plan Strategy Area (s): Technology Sector and Talent/Workforce

GOVA Funds Requested: $290,000 in GOVA funds requested, with a match of $162,000

Project Description:

The Roanoke-Blacksburg Technology (RBTC) often hears the need for more seasoned tech talent when talking to regional employers and also hears from higher education institutions that there is a need for quality paid internship opportunities.

The Region 2 Growth and Diversification Plan highlighted the critical need for our region to retain more of its postsecondary graduates, the GO Virginia-funded "Stopping the Brain Drain" study (2019) identified best practices, and a study by Valleys Innovation Council of employers in the New River and Roanoke Valleys suggested that the most critical IT and software development talent needed was software developers. The employers also projected significant growth over the next 18 months, a regionally high average annual wage (~$90,000), and a mean of 54 days to fill early-career software developer positions.

These efforts cited the lack of familiarity with the region and its employment opportunities as factors hindering the efforts to fill local jobs with regionally-educated talent. However, the overwhelming majority of Region 2's vacant tech jobs require at least 2-4 years of hands-on work experience, and hiring managers are skeptical that new graduates can stretch into those jobs. In addition to this lack of hands-on experience, hiring managers list certain essential skills recent engineering graduates must possess in order to be hired directly from school: Agile/Scrum, project management, automated testing, DevOps.

RBTC has partnered with NextUp Solutions to develop the Experiential Learning in Tech Employment (ELITE) internship project to strengthen the pipeline of talent to meet the Emerging Technologies and IT industry cluster's needs. The ELITE project will address the identified talent disconnect through activities in four areas: building and maintaining relationships with higher education institutions, regional employers, and professional internship organizations ($37,000); managing the internship experiences and provide on-site training and support of interns by Professional Internship Organizations ($155,840); direct financial support for paid internships at PIOs on projects in support of Region 2 companies ($188,160); and grant administration activities ($23,000). The total project budget also includes $48,000 in office space support for ELITE interns by NextUp Solutions.

The program will provide funding to support up to 57 semester-long or summer paid internship experiences in one or more Professional Internship Organizations (PIOs) to meet the near-term IT and software development talent in Region 2 while building a more robust and connected talent pipeline to meet longer-term regional tech employment needs. Centralization and professionalization of internship operations will allow interns to develop skills under expert mentors who have been trained in their area of expertise (eg. software development) as well as in mentorship and professional development.

By centralizing the internship experience, a PIO can also draw from smaller institutions in the region that may not have the economies of scale to attract interest from company-based internship programs. At the same time, working on a project-based model means that interns can be recruited to work in a

variety of industries at one location. The PIO also develops professional development modules for the internship experience on topics such as database technology, programming best practices, and automated testing. Students are still exposed to the employer culture and environment via regular project meetings and stakeholder feedback facilitated by the PIO.

At the same time, the program will benefit small and mid-sized businesses that are challenged to launch and oversee an internship program due to the significant administration, HR issues, and daily supervisory burden of adding a small number of seasonal college-age workers to their workforce. Startups who never imagined having the scale to benefit from an internship program can now build a talent pipeline while harnessing the capacity of the emerging workforce. Employers who build a healthy talent pipeline retain more senior employees because they are freed up to work on more complex and strategic projects, instead of being overstretched to support work "beneath their pay grade." A PIO works with the employer to offload lower-level maintenance work to its interns, freeing up senior employees for strategic projects.

The project will begin with 4 internship experiences provided in Fall 2020 and offer semester-long experiences for fall, spring, and summer semesters. As more Region 2 employers become engaged over the course of the project performance period, the number of internship experiences supported by the project will scale to 12/semester by Summer 2022.

Costs to support the intern and the intern's management would be shared between a client company and the grant, and regional employers will only be eligible for a subsidized internship experience the first semester working with an intern. Client companies would be eligible for a continued subsidy if they choose to engage with a new intern in a subsequent semester, and an intern would be eligible to continue participating if they worked with a new client company.

<u>Project Assessment</u> (Region 2 staff reviewer – Scott Tate; External reviewer – Melissa M. Lubin, Ph.D., Dean, Professional & Continuing Education, James Madison University; Region 2 Council reviewer – Kenneth Craig.

Strengths

- "The project states as one of its goals is to hire at least 23 of the internship graduates in Region 2 by end of year 5. With IT being one of Region 2's priority clusters, this is a strength."
- The project is "specifically focused on strengthening the pipeline of talent to meet the Emerging Technologies and IT industry cluster's needs"
- The project aspires to "creating software engineer development hub"
- It is also "focused on inciting students to stay in the area (reduce brain drain) based on internship opportunities"
- "The PIO model is unique and compelling"
- "The applicant/partners have a demonstrated history of managing successful internship programs."
- "The expectation that only the first semester will be funded by the grant—future funding will be by company" encourages private sector commitment.
- "Does appear to be a need in region for IT sector workers."

Weaknesses
- "Very narrow IT focus"
- "Little mention of COVID and how impacts the industry, this occupation, and this project in particular."

- "Data and evidence of industry need for workers is all pre-COVID."
- "No mention of [process for] start-up of the initiative—Fall 2020 seems unrealistic, unless work has already been done to hit the ground running. For instance, are the interns already identified for first semester?"
- "Support and engagement from others working in the region on this space (RRP, Onward,VT) is welcome as the potential for synergies, but also overlaps, in services provided and communication with companies and students is high. Council might ask current and past grantees to meet with staff to provide a written report on how they will manage coordination."
- "The proposed solution here to a talent gap is internships.   The challenge with that is there is no clear connection that interns will stay on and become regular employees. A post-degree boot camp style program, an apprenticeship model, or some form of post-degree incentive combined with training would all seem to be much more effective solutions to addressing the talent needs in a clearer way."
- "There is a lag time in these individuals becoming full time employees as they are still in-degree programs. Does this lag time meet the needs of region 2 employers? "
- "Applicant cities Lynchburg and Bedford as service region, but there is no support from there documented."
- "There are no letters of support from the Lynchburg Region."
- "The GOVA investment here appears quite high for a program that, while worthy, may not be tightly designed to ensure that the investment results in actual workers, post-graduation."

Questions

- "What incentive does the student have to stay with the company that they intern with? Is there potential to take advantage of this opportunity, graduate and land a job somewhere else?"
- "Is it a concern that much of funding would go to a private sector company?"
- "But for the grant, couldn't NextUp Solutions, market this program directly to employers and educational institutions? That is, is this grant needed to push this concept forward?"

Project Title: Amherst LYH Region Site
Applicant: Lynchburg Regional Alliance

Localities covered: The Lynchburg MSA is the counties of Amherst, Appomattox, Bedford, Campbell
                        and the City of Lynchburg with a total population of 260,000. The entire
                        population will be served by this project.

Growth & Diversification Plan Strategy Area (s): Sites and Building

GOVA Funds Requested: $366,572 in GOVA funds requested, with a match of $180,600

Project Description:

The Lynchburg Regional Business Alliance is applying for GO Virginia Region 2 funding to support advancement of 15 publicly owned sites to tier 3,4 and 5. In 2018 we hired Draper Aden to conduct the Lynchburg Regional Business Alliance Site Readiness Analysis in accordance with Virginia Business Ready Sites Characterization Program. The results of the analysis indicated that our ability to recruit industry was hindered by not having pad ready sites available.

The Amherst LYH Site Readiness is the next step after completing the regional Due Diligence Project that advanced a portfolio of six existing commercial/industrial sites along the site readiness scale and clarified next steps for moving all sites to at least Tier III on the Virginia Business Site Readiness Scale (VBRSP) with seven jurisdictions participating. This project is a collaboration between The Lynchburg Regional Business Alliance and municipalities in Region 2, including: Amherst County and the town of Amherst.

The Lynchburg Regional Business Alliance (Alliance) serves as the regional economic development organization for the City of Lynchburg and the counties of Amherst, Appomattox, Bedford and Campbell and the Towns of Altavista and Amherst. Through a competitive bidding process, the Alliance and its GO Virginia project partners, selected Draper Aden Associates as the team that conducted the commercial/industrial site readiness evaluations for twelve publicly owned industrial sites.

Of the twelve sites ranked we identified six existing, established industrial sites – one in each of the participating Counties to execute the required due-diligence phase necessary to advance those sites. In 2018, the twelve industrial sites were evaluated and subjected to a high-level screening and evaluated to assess their readiness for recruitment of commercial/industrial capital investment projects as part of the Growth & Diversification Plan development for the Region 2.

Six of those sites were then selected for due diligence completion and thanks to a GOVA Region 2 grant the due diligence phase was completed on those six sites, positioning us for this next step. This project will continue marching industrial property through the site readiness/site improvement phase. The consultant team will complete due diligence, mass grading documents and grading to advance 240 acres (7 parcels) to tier III, one parcel to a tier IV and one parcel to a tier V (26 acres), as defined by the VBRSP.

As Go Virginia strives to create higher paying jobs through incentivized collaboration, primarily through out-of-state revenue, which diversifies and strengthens the economy in every region, our region strives to answer the need of companies considering our region. We are often passed over for lack of site-ready product. Over the past four years we have been invited to the dance by relocating companies but never danced because our sites were not "site-ready." The average sites and building requests to the Lynchburg region are 100,000 square feet existing and/or 27 acres pad ready. This grant continues the progression toward making pad ready sites available in the Lynchburg region.

Project Assessment (Region 2 staff reviewer – Scott Tate; External reviewer – David Denny, Managing Partner, Sanford Holhouser; Region 2 Council Reviewer – Sandy Davis)

Strengths

- "I can see the direct impact to the region's priority clusters of manufacturing and food and beverage processing. If the sites are upgraded to higher tier readiness and with location near a four-lane highway with good connections the sites will be highly attractive to these sectors."
- "Organization is well established and with expertise in this area."
- "The letters of support from other localities in the region coupled with a regional EDO (LRBA) providing a conduit and support for the project is sufficient evidence of regional collaboration."
- "LRBA is an established and capable regional economic development organization with sufficient resources and collaborative networks to serve this project. The County and Town partners offer additional support and resources on the project."
- "The project is a proactive step in getting economic development "product" into a state of readiness and attractiveness for prospect companies looking for locations."
- "Businesses attracted create new jobs and provide direct and indirect positive economic impacts. You cannot sell out of an empty wagon. Putting 15 lots into play will provide an inventory for many years ahead."
- "Project should help region better attract industry."
- "Organizational capability to execute and partner capacity is very strong."

Weaknesses

- "Less clear why the sites in this park in Amherst were selected for advancement versus some of the other assessed sites – are there other factors that make this location particularly appealing to prospects?"
- "Perhaps a concern that locality funding is from Amherst County and Town of Amherst."
  - NOTE FOR CONTEXT: The LRBA does also have letters from city of Lynchburg and Bedford County per contributions to and active support for this project as part of their support for LRBA.

Questions

- NOTE: The applicant is working on an issue related to a small part of its match, which we can update council on.
- "How does the LYH regions inventory of ready sites compare to our other Region 2 sub-regions? Does this project represent a catching up, or is it creating unique assets for our region as a whole?"
- "Is there a marketing/promotional plan on which sectors, and more importantly, the types of companies in each sector might be targeted and how do those companies targeted match to the assets and characteristics of each site? This is more specific and detailed than what is probably required at this time but needs to be carefully developed when the sites are ready for market in order to now "waste" assets by opening access to all sites by all prospects."
- "It is unclear from the information I reviewed what current tier levels are currently in place for each lot and to what higher tier will be achieved for each. This is important to know in order to estimate "inventory" level over time and project what future funds are needed to keep moving lots up the readiness tiers."
- "Are there any MOUs or statutory arrangements (e.g. RIFA) that clearly spells out that this is project provides for cost and revenue sharing? Even if not applicable for every project, having a regional RIFA could be more positive demonstration of multi-jurisdictional/region collaboration."

Project Title: Profiles to Increase Critical Knowledge for Skills That Matter (PICKS TM)
Applicant: New River Mt. Rogers Workforce Development Board

Localities covered: Counties of Pulaski, Montgomery, Floyd, Giles and city of Radford
Growth & Diversification Plan Strategy Area (s): talent and workforce.

GOVA Funds Requested: $100,000 in GOVA funds requested, with a match of $100,000 and anticipated additional leverage (as described by applicant) of $477,240.

Project Description:

PICKS TM seeks to help employers, job-seekers, and training providers to better understand and communicate knowledge, skills and abilities required to effectively perform specific in-demand jobs of high-growth businesses in targeted industries of GO Virginia Region Two.

Using the American College Testing (ACT) Job Profiling system, the project will analyze the skills, skill levels, and skill frequency workers need to be successful at certain high-demand, high-wage jobs. The project seeks to provide businesses with a sharable, detailed analysis of skills and abilities an employee needs to be productive and efficient on the job. Using ACT's standardized structure, detailed internal reports will enable efficient job matching to applicant work history, applicant training completions, and employee skill mastery. External redacted (without personal identification information) reports will inform workforce system partners in developing navigational career progression maps specific to the region.

These tools will aid in the development of skilled-worker pipelines from K12 through senior-level talent by reducing subjective interpretation of businesses' required and preferred skills, identifying gaps, and guiding training selection and/or modification. While modifications to the talent pipeline will develop over time, businesses will immediately have a standardized tool to calibrate their recruitment efforts to significantly reduce turnover and encourage retention.

This tool will also inform Workforce System partners and Job Seekers of the critical skillsets required to be successful in specific jobs. Using the same ACT Job Profiling system, curriculum may be profiled to measure the degree of alignment between specific jobs and the outcomes of a training program.   The process seeks to aid in establishing reasonable expectations as well as providing assurance to employers that graduates of a program have the skills they need to be successful in the company.

Knowledge and skill gaps can be analyzed and understood so that custom training may be secured. Graphics depicting the career pathway information (competencies, education/training, and credentials) will be shared for all to openly access in our website www.vcwnewrivermtrogers.com and our online portal developed in our America's Promise grant, KnowledgetoWork.com.

Specifically, the project will:

- Profile eight Jobs in High-Growth Target Industries
- Provide businesses with ACT Job Profile Reports including training recommendations.
- Create micro-view career pathway lattices for the companies, denoting specific skills necessary to transition from one position to the next and/or required experience.
- Create standardized labels for profiled jobs. Labels will denote overall skill level while also listing critical skills, preferred credentials, and required education levels.

- Create meso-view Career Lattice based on occupational skill levels required among regional businesses in target industries.
- Profile education/training curriculum based on:
    - a. occupational frequency in our high-growth, target industries
    - b. number of applicants from a specific training program
    - c. percentage of graduates from a specific training program who leave the region
- Create Curriculum Profile and Job Profile Alignments.
- Create macro-view career lattices for each target industry.
- Share macro, meso, and micro-view Career Lattices with Workforce System Partners (including CTE programs, Chambers of Commerce, Industry Cooperatives and Partnerships, Training and Education Partners) and Job Seekers.

PICKS TM offers a forward-looking approach to supporting the economic growth of the region's priority industry clusters by developing a tool, process, and common language in helping businesses with their recruiting, hiring, training, and promoting practices as well as in making critical decisions about jobs, identifying strengths, setting training goals, and finding appropriate training programs. The ACT Job Profiling system saves companies time and money as stated in the ACT Workforce Solutions 2020 ROI Report, "23.2% increase in employee productivity in task performance; 21.1% increase in output due to increased employee safety; 18.9% reduction in hiring needs due to increased performance; 19.3% reduction in hiring needs due to increased employee safety; 25-75% reduction in turnover; 50-70% reduction in time-to-hire; 70% reduction in cost to hire; 50% reduction in training time."

However, only 76 of the roughly 8000 businesses in the New River/Mount Rogers Workforce Area have profiled jobs since 1994. Further, companies that have used the ACT System have not shared the information collected during the Job Profiling process with Workforce System partners and Job Seekers. This project tests the benefits of Job Profiling, and builds on the system's capacity to increase employee retention and promote company growth by aligning Workforce System services and investments with high-growth industry needs

Project Assessment (Region 2 staff reviewer – Scott Tate; External reviewer – Kristin Wolff, Senior Associate at Social Policy Research Associates; Region 2 Council reviewer – Kimball Payne.

Strengths

- "It's very specific about the proposed solution and offers a clear implementation process."
- "Targets industries and sector with high growth and good pay in mind."
- "The project would support the growth of skilled talent by clarifying the necessary knowledge, skills and abilities of the position and developing viable training plans."
- "Applicant and partner capacity is a clear strength. It reads as if it were written by an organization that has done this work before or has a very clear roadmap of what it entails."
- "The proposal offers a strong plan for implementation."
- "Applicant has track record with large scale, complex projects and capacity to execute."

Weaknesses

- "The goals of the project seem very modest. The sources and uses spreadsheet indicates that it takes 47 hours per profile and the proposal sets a goal of 8 job profiles in selected industries. That's a total of 376 hours. Yet, the proposal asks for funding support for two full time positions for a year, or about 4000 hours. While I can acknowledge that there is other work to be done, it seems that more than 8 profiles could be accomplished in a year."

- "The link to growth seems weak. Beyond serving existing employers/better filling pipeline, how does it grow high wage jobs? (if the answer is by filling the pipeline and upskilling the workforce, it seems like a complementary supply chain/sector/recruitment or e-ship strategy would boost the likelihood of achieving this)."
- "The project doesn't promise to spur the growth of higher-wage jobs as much as it says it will promote increased employee productivity and reduce turnover. "
- "The proposal is clear about building the capacity to have this information, but less clear about how to use it to meet the overall goal – spurring the growth of high wage jobs."
- "The collaboration between partners is evident. The value of that collaboration to the region (not just the collaborators) is less evident."
- "No mention of COVID. It seems likely that the employment landscape has changed in recent months and with it, occupational needs and requirements."

Questions

- "How might the project respond to COVID-related needs and challenges? Could you use the profiles to help design and profile post-COVID occupations; or 2) could you use this information to work across sectors (find the core skills and knowledge association with key industries across sectors) and then build programs that serve multiple sectors initially and then specialize later on (this is the meso-view)? Similarly, does the reduced hiring and training costs value proposition make a case for using this project as way to help people who do need upskilling (and are unemployed or underemployed) and enable them to reconnect or advance?"
- "It's not clear to me how the benefit of the support you will offer gets shared with the region, rather than specific employers, programs, or colleges. The approach is solid but could be better."

Project Title: New River Valley COVID-19 Business Continuity Team
Applicant: New River Valley Regional Commission

Localities covered: Counties of Pulaski, Montgomery, Floyd, Giles and city of Radford
Growth & Diversification Plan Strategy Area (s): entrepreneurship and business development; COVID
                        response

GOVA Funds Requested: $250,000 in GOVA funds requested, with a match of $125,000 and anticipated additional leverage of up to $450,000. This is a follow-up request to a $100,000 Fast Access project previously awarded.

Project Description:

The New River Valley Business Continuity Team (BCT) is being assembled to assist businesses directly impacted by an individual testing positive for COVID-19 at their place of business. The BCT will deliver wrap around services necessary for businesses to operate in the COVID environment. The BCT will be administered by the New River Valley Regional Commission and the team will work in coordination with the New River Health District-Virginia Department of Health to provide employers with 24/7 technical assistance from a multi-disciplinary team, public and employee messaging and education, facility cleaning, certification of best practices and coordination of on-site testing, if deemed appropriate.

This project will assist in mitigating the economic impacts of COVID by providing cost efficient resolution of problems for businesses and by instilling confidence in consumers and employees. This confidence will be developed by providing an immediate coordinated response to outbreaks, consistent public messaging, education, and the development of best practices throughout the region. All of these will help to stabilize the region's overall economy through the coming months.

Services available to impacted businesses include:
        -Continuity Plan developed by the BCT
        -Access to a pool of funds to pay for on-site cleaning; public relations expertise to communicate with employees, customers, media and general public; website support for any pertinent messaging; human resources related legal advisement.
        -COVID-19 testing provided by the New River Valley Public Health Task Force (not funded by GO Va)

When an employer learns about a positive COVID-19 case within their business, they will contact the program manager, who will work with the BCT Public Health Director, New River Health District and impacted business to prepare a continuity plan for the business in a matter of hours. The BCT will work with the impacted business to begin executing their plan. The company may need assistance with messaging to their employees, customers, or general public. In addition, site cleaning, website support for external messaging and human resources related legal advisement are all eligible expenses the businesses may choose to utilize in order to respond appropriately. Since each continuity plan will be crafted specifically to the impacted business, there is not a linear process, but rather a suite of services available on short-notice.

The BCT services funded by GO Va will be dedicated to firms in the GO Va Region 2 Targeted Industries of advanced manufacturing, life sciences and health care, food and beverage processing, and emerging technology/IT firms. Outcomes will be measured by the number of firms receiving marketing information of the BCT availability, number of firms utilizing the BCT services, number of firms receiving

the certificate conferred by the Public Health Director indicating the continuity plan was executed, and number of jobs retained as a result of the BCT services offered.

The BCT will directly mitigate the economic impacts of COVID-19 by providing a continuity plan promptly with access to the services necessary to execute the plan. The primary value-add of the BCT is a wrap-around program to help businesses quickly navigate a challenging situation that does not have extensive guidance readily available. It makes available the best public health resource in the region to those who need it along with expertise to directly assist the businesses.

Project Assessment (Region 2 staff reviewer – Scott Tate; External reviewer - Sheri McGuire, Associate VP for Community and Economic Development, Longwood University)

Strengths

- "Supporting existing businesses in a very direct way."
- "If successful, it could be very impactful to keeping businesses operation and workforce employed."
- "Applicant and partner capability and capacity to execute are strengths".
- "Specifies focus on support for Region 2 Traded Sector and Target Industry firms."
- "Local government active support, financial commitment, and leadership appears present."
- "Local government leaders identified a need for and helped develop this project."
- "Business continuity and job retention is the focus."
- "Answers an immediate need of the business community."

Weaknesses

- "How reliant is project on other leveraged funds to be successful, and what is status of those sources?"
- "The applicant could provide more evidence on private sector/traded sector firms who have expressed need and willingness to call upon this assistance.?"

Questions

- "Any duplication of other services and programs? How are they taking steps to coordinate with other resources and services?"
- "What will the funding for testing involve? What is the relationship to VT testing site, if any?" (NOTE: We can confirm with applicant that the costs here are associated with the health district's conducting tests as opposed to VT processing of tests, which we understood to be the case.)
- "What is connection, if any, to the other proposed project from Virginia Tech for mobile app development?"

Region 2 GO Virginia Council

Project Title: PHRE Mobile App – A Resource for Helping Small Organizations Confront CoVID-19

Applicant: Virginia Tech Institute for Critical Technology and Applied Science

Localities covered: Counties of Floyd, Montgomery, Giles, and Pulaski

Growth & Diversification Plan Strategy Area (s): COVID response

GOVA Funds Requested: ECB of $63,500 and match of $42,610, Total project budget of $106,110

Project Description:

Larger organizations are well-equipped to implement state and federal recommendations to enable employees to return to work safely, but smaller organizations, which are most vulnerable right now, often lack the personnel and resources to do so. We propose the development of a Public Health Readiness Evaluation (PHRE) tool – an easy-to-use mobile application designed to help these smaller organizations quickly assess and optimize their readiness to operate with minimal risk to workers, customers/patrons, and surrounding communities.

The tool will be adapted from a safety framework originally developed for small nanotechnology businesses, and will include in-kind efforts from leading risk scientists and mobile application developers (see attached support letters Linkov and Eksdyne). The tool will be launched within one-month of project kick-off and refined over a period of three additional months (i.e., four months total project duration).

A consortium of nearly a dozen small businesses, community organizations, and health officials is being assembled and about a half dozen have already agreed to provide in-kind support of up to 40 hours over the four month project (about 2.5 hrs/week) to help evaluate and improve the tool (see accompanying PHRE Consortium support letters).

Further, leveraging back-end data analytics and machine learning approaches, information obtained through the PHRE mobile application will be used to help local and state health officials better understand and meet the public health and safety needs of small businesses from diverse sectors of Virginia's regional economies.

The project will 1.) allow our region's small businesses, which struggle most with adapting to matters of safety and compliance, to return to normal operation more quickly and safely; 2) it will enhance the capacity of regional economic development task forces and business continuity teams by expanding their reach beyond physical engagement only; and 3) beyond the CoVID-19 pandemic, it will create a framework for streamlining public health and safety compliance for small resource-constrained businesses and other organizations – leaders of such organizations frequently struggle with such matters and, as a matter of necessity, often ignore them.

<u>Staff and Council Assessment</u> (NOTE: Since Virginia Tech is the applicant, we engaged **Bryan David** with the Region 3 support organization to provide a staff review. **Eddie Amos** provided review comments for Region 2 Council and **Marty Kaszubowski**, Executive Director for Innovation Initiatives at Old Dominion University's Institute for Innovation & Entrepreneurship (IIE) provided external subject matter reviewer comments.)

<u>Strengths:</u>

- "The tool provides health officials a tool to broaden their reach as they seek to support all aspects of our regional economy, particularly small, resource-constrained businesses."
- "This is a "speed to market" mobile application focused on small business sustainability and adaptation to COVID-19. Maybe there will be downstream high-wage IT and health sector jobs, but its more focused on sustaining small business viability"
- "…success can be assured given the high-level of IT and health care talent committed to project."
- "The genesis of the idea from nanotechnology risk assessment is a strength and the proposal makes a reasonable case that the knowledge base is applicable to COVID-19 response."
- "Demonstrated and documented breadth of regional support."
- "The list of supporting entities is impressive."
- The applicant and partner capability and capacity to execute is "the most significant strength of project."
- "The project is innovative because of its "speed to market" focus. Further, its focused on sustainability of small business. A policy issue which has with good reason garnered great attention during the COVID-19 pandemic."
- "The proposed design of the project should be repeatable across other regions in the Commonwealth."

<u>Weaknesses:</u>

- ""In its initial form, the project is obviously not a job-creator, but rather a job-saver and a tool to support public-health."
- "The project does not create new jobs nor advanced current positions to higher wages."
- "I love the concept of this project but fail to see how it aligns with the mission of Go Virginia."
  - <u>CONTEXT NOTE</u>: The alignment of project with GO Virginia mission is an open question, as state ERR guidance does list allowable funding for "Expanding workplace health and sanitation activities to support continuity of operations or return-to-work efforts." However, there is also ERR guidance to focus support on "firms in targeted industry clusters and/or highly-impacted locally traded sectors." The extent to which this project would do that is a good question for the applicant.
- "Could provide more high-level information on what types or categories of recommendations or guidance will be forthcoming to these small businesses. "

<u>Questions or other comments:</u>

- "Who will develop the application? What platform? Is there data to support the choice of platform?"
- "The proposal would benefit from a brief mention of any plans to build on and generalize the framework and app to support a broader range of existing and future response profiles. Could this be turned into a major public health and/or emergency response tool?"

Project Title: Virginia SBDC Network ERR Support
Applicant: George Mason University
Localities covered: Statewide
Growth & Diversification Plan Strategy Area (s): ERR; Statewide

GOVA Funds Requested: $1,620,235 in GO VA statewide competitive funding

Project Description:

Since the COVID-19 outbreak the Virginia Small Business Development Center (SBDC) Network has been working around the clock to facilitate small businesses in Virginia securing federal financial assistance. Some SBDC offices are now in jeopardy if local cash match sources are diminished, which would reduce Virginia's access to recovery resources from the federal government. This GO Virginia Statewide ERR application is a request to provide up to $1,620,235 to ensure the Virginia SBDC Network can satisfy the required 50% cash match in order to access the full amount of SBA funding and sustain SBDC services for small businesses. The funds will only be used in the absence of appropriate local host or partner funding to leverage the maximum federal funds available.

The Virginia SBDC Network is a statewide program of 26 local offices staffed by professional business advisors that provide confidential 1-on-1 business advising and group training to small businesses and aspiring entrepreneurs in every corner of the Commonwealth. SBDC advising is provided at no-charge and since COVID-19 advising and training has been provided remotely via telephone, email and web based platforms like Zoom and WebEx.

George Mason University manages the Virginia SBDC Network and is funded in part by a cooperative agreement from the US SBA. The federal funding from SBA requires a 1:1 match; at least 50% must be cash match. The sources of cash match for the Virginia SBDC are universities, community colleges, local governments/economic development organizations, chambers of commerce and private businesses. The COVID-19 pandemic is impacting revenues for all of these entities causing them to review and revise annual budgets for FY2021. Fiscal pressures and extraordinary demands for public services may negatively impact the level of cash match available and provided by hosts and local governments to meet cash match requirements.

Small businesses are commonly defined by SBA as having fewer than 500 employees. Small employers represent the vast majority of firms and half of employment among Virginia firms. Nearly 90% of firms have fewer than 20 employees and small businesses with fewer than 500 employees are disproportionately found in sectors that are severely- and moderately-impacted by COVID-19. Findings from the 2008 great recession were that small businesses accounted for 50% of US jobs, but 70% of net job losses. Virtually all business closures in 2009 were firms with fewer than 500 employees. The COVID-19 crisis is already showing worse impacts than the Great Recession and dramatic impacts are expected to small businesses across the Commonwealth.

Most SBDC clients have fewer than 20 employees and the great majority have fewer than 10 employees. These businesses turn to the SBDC for guidance with accessing capital, marketing, strategic and business planning, and financial analysis. The businesses may not have expertise on staff or resources to retain private sector expertise. The SBDC professional advisors are able to help business owners assess critical decisions to take action to manage operations. Local economic development organizations rely on the SBDC to support and assist small businesses in their communities. Since COVID-19, the demand for SBDC services has grown exponentially as businesses struggle to access capital to sustain operations, to retain employees, to pivot from traditional sales methods to online sales and alternate avenues of customer engagement, and to comply with health and public safety requirements.

George Mason University subcontracts with 13 organizations, including universities, community colleges, chambers of commerce and economic development organizations, to host and manage the local SBDC offices. SBA funds are allocated by Mason to host organizations that are responsible for securing local cash and in-kind sources to match their federal funding. These match amounts are certified during the proposal process and reported on invoices. The total federal funding amount for CY2020 is $3,240,470 requiring at least $1,620,235 in cash match. (Please note: In the CY2020 funding proposal to SBA, Mason certified cash match totaling $2,487,466. This amount appears on SBA budget Attachment 3: SBA Notice of Award.)

The COVID-19 pandemic is impacting revenues for all of these entities causing them to review and revise annual budgets for FY2021. Fiscal pressures and extraordinary demands for public services may negatively impact the level of cash match available and provided by hosts and local governments to support the SBDC services at a time when businesses and communities will depend on reliable, affordable and accessible guidance for reopening, recovering and reimaging operations.

Project Assessment (Region 2 staff reviewer – John Provo/Scott Tate; External reviewer – Dan Ripke Director, Economic Development, Funding and Grants, California State University, Monterey Bay; Region 2 Council reviewer – John Putney)

Strengths

- "The SBDC is an asset to the Commonwealth and they have a critical role to play in helping small businesses with economic recovery."
- "The organization has a strong track record for implementation and fiscal responsibility."
- "The need relates to the intent of the ERR program."

Weaknesses
- "This funding is less directed towards a project than towards organizational financial sustainability. As such, it seems less of a fit with the usual aims of GO Virginia."

Questions

- "GOVA Virginia has never previously provided contingent funding in this fashion. Other state agencies are dependent on local support to sustain federal match (e.g. Virginia Cooperative Extension). Does this open a door to future requests of this fashion?"
- "Would this create unintended consequences of causing local governments to reduce their contributions to regional SBDCs, since the state funding would be available? "
- "Through the ERR the state will provide some flexibility to regional councils to support projects that extend beyond traditional target sectors. The applicant, based on past performance, reaches different businesses in different regions. In Northern Virginia (GOVA 7) or Charlottesville (GOVA 9) the number was close to one third. In Region 2 it is about 10%. That may be more flexibility than the council is comfortable with."

Project Name:	Center for Energy Research and Education (CERE) Industry Labs
Project Manager:	Rich Diddams
Project Timeline:	May 9, 2018 – May 8, 2020
GOVA Funding	$182,434 of $300,000
Match Funding	$1,448,107 of $1,586,100
Status:	Met Q2 Milestones
Q2 Progress	All Labs are established and fully operational. One additional R&D contract was secured this quarter with BWXT. Seven new jobs were created with partner entities this quarter including one with Sentry, one with Simplimatic, and five with BWXT. The CERE Labs held training classes, with 31 adults participating, resulting in added skill sets that support workforce development. CERE Industry Labs secured $30,000 in leveraged private investment during quarter 2, as well as an additional $40,000 procured in revenue from lab usage.

Project Name:	Enhancing the Region through New Technology for Unmanned Systems (Drone Zone)
Project Manager:	John Rainone
Project Timeline:	June 4, 2018 – June 8, 2020
GOVA Funding	$76,000 of $76,000
Match Funding	$257,000 of $257,000
Status:	Has not met Q2 milestones, due to COVID-19. Staff is monitoring.
Q2 Progress	The college president and two faculty members participated in a 4-week virtual "Preparing the Drone Workforce" conference. The college president facilitated two of the sessions on June 3 and June 24. Drone Zone initiated the Development of Forestry Technology pilot project involving the Center of Innovation Technology; DSLCC Forestry and Unmanned Systems faculty and staff; a private employer; the Alleghany Highlands Drone Zone employer; and the Virginia Department of Forestry. DSLCC adjunct instructor of Unmanned Systems courses is currently networking to develop customized noncredit training for targeted cohorts including police officers, forestry, and forest firefighters. The COVID-19 pandemic derailed new employees hiring as well as enrollment in college courses in Unmanned Systems. Secured $85,000 in leveraged private and public investment during quarter 2.

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Project Name:	Region 2 Talent Collaborative
Project Manager:	Ben Bowman
Project Timeline:	August 1, 2018 – July 31, 2020
GOVA Funding	$74,939 of $300,000
Match Funding	$141,380 of $630,072
Status:	Has not met Q2 milestones due to training concerns, staff is monitoring. No cost extension request expected through December to include response to COVID-19 affected businesses.
Q2 Progress	Two previously delayed contracts for existing worker training were implemented this quarter for a total of $4,667.00. Four potential contracts are currently under evaluation. Equipment has been purchased by the Central Virginia Workforce Development Board to allow staff to directly produce career pathway videos. Planning is underway to explore virtual career expos in the future. The program is continuing to experience significant concerns regarding training, due to Covid-19. There is consensus with the three workforce boards that an extension of the grant through December 31, 2020 would allow the remaining funds to be invested in both career pathway development and improving or retooling skills for the identified sectors.
Q3 Plans	Continue to develop customized program curriculums, as needed, with business needs in mind to efficiently train at least 75 existing workers in Region 2. Submitting a no-cost extension to serve businesses affected by COVID-19.

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Project Name:	Roanoke Small Business Development Center (SBDC) Expansion
Project Manager:	Cheryl Tucker
Project Timeline:	January 31, 2019 – June 30, 2020
GOVA Funding	$32,687 of $42,000
Match Funding	$35,833 of $36,000
Status:	Met Q2 milestones.
Q2 Progress	

- SBDC worked closely with all jurisdictions in the New River Valley on co-hosting events related to COVID-19 impact. The organization hosted original content and worked directly with jurisdictions and Chambers to guest speak on events held for specific communities. Roanoke SBDC served the City of Radford EDO, Better Business Bureau, Christiansburg, and the NRV Town Hall during the months of April and May. Upon going into critical operations mode in March, staff served as an SBA partner to small businesses impacted by COVID-19. SBDC continued their work by serving as catalyst and educations for EIDL and PPP loan applications, assisting over 2,000 New River Valley customers through their website hotline and email channels.
- Served on the newly formed Entrepreneur and Innovation Council for the New River Valley hosted by Valleys Innovation Council.
- Participated as a guest host on the RBTC Radio Show to talk about COVID-19 impact to small businesses.
- Attended an Economic Development discussion with Dr. John Provo, hosted by the VT Roanoke Center.
- Developed a web knowledge base for clients to seek documents, guides, and other helpful information to help them handle the COVID crisis.
- Developed a downloadable digital asset page on our website for resources needed by small businesses.
- Held their first ever co-hosted event with all of the NRV partners to put on a Reopening Mask Friendly event with the Health Department, a retail and restaurant specialist, and a business owner. Additionally, SBDC provided window graphics for owners to use to show that they are mask friendly upon reopening.
- Hosted two ICAP (Innovation Commercialization Assistance Program) virtual co-horts for commercialization companies. This program takes co-horts through customer discovery and begins to prepare them for research grants.
- Participated in the Access to Capital Committee hosted by Valleys Innovation Council to support and accelerate access to capital for entrepreneurs in Region 2.

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- Served as a communication catalyst for local Cares Act grant programs and hosted Floyd EDO on a Community on Call (FB Live every Wed at 12) to talk about their new Floyd RISES grant program.
- Two New River Valley clients participate in the 2020 Gauntlet competition and both won the top prizes.
- Assisted with access to $2.76 million in capital for NRV entrepreneurs during this quarter.

Project Name:	CERE Additive Manufacturing Partnership Lab (AMPL)
Project Manager:	Rich Diddams
Project Timeline:	February 1, 2019 – February 2, 2021
GOVA Funding	$274,980 of $274,980
Match Funding	$475,017 of $630,000
Status:	Met Q2 milestones
Q2 Progress	The AMP Labs currently have six 3-D printers working around the clock producing face masks and shields for the medical community, this supports CENTRA. The organization has also provided on-site training for users to learn how to program, operate, and maintain the AMP equipment. AMP Labs are training high school personnel on a 2-3-person basis based on COVID-19 restrictions. Project work this quarter includes the development of prototype devices by students for use in the fashion industry – prototype handbags utilizing 3D printers were used to collaborate with the fashion industry in New York. In addition, firms are supporting efforts to establish a codified process for students as well as the local community and industry to find ways to utilize the 3D printers to help advance their own business interests. One R&D contract was secured to develop face masks to assist in the covid-19 crisis. Secured $100,000 in leveraged private investment, $50,000 in leveraged public investment, and $15,000 in revenue from lab usage.
Q3 Plans	- Consultations with Lynchburg Regional Business Alliance - Industry mixers - Travel to industry partners - Site consultant services - Industry partners and entrepreneur site visits

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Project Name:	Ignite Internship Expansion
Project Manager:	Melinda Leland
Project Timeline:	July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2021
GOVA Funding	$31,487 of $99,406
Match Funding	$32,923 of $102,886
Status:	Has not met Q2 milestones. Covid-19 impacted their ability to hold 3 Reality Stores, held 1. Covid-19 has also impacted the program's ability to place interns.
Q2 Progress	Internship sites were recruited, and students and coordinators were provided with manuals from the program's website to begin applying for internships. When schools announced they were going to be out indefinitely, the program began encouraging coordinators to communicate to students that they could apply from home. Unfortunately, because of COVID, five businesses decided not to take interns this summer. All 7th grade students have access to career assessments and are mandated to create their Academic Career Plans. A total of 581 students have access to use Major Clarity at home for identifying career interest and more. Reality Store activities were scheduled for the spring, however, two had to be canceled because of COVID. Only one Reality Store took place. Internships were established with one student placed at NRCC this summer.
Q3 Plans	- Continue training 12 Ignite coordinators - Conduct Careers Expo for Youth for 7th grade students

Project Name:	Lynchburg Due Diligence Study
Project Manager:	Megan Lucas
Project Timeline:	July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2020
GOVA Funding	$65,001 of $81,300
Match Funding	$65,001 of $81,301
Status	Met Q2 milestones
Q2 Progress	The Due Diligence is complete on six industrial sites and documentation has been provided for each of the six sites. All outcomes achieved. Phase one of Environmental Site Assessment progress: complete. Cultural Resource Review: complete. Endangered Species Review: complete. Wetlands Survey and Delineations: complete. Geotechnical Evaluation Report: complete.

Project Name:	Regional Career and Technical Education Study
Project Manager:	Morgan Romeo
Project Timeline:	September 1, 2019 – August 31, 2020
GOVA Funding	$0 of $45,000
Match Funding	$0 of $45,535
Status:	Met Q2 milestones.

Q2 Progress

During quarter 2, staff has been working closely with the Shaffer Evaluation Group. The group has been working with the school systems and the community colleges to finalize reports and data from the site-visits in early March. These reports were presented as notes to the school systems and the community colleges and were used to draft the final report and recommendations. An initial conversation regarding recommendations that would be put forth by the Shaffer Evaluation Group occurred with representatives from the WVWDB and RVARC project staff in early June. This allowed the WVWDB and RVARC to hear the recommendations for the first time and provide feedback on how they would be received and any other key points that should be reviewed prior to releasing the first draft of the report. Overall, the Shaffer Evaluation Group did a great job capturing the needs of the region and the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats that face our CTE centers and programs. The first three outcomes of the project have been completed, including an evaluation of any prior studies of career and technical education programs in the region, the evaluation of the existing conditions of CTE centers in the region, and the analysis and research on the alignment of business needs. The last outcome to be completed will be the final report, scheduled to be released by July 31st.

Q3 Plans

- Final report delivered to project implementation team

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Project Name:	Blockchain Ecosystem Catalyst
Project Manager:	Kirk Cameron
Project Timeline:	September 10, 2019 – September 9, 2021
GOVA Funding	$0 of $246,800
Match Funding	$0 of $250,000
Status:	Has not met Q2 milestones due to hiring delay, no in-person meetings, and moving Blockchain initiatives online. Staff is monitoring.
Q2 Progress	During this quarter, the program focused on financial participation from 3 municipalities, the hiring of James Harder for the Project Manager position in the department of computer science, working with CPE on outsourcing training components, as well as meetings between BlockOne and VT Wildlife and Fisheries. Much of the timeline has significantly slowed due to impact from covid-19.
Q3 Plans	- Develop student bootcamp curriculum - Evaluate resource center models - Develop Blockchain Knowledge Repository and Resource portal - Develop blockchain commercialization and entrepreneurship support services - Release on- campus blockchain commercialization and entrepreneurship support resources

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Project Name:	Developing a Destination for Talent
Project Manager:	Catherine Amelink
Project Timeline:	December 9, 2019 – December 8, 2021
GOVA Funding	$25,710 of $300,000
Match Funding	$25,710 of $473,000
Status:	Met Q2 milestones
Q2 Progress	The Destination for Talent program has held one event this previous quarter on May 18th, The Developing a Destination for Talent Virtual Internship Forum, that allowed staff to interact with interns by teaching them more about the region and providing soft skill training through guest speakers. Young professional Dianne Nguyen provided an interactive questionnaire to help the students learn about professionalism in the workplace, building their personal/ professional brand, and unique facts about our region. Donna Ratcliffe, Director of Career and Professional Development, helped to guide this discussion and collaborated with staff regarding the best topics to discuss during this event.

Aside from this event, the program worked to create a flyer for local governments to share with eligible employers in their part of the region. The flyer featured basic details regarding the program and ways it could benefit their organization. This has allowed staff to effectively connect with other organizations. Destination for Talent has also expanded their program to work with Fontaine Modifications, Modea, Montgomery County IT Department, Fluxteq, MAAG, Automation Creations, and Trovac for their internship program. All organizations are working toward either expanding their current internship program or initiating one. Along with the expansion of the internship program, staff has also created partnerships between Virginia Tech faculty and organizations such as Fontaine Modifications, Trovac, Medeco, and Nippon Pulse to begin working on classroom-based projects. Additionally, the program has continued to work closely with the Roanoke Regional Partnership and Onward NRV by enrolling three fourths of their current interns in summer leadership. These programs have served as the second event for students and allowed them to meet young professionals and employers in the region, learn more about the area, and gain professional knowledge. |
| *Q3 Plans* | Ongoing internship development Ongoing intern placement for fall 2020 semester Recruitment event |

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Project Name:	VIC Region 2 Entrepreneurship Initiative
Project Manager:	Meredith Hundley
Project Timeline:	January 1, 2020 – December 31, 2021
GOVA Funding	$16,273 of $299,995
Match Funding	$8,334 of $150,004
Status:	Has not met Q2 milestones. COVID-19 caused a delay of the first meeting of the cross-regional ecosystem steering group.
Q2 Progress	The program held three regional coalitions, a total of 103 individuals were invited, representing 79 different organizations. A total of 53 individuals attended the coalition meetings, representing 39 different organizations across Region 2. The Innovation and Entrepreneurship Newsletter was distributed to nearly 200 individuals. The Stakeholder Survey was distributed to support organizations across Region 2 in April and May (after the start of the pandemic-induced recession) to identify top needs and opportunities related to innovation-based entrepreneurship. Findings were shared during the May and June coalition meetings and staff is currently working to create a full survey report in mid-July. The Grant Pipeline Development has resulted in a submitted Federal EDA application, establishing baseline for future projects that are currently in development, and various discussions that will likely lead to more grant applications. VABio is a current grant proposal in progress. There are now 3 sub-regional coalitions established. Additionally, the cross regional steering committee members have been identified and will be holding their first meeting in July. Ongoing work with the individual coalitions includes survey work, coalition conversations, and data gathering. VIC is working with Virginia Tech and CIT to establish the best tracking methods moving forward, as well as discussing various needs with regional stakeholders.
Q3 Plans	- Convene cross-regional ecosystem steering group (to be held in July) - Assist with organizing and supporting a Regional Entrepreneurship Summit - Release preliminary sub-regional I+E investment plans - Support entrepreneur- resource matchmaking platform region wide - Update capital ecosystem study

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Project Name:	Increasing the Birth Rates of New High Growth Companies Phase 2
Project Manager:	Annette Patterson
Project Timeline:	April 17, 2020 – April 16, 2021
GOVA Funding	$0 of $180,000
Match Funding	$0 of $180,000
Status:	Met Q2 milestones
Q2 Progress	During this quarter, the program obtained ten needs assessments from potential high growth companies. The organization successfully recruited six companies for IM program, with three IM companies being referred to next level accelerators. Additionally, the program completed eight 360-degree evaluations. Finally, the program engaged one institution of higher education, as well as coordinated the engagement of four students.
Q3 Plans	• Obtain needs survey assessments for 6 potential high growth companies • Recruit 3 new/early stage high growth companies

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GO Virginia Region 2 Council Meeting Minutes

February 4, 2020, Carilion Clinic 4th Floor Education Conference Room, 1 Riverside Circle, Roanoke, Virginia 24016.

Council members in attendance: Marla Akridge, Eddie Amos, Amy Ankrum, Nathaniel Bishop, John Capps, Kenneth Craig, Beverly Dalton, Sandy Davis, Watt Foster, William Fralin, Michael Friedlander, Don Halliwill, Brian Hemphill, Victor Iannello, Floyd Merryman, Marty Muscatello, Kim Payne.

Council members not in attendance: Ab Boxley, John Dooley, Mike Hamlar, Terry Jamerson, Debbie Petrine, John Putney.

Staff in attendance: John Provo, Elli Travis, Rachel Jones, Julia Kell.

Staff participating remotely: Scott Tate.

Public in attendance: Jerry Dunnavant (Brown Edwards), Wayne Strickland (Roanoke Alleghany Regional Commission), Carole Tarrant (Virginia Western Community College), Sheri Winesett (The Advancement Foundation), Annette Patterson (The Advancement Foundation), Debbie Custer (The Advancement Foundation), Ashlyn Shrewsbury (Montgomery County), Mary Miller (RAMP) Laurence Hammack (The Roanoke Times), Deborah Flippo (Draper Aden), Megan Lucas (Lynchburg Regional Business Alliance).

The meeting convened at 3:02pm and adjourned at 4:54pm.

Chairman Smoot called the meeting to order with introductions of the three new council members, Amy Ankrum, Eddie Amos, and Kimball Payne.

Project Review- Proposals

Classrooms to Careers

Dr. Provo began with an overview of the proposal "Classrooms to Careers" led by Mark Husband with Montgomery County Public Schools, in partnership with Giles and Floyd County Schools. No action was required by the council as the proposal was approved for $225,000 in GO Virginia funding during the October 24, 2019 council meeting The project supports IT/cyber internships. Following advice by state program staff, the applicant expanded engagement opportunities for private sector partners. The proposal will move forward for state board review this quarter.

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Increasing the Birth Rates of New and High Growth Companies

Dr. Provo provided an overview of a proposal led by the Advancement Foundation "Increasing the Birth Rates of New and High Growth Companies." A project by this name was approved in Spring 2019 for one year of funding. The Council asked the applicant to return with results from that first year for a proposed second year of funding, which is the standard length of GO Virginia per capita projects.

Annette Patterson, President of the Advancement Foundation, spoke to the Council documenting their success in meetings and exceeding goals for serving entrepreneurs. Mr. Muscatello asked if Ms. Patterson saw a positive participant pipeline in the new year. She stated that she did, highlighting the pace of local referrals and strengthening of other ecosystem connections.

The Advancement Foundation request totaled $180,000 of GO Virginia Region 2 funds. Mr. Iannello motioned to approve and Mr. Halliwill seconded. All were in favor and none opposed.

Virginia Accelerator Network

Dr. Provo gave an overview of the new project proposal *Virginia Accelerator Network* submitted by Lighthouse Labs in partnership with RAMP. This $3m project will draw on the state competitive fund, which requires partnerships between multiple GO Virginia regions. The proposal was approved by Region 4 who would serve as the administrative lead for project implementation.

Carole Tarrant from Virginia Western Community College and Mary Miller from RAMP explained benefits for Region 2 from the partnership, including support for university engagement. Mr. Iannello expressed his understanding of state support for receipt of this project.

Mr. Fralin moved to approve the project, and Mr. Merryman seconded. All were in favor and none opposed.

Project Metrics Reporting

Elli Travis reviewed the quarterly report on all existing grantees. Most are on time or ahead of schedule. Staff reported they are continuing to monitor the Region 2 Talent Collaborative project because of some delays with billing of expenses. Additional monitoring will continue to take place, with reports back to council at future meetings.

VEDP Sites Study/ New State Broadband Policy

Dr. Provo introduced to new state board policies on sites and broadband. These are intended to guide the council on the types of projects that would be more likely to find support from the state board.

Chairman Smoot recommended that the Council organize a broadband task force to address how projects meetings the new state policy might best connect with the goals of the Council in its Growth and Diversification plan. Mr. Fralin highlighted the challenge of defining the application of the term "middle mile infrastructure" that is the recommended focus of state policy. Mr. Fralin and Ms. Akridge recommended engaging providers in the discussions of the proposed task force. Chairman Smoot then called for members of the council who would be interested in serving on the Broadband task force and those members who indicated interest are as follows: Ms. Marla Akridge, Mr. William Fralin, Mr. Eddie Amos, and Mr. Victor Iannello.

Dr. Provo shared that the Virginia Economic Development Partnership (VEDP) has asked GO Virginia regions assist in facilitating a rollout of a statewide study referenced in the new state policy. A meeting of Region 2 stakeholders with VEDP is scheduled for April 2nd, 2020. The meeting will include a public presentation, high level version of findings, and opportunities for consultations. Further details will be shared as available.

Council Business

Chairman Smoot reminded the Council of last year's speaker bureau activity. He requested volunteers for a new round of outreach to local governments in support of the program and potential match funding commitments. Staff will be in contact with council members to schedule dates/times available for outreach.

Chairman Smoot reminded the Council there are currently two vacancies in the Lynchburg region, one vacancy in the New River Valley, and two vacancies in the Roanoke Valley/Alleghany Highlands region.

The Council reviewed minutes from the Council meeting held on October 24th, 2019, the Executive Committee meeting held on January 16th, 2020, and the GO Virginia Celebrate Success event held on January 22nd, 2020. Chairman Smoot asked if there were any questions regarding the minutes, there were none. Mr. Merryman motioned to approve the minutes, with Ms. Davis seconding. All were in favor and none opposed.

Dr. Provo then led the council through the GO Virginia Celebrate Success event highlights, including the presentation of educational videos explaining the program. Dr. Provo also reminded the Council that state workgroup meetings to recommend policy changes to the state board are underway. Two final meetings will be held on February 7th, with the topic of discussion being program focused/traded sectors and high wage jobs, and February 21st, with the topic of discussion being project evaluation/return on investment.

GO Virginia Region 2 Council Meeting Minutes

May 6, 2020, 3:00p.m.- 5:00p.m, Zoom Webinar.

Council members in attendance: Marla Akridge, Eddie Amos, Amy Ankrum, Nathaniel Bishop, Ab Boxley, John Capps, Kenneth Craig, Beverley Dalton, Sandy Davis, William Fralin, Michael Friedlander, Mike Hamlar, Brian Hemphill, Victor Iannello, Floyd Merryman, Marty Muscatello, Debbie Petrine, John Putney, Ray Smoot.

Council members not in attendance: John Dooley, Watt Foster, Don Halliwill, Terry Jamerson, Kimball Payne.

Staff in attendance: John Provo, Scott Tate, Rachel Jones.

Public in attendance: Aisha Johnson, Mike Burnette, Meredith Hundley, Megan Lucas, Mary Zirkle, Mary Miller, Sarah Whitt, John Edwards, Deborah Flippo.

The meeting convened at 3:03p.m. and adjourned at 4:15p.m.

GO Virginia State Program Changes

Dr. Provo began with an overview of GO Virginia state program changes, including the creation of a new resilience and recovery program to assist with both the economic and health crisis. The program allows each region to apply for up to $1 million for projects that directly respond to the covid-19 crisis. Dr. Provo stated that with this program match requirements are reduced, with the local match requirement waived. The state board has also waived the local match requirement through October 18, 2020 on regular per-capita funds.

Executive Committee Actions Review

Dr. Provo provided an overview of actions taken by the Executive Committee on April 21, 2020. The Executive Committee approved the region's first covid-19 response related project. *Workforce Training and Regional Capacity for Rapid High-Throughput COVID-19 Testing* submitted by Virginia Tech's Office of Vice President for Health Sciences and Technology. The project budget will support an initial 90-day start-up phase for two testing sites located in Blacksburg and Roanoke. Once fully operational, the project will support around 500 tests per day in each location. Dr. Friedlander provided an update to council stating the sites have been launched and the program has begun testing samples they are receiving daily from regional health departments.

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The project proposal was approved by the Executive Committee for $100,000 of GO Virginia Region 2 funds.

New Project Review

Workforce Training for Covid-19 Testing in Southwest Virginia

Dr. Tate provided an overview of the new project proposal *Workforce Training for Covid-19 Testing in Southwest Virginia.* The project budget will support the hiring and training of medical staff as well as the procurement of equipment needs. The initiative will remain active through June 2021. Dr. Friedlander provided an update to council reporting that the outcome of positive tests in the region has proven to be quite high. The program is currently in the process of identifying and interviewing potential employees. Dr. Friedlander addressed questions from the council regarding project timeline and progress of receiving samples thus far.

The Office of Vice President for Health Sciences and Technology request totaled $500,000 of GO Virginia Region 2 funds.

Chairman Smoot asked if there were any additional questions. There were none.

Council members recusing from the vote include Ms. Petrine, Mr. Fralin, Mr. Friedlander, and Mr. Bishop.

Mr. Iannello motioned to approve the project, and Mr. Boxley seconded. All were in favor and none opposed.

Pivot and RAMP Up Program

Dr. Tate provided an overview of the new project proposal *Pivot and RAMP Up Program* submitted by the Roanoke-Blacksburg Technology Council (RBTC). The project budget will focus on the continuation of RAMP's efforts as well as pivot the program's deliverables in order to maintain its momentum to support the entrepreneurial community during the response and recovery of our region post Covid-19. RAMP's pivot consists of three key components: a robust content management system, the development of an online mentor and expert support network, and a new "Exit RAMP" program providing ongoing business assistance and connections to resources for RAMP alumni. Mary Miller from

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the Regional Accelerator and Mentoring Program (RAMP) provided a detailed overview to the council stating the program has begun to pivot their deliverables to online resources and will continue to do so with the proposed GO Virginia funds.

RAMP and RBTC request totaled $97,200 of GO Virginia Region 2 funds.

Chairman Smoot asked if there were any questions. There were none.

Mr. Fralin recused himself from the vote.

Mr. Capps motioned to approve the project, and Mr. Muscatello seconded. All were in favor and none opposed.

Region 2 Budget Proposal

Chairman Smoot and Dr. Provo provided an overview of the Region 2 budget proposal. As approved GO Virginia Region 2 projects continue to increase, support staff have adjusted accordingly in their evaluation efforts as well as the preparation of proposals presented to the council. All GO Virginia Regional Councils are administering an 8% charge in per-capita grant funds to focus on additional contracting work. The proposed budget would reflect these enhancements. The two-year estimated budget totals in $740,000.

Dr. Capps motioned to approve, and Ms. Akridge seconded. All were in favor and none opposed.

Broadband Policy Report

Dr. Provo provided an overview of guidelines recently adopted from the State Board relating to recommended regional broadband proposals. Included in the report are guidelines regarding middle mile delivery as well as policies pertaining to specific limitations for broadband planning funds.

Mr. Fralin and Mr. Amos provided an update stating the task force is continuing to meet and are making progress to develop a proposal for the council's review.

Council Vacancies

Chairman Smoot provided the council with an update regarding council vacancies. There are currently two vacancies in the Lynchburg region and two vacancies in the Roanoke Valley/Alleghany Highlands. The Chairman encouraged members of the council from those two regions to bring forward an individual to fill those vacancies. Chairman Smoot then offered the council the name of Vince Hatcher,

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Southeast Regional Operations Director of Hollingsworth and Vose, located in Floyd County. Mr. Hatcher would fill the vacancy in the New River Valley in place of Matthew Stewart.

Chairman Smoot nominates Mr. Hatcher to join the Region 2 Council, and Mr. Iannello seconded. All were in favor and none opposed.

Project Reporting and Evaluation

Project reporting updates were provided in the council packet and the full report is available for review on the support staff's website listed here.

There being no further business to come before the council, adjournment occurred at 4:15p.m.

GO Virginia Region 2 Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

July 16, 2020, 10:00a.m.- 11:30a.m, Zoom Webinar.

Executive Committee members in attendance: Beverly Dalton, Sandy Davis, Ray Smoot (Chair).

Executive Committee members not in attendance: Ab Boxley (Vice-Chair).

Council members in attendance: Eddie Amos.

Staff in attendance: John Provo, Scott Tate, Rachel Jones.

Public in attendance: Kathy Hodges, Meredith Hundley, Megan Lucas, Mary Miller, Jeff Mitchell.

The meeting convened at 10:12 a.m. and adjourned at 11:08 a.m.

Financial Report

Scott Tate began by providing a brief financial report. The council has a remaining balance of $2.2M. Staff to provide a full financial report during each upcoming meeting of the full council and executive committee.

Proposal Updates

Tate began with a brief overview of proposals to come before council during the upcoming GO Virginia Region 2 Council meeting, to be held on July 30, 2020.

PHRE Mobile App

Tate provided a brief overview of the new project proposal, PHRE Mobile App – A Resource for Helping Small Organizations Confront COVID-19, submitted by the Virginia Tech Institute for Critical Technology and Applied Science. This proposal focuses on the development of a Public Health Readiness Evaluation (PHRE) tool, an easy-to-use mobile application designed to assist smaller organizations by quickly assessing and optimizing their readiness to operate with minimal risk to workers, customers/patrons, and surrounding communities.

The Virginia Tech Institute for Critical Technology and Applied Science request totaled $63,500, qualifying the proposal to receive funding from the GO Virginia Region 2 Economic Resilience and Recovery program.

ELITE Internship Program

Tate provided an overview of the new project proposal, Experiential Learning in Tech Employment (ELITE) Internship Program, submitted by the Roanoke-Blacksburg Technology Council. The internship

program intends to strengthen the talent pipeline to meet the Emerging Technologies and IT industry cluster's needs by providing structured internships in our region, in partnership with higher education institutions and Information Technology employers.

The Roanoke-Blacksburg Technology Council request totaled $290,000 of Region 2 funds.

New River Valley Business Continuity Team

Tate provided an overview of the new project proposal, New River Valley Business Continuity Team COVID-19 Response, submitted by the New River Valley Regional Commission, in coordination with the New River Health District-Virginia Department of Health. This COVID-19 response related proposal will assist businesses directly impacted by an individual testing positive for COVID-19 at their place of business. The New River Valley Business Continuity Team will work to provide employers with 24/7 technical assistance from a multi-disciplinary team, public and employee messaging and education, facility cleaning, certification of best practices and coordination of on-site testing, if deemed appropriate.

The New River Valley Regional Commission request totaled up to $250,000 of Region 2 funds.

LYH Regional Site Readiness

Tate continued by providing an overview of the new project proposal, Amherst LYH Region Site Readiness, submitted by the Lynchburg Regional Business Alliance. The Lynchburg Regional Business Alliance (LRBA) will support advancement of fifteen publicly owned sites to tier three, four and five. In 2018, the LRBA hired Draper Aden to conduct the Lynchburg Regional Business Alliance Site Readiness Analysis in accordance with Virginia Business Ready Sites Characterization Program. The study analyzed the twelve publicly owned industrial parks in our region to determine the site characterization tier level, as per the Virginia Business Ready Sites Program. The results of the analysis indicated that their ability to recruit industry was hindered by not having pad ready sites available. The Alliance identified the largest sites in each partner locality. The six sites identified required the due diligence completion which included: WOTUS USACE, geotechnical borings, boundary survey, topographic survey, phase one environmental, endangered species review and archeological and architectural review.

The Lynchburg Regional Business Alliance request totaled $366,572 of Region 2 funds.

PICKS TM

Tate continued by providing an overview of the new project proposal, Profiles to Increase Critical Knowledge for Skills That Matter (PICKS TM), submitted by the New River/Mount Rogers Workforce Development Area Consortium Board. PICKS TM aims to expand our regional capacity by building a foundational system to better understand and communicate knowledge, skills and abilities required to effectively perform specific in-demand jobs of high-growth businesses in targeted industries of GO Virginia Region Two. Utilizing the American College Testing (ACT) Job Profiling system, the program will consult with subject-matter experts at companies to analyze the skills, skill levels, and skill frequency workers need to be successful at certain jobs.

New River/Mount Rogers Workforce Development Area Consortium Board request totaled $100,000 of Region 2 funds.

Virginia SBDC Cash Match (Statewide) CY2020-2021

Tate continued by providing an overview of the new project proposal, Virginia Small Business Development (SBDC) Cash Match CY2020-2021, submitted by George Mason University. The Virginia SBDC Network is a statewide program of twenty-six local offices staffed by professional business advisors that provide confidential one-on-one business advising and group training to small businesses and aspiring entrepreneurs in every corner of the Commonwealth. George Mason University manages the Virginia SBDC Network and is funded in part by a cooperative agreement from the US SBA. Since the COVID-19 outbreak began, the Virginia Small Business Development Center (SBDC) Network has been working to facilitate small businesses in Virginia securing federal financial assistance. Some SBDC offices are now in jeopardy if local cash match sources are diminished, which would reduce Virginia's access to recovery resources from the federal government. This GO Virginia Statewide Economic Resilience and Recovery application is a request to provide up to $1,620,235 in GO Virginia state funds to ensure the Virginia SBDC Network can satisfy the required 50% cash match in order to access the full amount of SBA funding and sustain SBDC services for small businesses.

George Mason University request totaled $1,620,235 in GO Virginia Statewide Economic Resilience and Recovery Funds.

Chairman Smoot asked if there were any questions. There were none.

Special Updates

Broadband Task Force

Eddie Amos began by providing a brief update from GO Virginia Region Two's Broadband Task Force. The Broadband Task Force was created to review and examine the prospects of 5G technology in Region Two. The working group is led by Frank Smith, President and CEO of the Roanoke Valley Broadband Authority, members include Brenda Van Gelder, Office of the CIO, Virginia Tech, Scott Midkiff, CIO, Virginia Tech, Jeff Crowder, Jeff Reed, Virginia Tech, and Luiz DaSilva, Commonwealth Cyber Initiative, with council member William Fralin acting as Executive Sponsor of the task force. Mr. Amos stated the biggest issue the region currently faces is related to a limited set of network mobile operators controlling the roll out of technology around the country. The goal of the working group is to facilitate the roll out of 5G broadband in Region Two, beginning with a select set of innovation zones leveraging the capacity of Virginia Tech. The goal will be the creation of a reusable infrastructure very similar to the format of the Roanoke Valley Broadband Authority, bringing public and private entities together and working towards the opportunity of 5G roll out in Region Two. The task force is analyzing end-to-end capabilities in innovation zones. The project will facilitate higher paying jobs in target sectors such as networking, security, software development and infrastructure, that will then benefit healthcare, manufacturing, transportation and other areas vital to the growth of the region. No funding is requested at this time.

Chairman Smoot asked if there were any questions. There were none.

Regional Entrepreneurship Initiative

Meredith Hundley, Valleys Innovation Council (VIC), began by providing a brief update regarding VIC's region two funded project, Regional Entrepreneurship Initiative. VIC has held four coalition meetings, inviting over 100 individuals from across the region, with a total of fifty-three individuals attending, representing thirty-nine organizations across Region 2. Coalition meetings are organized by four sub-regions, Lynchburg, Roanoke Valley, Alleghany Highlands, and the New River Valley. Roanoke Valley and Alleghany Highlands have held two coalition meetings, including a meeting in February, with sixteen attendees, and a virtual meeting in May with twenty-two attendees, representing eighteen organizations. The New River Valley coalition met in May as well, with twenty-two attendees, representing nineteen organizations. The Lynchburg coalition met in early June with seventeen attendees, representing fifteen organizations. As part of phase two of the initiative's efforts the program has identified initial members to participate in a cross-regional steering group. Ms. Hundley announced the initiative has created a "Growing our Regional Innovation + Entrepreneurship Ecosystem" newsletter, with three newsletters released to date, growing from 157 recipients in March to 200 recipients from the recent newsletter. The program is in the process of creating a web presence to advertise relevant documentation to effectively update the public pertaining to the initiative. VIC is currently working to create their sub-regional strategic investment plans, by releasing a stakeholders' survey to entrepreneurial support organizations and local governments, with thirty-five responses thus far. Most responses indicate a critical need for access to capital, with the top industry cluster response being health and life sciences. VIC will distribute a similar survey to entrepreneurs in region two this month. No funding is requested at this time.

Staff Updates

Project Evaluation

John Provo began by stating the quarter one report was included in the information packet and the quarter two report for the months of April-June will be presented to council at the upcoming GO Virginia Region 2 Council meeting, to be held on July 30, 2020. Provo continued with an update regarding projects that may require further attention. Enhancing the Region through New Technology for Unmanned Systems, a funded GO Virginia Region 2 project, will close out this quarter with greater outcomes than previously contracted as well as providing a higher match than required. However, the program did not provide training for as many students as anticipated. Region 2 staff is monitoring closeout procedures with State staff and will address any concerns during the upcoming meeting of the full council. Additionally, Region 2 Talent Collaborative, a funded GO Virginia Region 2 project, has not utilized all funds, subsequently, Region 2 Council is projected to receive some previously allocated funds following project closeout. However, the project has met their outcomes. Region 2 staff are working closely with State staff to determine further action.

Chairman Smoot asked if there were any questions. There were none.

Proposal Pipeline and Fund Balance

Tate began with a brief overview of the Region 2 project pipeline, stating in addition to the six proposals discussed, there are six additional regional proposals in the pipeline, as well as two additional statewide proposals. Anticipated proposals to come before the council include, but are not limited to, a 5G Broadband project, a project led by Central Virginia Community College, a Virginia Tech proposal, a Carilion proposal, a proposal from the Roanoke Small Business Development Center, a proposal focused on the regional transportation/manufacturing sector, and a multi-regional proposal from Virginia Biotechnology Association. Region 2 staff remains in active discussion with businesses who are anticipated to come before the council during the subsequent meeting, to be held in October.

Chairman Smoot asked if there were any questions. There were none.

Council Business

The Committee reviewed minutes from the Executive Committee meeting held on May 22, 2020. Chairman Smoot asked if there were any questions regarding the minutes, there were none.

Sandy Davis motioned to approve the minutes, with Beverly Dalton seconding. All were in favor and none opposed.

Chairman Smoot inquired about vacancies on the council. Provo stated there are currently two vacancies in the Lynchburg region and three vacancies in the Roanoke Valley/Alleghany Highlands. Vacancies existing on the council will be discussed during the upcoming GO Virginia Region 2 Council meeting.

With there being no further business to come before the committee, adjournment occurred at 11:08a.m.