



VIRGINIA INITIATIVE FOR
**GROWTH &
OPPORTUNITY**
IN EACH REGION

GO Virginia Region 2

GO Virginia Region 2, Executive Committee Meeting

April 22, 2021, 1:00p.m.- 3:00p.m.

- Introductions (1:00-1:05)
- Financial Report (1:05-1:15)
- Proposal Review (1:15-2:20)
 - Dearing Ford Industrial Park, Town of Alta Vista and Campbell County
 - Health and Life Science Workforce Initiative, Carilion Clinic and partners
 - Skills Matching Initiative, New River Mount Rogers Workforce Investment Board
 - Industry 4.0 Manufacturing Workforce Program, Virginia Tech Industrial and Systems Engineering
 - Expansion of ICAP Mentor Network, Virginia Small Business Development Center Network, Statewide ERR Proposal-Lead Region 7
- Special Updates (2:20- 2:30)
 - Virginia Innovation Partnership Update
- Council Business (2:30-2:40)
 - Council Vacancies
 - Minutes
- Staff Updates (2:40-3:00)
 - FY21 Capacity Building Funds
 - Program Evaluation

Region 2 Allocations

Updated 4/19/21

FY 21 Per Capita (Projects)

Original allocation	\$1,545,403.00
Transfers from FY 20 Per capita	-\$2,357.83
Transfer from FY20 Capacity Building	\$14,700.00
Anticipated return from FY 18 project	\$105,415.00
Biotech Lab Space Development	-\$99,360.00
Beacon of Hope (State admin approval pending)	-\$95,480.00
Current Balance	\$1,468,320.17

FY 21 Capacity Building (Support)

Original allocation	\$250,000.00
Support org services	-\$170,000.00
Current Balance	\$80,000.00

Applications Under Consideration 4/22/21

Per capita (Projects)

Regional Health Sciences		
Talent Pipeline	\$100,000.00	ECB (Planning)
Altavista site	\$800,000.00	
PICK-TM	\$100,000.00	ECB (Planning)
Industry 4.0	\$45,360.00	ECB (Planning)
Totals	\$1,045,360.00	
Balances if all approved	\$422,960.17	

State Competitive Funds

Virginia SBDC-ICAP \$882,794.00 *No Region 2 Funds Involved*

Planning applications \$245,360.00

Percentage of planning cap 98%

Region 2 GO Virginia Council

Project Title: Altavista GAS LYH Region
Applicant: Lynchburg Regional Business Alliance (LRBA)
Localities covered: Town of Altavista and Campbell County. (also includes Town of Hurt in Region 3)
Growth & Diversification Plan Strategy Area (s): Sites and Buildings.

GOVA Funds Requested: \$800,000 in GOVA funds requested, with a match of \$400,000

Project Description:

LRBA is applying for a site readiness grant to assist with putting a gas line in for 49.9 acres located in Dearing Ford Industrial Park in Altavista, Virginia. Prior Region 2 funding helped move 21 acres here from a tier three to a tier five. This project aims to enhance the marketability of this site. Prospects have expressed an interest in pre-existing natural gas infrastructure and the applicant states that there have been prospects for which they have not been able to compete due to the lack of natural gas provision.

This would become the only Lynchburg region site with natural gas access, according to the application. The application states that the Dearing Ford Park is the closest park with a Tier 5 site to a gas line at approximately 3200 feet. The proposed project would fund a “trunk line extension” to the site. The total project cost is listed as \$1.2 million and localities will contribute \$400,000 towards the project.

Project Assessment (Region 2 staff reviewer – Scott Tate; External reviewer – Ken McFadyen (Botetourt County) Region 2 Council reviewer – John Dooley

Strengths

- Applicant (LRBA) has strong capacity to implement and a track record with managing other large and complex projects.
- “The proposed project is a basic infrastructure enhancement. The additional of the gas line may make the Dearing Ford Industrial Park more attractive to prospects.”
- The natural gas line extension seems likely to enhance the marketability of the site and make it more likely to attract a prospect company,
- Project seeks to address an existing “need for pad-ready sites, including sites served with natural gas. “
- “This is a strong proposal from the perspective of addressing a specific site development need. I can support the need to have a site served with natural gas or to have the basic infrastructure in place to serve the client.”
- “ The project addresses collaborative development of sites in a clear and demonstrated way. Great collaboration between the Town of Hurt and Lynchburg region. “
- “Letters of support are impactful and relevant.”

Weaknesses

- “The projected stimulus of new jobs is very limited (50) for the scope of investment.”
- A very large request: \$800,000. This would by far be the largest GOVA project funded in Region 2.
- “The proposal really doesn’t address a regional strategy. It focuses on Altavista and Campbell County. “
- “Lots of construction detail questions need to be answered.” (see questions section below).
- “I am concerned about the cost of \$1.2 M for 3,200 LF of gas line. That is \$375 per linear foot if it is plastic pipe.”

- “The narrative doesn’t speak to the relationship of the project to the priority clusters. “
- The request from the Regional Council is significant--\$800,000, which is approximately half the Regional Council’s annual allocation.
- “a large commitment of the Region 2 budget to realize just 50 projected jobs.”
- Only 1 locality financially contributing: Altavista.

Questions/Misc.

- The character, nature, and sources of local match is unclear. At one point in narrative, both Campbell and Altavista are listed as contributors. The budget document only lists Altavista. Is the match cash, or already invested funds?
- “Why isn’t Campbell County and the Town of Hurt participating financially?”
- “Why isn’t Columbia Gas contributing a great portion of the installation cost? It is my understanding that gas companies can build cost recovery into the base rate”
- “Are there other sources to assist with the project costs?”
- “Lack of construction details need to be addressed. A PER would be very helpful.”
- “Has thought been given to type of user likely to locate there and the type of service they would most likely need (4- or 6-inch line) that then determines the grant project cost.”
- “Natural gas is certainly one part, but what is the state of readiness of the other components to call the industrial park “pad ready?”
- “I am concerned about the cost of \$1.2 M for 3,200 LF of gas line. That is \$375 per linear foot if it is plastic pipe. This unit cost suggests a six-inch service line, but this level of detail is not provided in the proposal. Service line size depends upon the type of user or operation. A heavy industrial gas user may require a six-inch line or multiple lines. Has a preliminary engineering report (PER) been completed? Can Columbia provide any detailed cost estimates? The cost to install the pipe is one part; however, is a pressure reduction station needed? If so, what is the cost?
- “Does the total project cost of \$1.2 M account for any customer cost recovery charges? Tap fees? Some costs can be deferred to when service is needed and could be accounted for by the localities as an economic development incentive when they have a bird-in-hand. Bottom line- what is the basic cost to install the infrastructure now versus the cost to activate service for the end user? The grant should address the former and defer the latter to the economic development incentive proposal.”
- “When would the infrastructure be conveyed to Columbia Gas? At completion or is Columbia building it?”
- Lots of construction detail questions need to be answered.
- “If the regional Council scales back its investment to no more than a \$400k investment, can the partners find other funding to complete the project? “
- Looking at the sites projects funded in Region 2 so far, of the \$1,422,212 in GOVA project funds awarded to date, \$1,122,852 have gone to projects in the Lynchburg sub-region. (This is nearly 80%).

Region 2 GO Virginia Council

Project Title: Building a Regional Health Sciences Talent Pipeline – Charting Career Pathways and Standardizing Curricula
Applicant: Blue Ridge Partnership for Health Science Careers (Fiscal agent: Freedom First Foundation; Project lead contact: Carilion Clinic)
Localities covered: The counties of Roanoke, Botetourt, Craig, Franklin, Alleghany, Montgomery, Floyd, Pulaski and Giles and the Cities of Salem, Roanoke, Radford, and Covington
Growth & Diversification Plan Strategy Area (s): Talent/Workforce

GOVA Funds Requested: \$100,000 in GOVA ECB funds requested, with a match of \$106,355

Project Description:

The project seeks funds to advance the life and health sciences talent pipeline by establishing a new initiative to better:

- 1) meet the acute and growing need of regional employers for qualified workers, including technicians and others.
- 2) support the region's emerging Health and Life Sciences (H&LS) ecosystem and
- 3) make the region stronger as a magnet for attracting established companies in the H&LS sector seeking to expand or relocate.

This new initiative will align with the region's economic development efforts, helping to ensure that talent pathways are responsive to the needs of employers, will foster entrepreneurship, and provide meaningful careers. The project was inspired by a model in Texas and expands on a smaller pilot effort led by Roanoke City, Roanoke County, and Botetourt County.

This project establishes a collaborative regional partnership and is supported by the region's higher education entities and community colleges, the school systems, local governments, and major sector employers including Carilion Clinic, LewisGale Regional Health System, and others.

GO Virginia funds will help stand up and operationalize the Partnership Executive Committee and Task Forces; to conduct a regional situational assessment and analysis; research best practices; identify/inventory existing and needed resources; and consult and engage with major stakeholders. These funds would also help pay for the creation of an informational website and information storage platform for Partnership work product.

Over the course of one year, this project will accelerate the establishment of a new model for wide-spread business-education collaboration, increase the number of health and life sciences graduates and begin to formalize a health sciences talent pipeline.

The project aims to better align, enhance and expand the training, workforce development, and educational offerings to support the acute and growing needs of employers and scale a qualified health sciences talent pipeline quickly to continue our region's competitiveness in the H&LS industry sector. The project will help establish a collaborative to move with urgency to work with public institutions and private employers to more systematically collaborate to leverage resources, align curriculum with employers' future growth strategies and encourage trans-disciplinary innovation.

Project Assessment (Region 2 staff reviewer – Scott Tate; External reviewer – Julia Potter, Potter Enterprises; Region 2 Council reviewer – Beverly Dalton)

Strengths

- Impressive and extensive list of collaborative partners including both public and private sector partners. Clear evidence of local government/school systems participation.
- Seeks to address and advance a clear and pressing strategic priority in the Region 2 G&D plan: supporting and growing the life science sector in Region 2, which is critical since in some ways this is still a nascent or early stage sector. The growth of life science companies and workforce is intricately linked to the region's health sciences enterprise.
- "There is so much evidence of need, capacity to meet the need and the longer view of impact and entrepreneurship. I particularly like the structure of partnership."
- "I am so impressed with the work taking place and the aspiration to fortify and expand it."
- "Overall, I think the application is outstanding. It is very well written and very compelling."

Weaknesses

- No real weaknesses here. However, we might ask the applicant how they will specifically engage and include life sciences and biotechnology sector companies and entrepreneurs, especially early stage and high growth potential enterprises – in terms of their workforce and training needs and overall involvement. I presume that the letter from RAMP and high-level engagement of FBRI will be one vehicle for that to happen.

Questions/Misc.

- Can/will the situational analysis and future state/gaps analysis include a specific and extensive focus on life science and biotechnology cluster in the region, the intersections with the health care sector, and the specific ways that workforce, education and training can support the future growth of bio/life sciences entrepreneurs and companies?
- How will this intersect and differ from VA BIO project and the regional hub?

Region 2 GO Virginia Council

Project Title: Profiles that Increase the Competencies, Knowledge, and Skills That Matter
Applicant: New River/Mount Rogers Workforce Consortium Board
Localities covered: Counties of Montgomery, Floyd, Pulaski, Giles and the city of Radford.
Growth & Diversification Plan Strategy Area (s): Talent and Workforce.

GOVA Funds Requested: \$100,000 in GOVA ECB funds requested, with a match of \$101, 840

Project Description:

PICKS™ (Profiles that Increase the Competencies, Knowledge, and Skills That Matter) proposes to expand the regional capacity for meeting the talent needs of business and industry. PICKS™ seeks to support 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.

Using the American College Testing (ACT) Job Profiling system, the applicant 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. Businesses will gain a sharable, detailed analysis of skills and abilities and 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 while external redacted 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 (including education) and Job Seekers/students 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—a process that will 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 possibly our online portal developed in our America's Promise grant, KnowledgeToWork.com.

The ACT Job Profiling system saves companies time and money. The ACT Workforce Solutions 2020 ROI Report found a: "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. 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 seeks to help companies address talent challenges. The PICK project proposes to assist businesses to meet their staffing need with more efficiency and increased ROI through lower turnover

rates. By having in-demand jobs profiled, businesses will learn how to best adjust their recruiting, hiring, training, and promoting practices by being able to determine which individuals are the best fit for skilled positions or are ready to receive and benefit from job-specific training. Using these standardized practices will aid businesses in making appropriate decisions about job vacancies, identifying strengths, setting training goals, and finding appropriate training programs, ultimately saving them time and money and increasing talent retention.

Project Assessment (Region 2 staff reviewer – Scott Tate; External reviewer – Jessi Fritiz, Virginia Economic Development Partnership (Workforce division; Region 2 Council reviewer – Kimball Payne

Strengths

- Applicant has significant organizational capacity and ability to implement. Past history with managing large and complex projects.
- The project does seek to implement a specific, narrowly defined intervention to help businesses better improve talent attraction and retention, through in-depth job profiling and etc.
- Support letters from major industry and manufacturers (Volvo; Hollingsworth & Vose)
- “I particularly feel that this will be useful in the manufacturing environment where it seems career pathways are not frequently mapped, which is vital for retention efforts. This could certainly be used in IT companies that accept entry level workers with less emphasis on post-secondary and/or graduate degrees, and it could be useful in developing a k-12 pipeline of future talent.”
- “The impact of having mapped out career lattices that are relevant to a variety of employers within a variety of industries could be widely beneficial to not only the NRV, but throughout multiple regions.”
- “The strength of the project it is designed to focus on high growth industries and sectors that indicate further growth. This is only going to support those efforts and spur additional long-term growth.”
- “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.”
- “The project would be managed by a regional consortium.”

Weaknesses

- Only support letter from 1 locality.
- “The project doesn’t propose to spur job growth.”
- “Only one letter of support from a regional locality.”
- “The project is not innovative but seeks to increase the awareness of and use of an existing tool.”

Questions/Misc.

- “This will require strong support from partners and a solid commitment from the involved employers to remain engaged.”
- “The career lattices will need to continually be evaluated as technology changes along with employer demands.”
- Unsure about pathway to a next step, applicant writes that after this project, they will pursue a competitive grant to, “refine the tools and expand Job Profiling and Career Lattice development to provide these services to an increased number of businesses.” Growing the # of businesses using the tool would likely not be enough of an ROI for a viable competitive GOVA project.

Region 2 GO Virginia Council

Project Title: Helping Local Employers Prepare the Existing and Future Workforce for Industry 4.0
Applicant: Virginia Tech Grado Department of Industrial and Systems Engineering (ISE) and Virginia Tech Roanoke Center
Localities covered: Counties of Botetourt, Roanoke and the city of Roanoke.
Growth & Diversification Plan Strategy Area (s): Talent and Workforce; Technology

GOVA Funds Requested: \$45,360 in GOVA ECB funds requested, with a match of \$30,000

Project Description:

The proposal seeks to address the need for specifically trained talent in both the current and future Region 2 workforce by creating experiential learning opportunities in specific local technologies and drafting a non-credit curriculum for existing workforce development.

By convening employers and identifying specific Industry 4.0 technologies in use at their facilities, the Virginia Tech Grado Department of Industrial and Systems Engineering (ISE) will acquire the appropriate technology and develop experiential learning opportunities in its Learning Factory for training employees (current workforce) and students (future workforce). Although the Learning Factory is currently well-equipped with Industry 4.0 technologies including mobile and collaborative robots, additive manufacturing processes and connected digital technologies, this project will equip the Learning Factory with technologies specifically in use by local employers. The Virginia Tech Roanoke Center team will facilitate development of targeted educational modules, short courses and workshops associated with those technologies. The Virginia Tech Roanoke Center team will facilitate development of targeted educational modules, short courses and workshops associated with those technologies.

The project seeks to develop a stakeholder network of manufacturers and other organizations in Region 2 who can help identify areas of I4.0 technology-in-use, I4.0 technology and skill gaps among the current and future workforce, and areas of potential I4.0 collaborative projects using the Learning Factory as an initial experiential learning site to bring together students and professional learners. Outreach activities will include partner discovery meetings, industry surveys, and faculty/student design team industry problem-focused experiential learning projects as well as a draft training curriculum for area workforce.

This planning project will be an organized effort to listen to the employers of Region 2, hear about actual applications of Industry 4.0 technologies in their facilities, and develop a long-term plan which will strengthen the current and future workforce. This activity will help clarify the local employer views and increase our competitiveness by making future targeted investments in systems, technology and education. A key outcome for the project is identifying I4.0 technologies in use within the region and aligning those with long term local employment and workforce development opportunities to help meet current and future employer needs.

Project Assessment (Region 2 staff reviewer – Scott Tate; GOVA Region 4: Wilson Flohr; External reviewer – Brian Warner (Rolls Royce, CGEP Board Member); External Reviewer – Lorin Sodell, Director of Business Development and Advanced Manufacturing Education Commonwealth Center for Advanced Manufacturing (CCAM); Region 2 Council reviewer – Luke Towles

Strengths

- Strong evidence of support from industry and partners (including the EDOs, localities, community colleges, GenEdge, and companies such as Carter, Moog, and others)

- “Targeted towards manufacturing concerns in our local market industries/technologies vs. macro trends”
- “Potential for broad industry impact.”
- Seeks to leverage a research university asset (ISE Learning Factory with 4.0 technologies) to better support industry growth and workforce training in region.
- Directly focused on advanced manufacturing sector competitiveness.
- Narrow focus may be a strength – seeking to gather information on specific company needs in region.
- Highly relevant topic.
- Appears to have “strong support from educational, municipal and industry leaders”
- “Overall, I think this will answer a need and the manufacturers will have a great opportunity to make some major steps forward.”
- “Project execution appears very strong based on proposed scale.”
- “The results of the project should promote economic growth.”
- “well documented and with an excellent line of sight for a per capita grant upon completion”
- “what is being proposed is a clear need for industry – in region 2 and across the state”

Weaknesses

- “This topic is large and my fear is that few people really understand it. It is a business mentality, not merely an engineering or technology implementation exercise.”
- “I would be concerned at the end of the project we will be sitting back asking ourselves where to go next.”
- It doesn’t have a strong impact and follow through built in for growth and improvement targets.”
- “I struggle to see the road to real impact across a spectrum without commitments across diverse backgrounds of people who really understand the entire topic and who have made choices relative to the topic in their businesses already. If you educate people when there are not businesses which are fully engaged, you will end with unhappy learners or people who will leave the region to practice their skills. Limiting the scope to core skills or areas of Industry 4.0 may be more beneficial than titling this as what seems all encompassing.
- Industry 4.0 terminology “has been around long enough now that I do not see it as innovative per se. If companies choose to embrace portions of Industry 4.0, then they likely are embracing tools or methods that have been prominent already. Some might say Industry 4.0 is an outdated term already.”

Questions/Misc.

- “Could this project potentially identify gaps in the local manufacturing economy (supply chain needs, technologies, other resources)?”
- “May be better to make the project more focused. Is Industry 4.0 too broad?”
- Is this forward thinking enough? Industry 5.0 already being discussed.
- “Could a larger scale project broaden the opportunity for growing higher pay/skill jobs?”
- Why not include Lynchburg, all of Region 2?
- The project mentions equipment purchases but not included in the budget. Would that be a part of a follow-up funding request or will that funding come from other sources?
- The question moving forward will be “how to demonstrate an ROI for the project?”
- “Specifically, can the project demonstrate how employers who’ve written support letters will progress incumbent employees through the developed programs to give them enough of a working knowledge to be able to competently use the tools and extend their application across the businesses.”

- “Also, will the program be able to sustain itself after the first classes, and what is the ongoing model to offer this, since it’s certainly not a “one and done” proposition.”
- “Since the business of CCAM is largely focused on implementation of I4.0 technologies, there might be a collaboration opportunity to explore with respect to VT graduate students, interns, or even connecting up CCAM with some of the Region 2 companies to help them implement I4.0 projects in their facilities.”

Region 2 GO Virginia Council

Project Title: Expansion of ICAP Mentor Network
Applicant: Virginia Small Business Development Center (SBDC)
Localities covered: State-wide
Growth & Diversification Plan Strategy Area (s): Entrepreneurship

GOVA Funds Requested: none from Region 2; \$ \$882,794 in statewide competitive Economic Recovery and Resilience (ERR) funds requested

Project Description:

This GO Virginia Statewide ERR proposal is requesting \$882,794 in funding over two years to expand the capacity of the Innovation Commercialization Assistance Program (ICAP) to support more early-stage technology and innovation-driven startups across Virginia. The applicant describes “an urgent need” to accelerate the commercialization of companies in the technology sector and increased demand for technology-related services, particularly as the COVID-19 pandemic has necessitated quick and scalable technological advancements.

Launched in January 2018, the ICAP program helps inventors and entrepreneurs take the right first steps in bringing new innovations to market. ICAP delivers high quality innovation-driven startup assistance in Virginia. The program currently manages a pool of 11 hourly ICAP Mentors, and is seeking to expand its capacity in order to meet the needs of a greater number of Virginia-based businesses, particularly early-stage technology companies that are crucial to the growth of the Virginia economy and the creation of high value and high paying jobs.

Requested funds will be used to hire 4 full-time, dedicated ICAP Mentors who will expand the existing team’s capacity; serve as full-time mentors, educational, and resource connectors; successfully stand up early-stage technology companies; and deliver high return on investment of public funds. This structure is built on a successful model that operates in several other states. ICAP mentors will provide well-rounded and personalized support to help technology and innovation-driven companies launch and sustain their businesses. Key activities that will be carried out by ICAP Mentors will include: assisting businesses through the ideation phase; assisting with business model development and validation; supporting minimum viable product development; connecting businesses with funding sources and customers; assisting with business infrastructure development; reviewing financials and recommending sustainable practices; and providing long-term coaching and advising.

Based on information provided by the applicant, ICAP has a track record of success in supporting companies across the Commonwealth. Since 2018, ICAP has assisted 553 companies which have gone on to receive over \$34 million in follow-on funding. This has been accomplished with the program spending roughly \$900,000 – an ROI of more than 30 to 1.

Project Assessment (Region 2 staff reviewer – Scott Tate; External reviewer – Tia Nelson, South Carolina Commerce; Region 2 Council reviewer – John Putney)

Strengths

- Applicant has strong capacity to implement and a track record with managing other large and complex projects.
- Seeks to expand a program with proven track record.

- Focuses on support for high-growth potential firms, a critical economic driver for jobs in the Commonwealth.
- Impressive and extensive list of partners and supporters.
- “The applicant seems to have an exhaustive plan to meet these objectives simultaneously. Maintaining the pipeline should always be the priority for ongoing success.”
- “The referral network already built (Roanoke example) will be an invaluable foundation for the launch of this project.”
- “Having an active VP (Paula Sorrell) in the rollout will be a major asset. She should provide ongoing insight into how Michigan attained financial sustainability for their program.”
- “The collaborative approach to this project is truly impressive.”
- “If they are able to maintain connectivity with commercialization partners and create a university talent pipeline, should be a home run for the ecosystem.”

Weaknesses

- ICAP network is based on a model existing in several other states – seems to use standard practices to bring the state up to speed with competitors. As such, may not be innovative or needle-moving.
- Sustainability plan seems vague and focused on possible increased future state support. Are there ways to diversify funding, better ensure sustainability after GOVA funding period?
- “The applicant could have spent more time discussing potential barriers to implementation beyond funding shortfalls. These projects seem to be highly administrative in nature and usually fail out of lack of state coordination/vision.”

Questions/Misc.

- Project aims to serve state-wide. How will this geographic focus be ensured? What is geographic distribution of mentors, or mix of virtual and face to face assistance?
- How will SBDC sustain this network and added staff after GOVA funding period?
- “The program should consider strategic ways to connect VCs/ keep startups in-state for phase 2 and 3 capital rounds- keep talent local”
- “SBIR/STTR federal grant support will be a linchpin for this program if application advisement is maintained. Strong referrals with tech transfer offices are also important. See www.3phasesc.com as an example of an SC state sponsored program that has been very successful collaborators in the existing ecosystem.”
- “Would recommend the ICAP team develop an exhaustive campaign to learn/map the ecosystem and build a referral network before jumping in with entrepreneurs. Sounds like they already have something like this in place, but it doesn’t hurt to have a reboot prior to launch. We just learned that connectivity the top need/ missing opportunity per our startup survey that was submitted in March.”
- “How does ICAP plan to plug startups into the existing ESO social network (ecosystem) to help build leadership team, advisement board, etc (p. 5). I’ve found this is often the most influential service to our fastest growing startups. Many ESOs do this in tandem with their mentors, but the ESOs play a leadership role in the overall coordination within the existing network.”



VIRGINIA INITIATIVE FOR
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GO Virginia Region 2

GO Virginia Region 2 Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

January 21, 2021, 1:00p.m.- 3:00p.m, Zoom Webinar.

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

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

Council members in attendance: Don Halliwill.

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

Public in attendance: Brett Malone, Dawn Myers, Cynthia Lawrence, Caroline King, Annette Patterson, Megan Lucas, Victoria Hanson, Laura Hamilton, Meredith Hundley, Frank Smith, Jason Ferguson, Kevin Carlson, Erin Burcham, Deborah Flippo, Jill Loope, Casey Jenkins, Caroline Buscaglia, Inscape Creative Co.

The meeting convened at 1:04p.m. and adjourned at 2:57p.m.

Financial Report

John Provo began by providing the executive committee with a brief financial report. The council has a remaining balance of \$1,663,160 in per-capita funds and a remaining balance of \$202,800 in Economic Resilience and Recovery funds.

Proposal Review

Virginia Tech Corporate Research Center

Scott Tate began by providing a brief overview of the new project proposal, *BioTech Lab Space Development*, submitted by the Virginia Tech Corporate Research Center. The Virginia Tech Corporate Research Center, Inc. (VTCRC), a wholly owned subsidiary of the Virginia Tech Foundation, Inc. (VTF), proposes to lead development of a comprehensive assessment, conceptual design, and associated operational plan to support both Roanoke and Blacksburg's life and health sciences ecosystem with flexible laboratory space. Brett Malone, Virginia Tech CRC, and Dawn Myers, Virginia Tech CRC, answered questions raised by the committee regarding project location and deliverables stating staff will be assessing needs in both Roanoke and Blacksburg and how the CRC will holistically manage those sites. Brett continued stating the idea behind the proposal is to create a model where the CRC can manage co-working lab space and utilize the CRC's operational logistics to effectively manage both locations. Eddie Amos inquired about what the surrounding ecosystem and needs are that would potentially occupy this space. Brett stated part of the scope of work would assess specific demand in those localities- what types of companies are needed and what kind of facilities will they need. Brett



continued by stating in parallel with this proposal, RAMP, a regional accelerator network, will host their first set of roughly 10 life science cohort start-ups, which will provide the VT CRC with a helpful indicator of what the regional pipeline indicates. Chairman Smoot inquired on possible entities that will move forward to construct and operate the space. Brett continued by stating staff are actively engaged with 3rd party developers who would bring in real estate investment funds, subsequently, partners of the CRC would partner with those entities in order to create the investment pipeline. This would be a investment opportunity for the 3rd party developers mentioned.

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

The Virginia Tech Corporate Research Center request totaled \$100,000 in GO Virginia Region 2 Enhanced Capacity Building funds, with a match of \$55,000.

The committee has recommended the proposal for review of the Region 2 Council.

Carilion Clinic

Scott Tate began by providing a brief overview of the new project proposal, *Building a Regional Health Sciences Pipeline- Charting Career Pathways and Standardizing Curricula*, submitted by Blue Ridge Partnership for Health Science Careers (Fiscal agent: Freedom First Foundation; Project lead contact: Carilion Clinic). The project seeks funds to advance the life and health sciences talent pipeline by establishing a new initiative to better; meet the acute and growing need of regional employers for qualified workers, including technicians and others, support the region's emerging Health and Life Sciences (H&LS) ecosystem, and make the region stronger as a magnet for attracting established companies in the H&LS sector seeking to expand or relocate. Cynthia Lawrence, Carilion Clinic, and Caroline King, Carilion Clinic, answered questions raised by the committee regarding how this project will relate to the Radford University Carilion program's presence in health sciences stating the RUC is one of their stakeholder educational institutions in this consortium. Cynthia continued stating staff are currently forming an executive committee with their role being to monitor their progress and ensure the initiative is meeting the objectives of employers, as well as the health and life sciences sector. Engaging the sector and ecosystem beyond providing direct care to patients, would be considered the most acute need and reasoning behind funding the pilot phase. Cynthia continued by stating once the team begins to build out the task force structure that will support the consortium, then the team will engage additional private sector companies to assist with identifying regional needs.

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

The Blue Ridge Partnership for Health Science Careers request totaled \$100,000 in GO Virginia Region 2 Enhanced Capacity Building funds, with a match of \$106,355.

With a fiscal year cap of \$250,000 for Enhanced Capacity Building projects, the Carilion team has confirmed they hold a sufficient amount of funds to begin the initiative without the requested GO Virginia Region 2 funds that will be made available on July 1, 2021.



Beverly Dalton motioned to recommend the proposal for review of the Region 2 Council during the spring 2021 meeting, with intentions of funding the proposal at the beginning of the FY22 fiscal year, beginning on July 1, 2021. Sandy Davis seconded. All were in favor and none opposed.

Lynchburg Beacon of Hope

Scott Tate continued with a brief overview of the new project proposal, *Futures Centers Expansion*, submitted by the Lynchburg Beacon of Hope. For the past 8 years, Lynchburg's Beacon of Hope has partnered with the Lynchburg City Schools to operate high-school based Future Centers. The Future Centers have proven effective in increasing students' pursuit of, access to, and affordability for post-secondary education, certification and training. This project aims to scale the Future Center's model outside of the City of Lynchburg. Laura Hamilton, Lynchburg Beacon of Hope, addressed questions raised by the committee regarding the effectiveness of the expansion's hands-on versus a virtual component stating the team has found that a combination of on the ground support in the locality that they're serving alongside the virtual expertise will create a successful model. Beverly Dalton requested clarification in regard to implementation timeline. Laura continued by stating their intention is to fully implement the program during the school year 2021-2022, with future centers in Lynchburg City, Amherst County, the Town of Altavista by September 2021, as well as expanding to another locality in the region by Spring 2022. Beverly Dalton requested additional information as to the Future Center's deliverables. Laura continued by stating the Future Centers were opened in Lynchburg City in 2012, with the idea for them to provide a k-12 pathway to certification, college, and portable post-secondary training, as well as offering the City of Lynchburg the first privately funded "promise program" implemented in Virginia that allows any student who graduates from Lynchburg City schools to attend Central Virginia Community College free of charge. The Future Centers will ensure all students participating will graduate with a viable pathway to certification, a career, or college. Eddie Amos requested clarification regarding why the students participating in the Futures Centers will not receive access to attend the community college for free. Laura responded by stating the access to free college is privately funded in the City of Lynchburg, therefore, the program would rely on each participating locality to privately fund access to free community college.

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

The Lynchburg Beacon of Hope request totaled \$95,480 in GO Virginia Region 2 Enhanced Capacity Building funds, with a match of \$138,600.

The committee has recommended the proposal for review of the Region 2 Council.

The Advancement Foundation

Scott Tate continued by providing a brief overview of the new project proposal, *Ag/Food Technology and Business Innovation Center*, submitted by The Advancement Foundation. The Advancement Foundation proposes to conduct a needs assessment and feasibility around emerging technology in agriculture, food/beverage processing and business incubation in the Bedford area. Annette Patterson, The Advancement Foundation, addressed concerns raised in the review process, stating the town and



county of Bedford will not be the only locality confirming their support of the project as The Advancement Foundation's partnerships run deep across the region. Annette continued by stating staff are working on business development not only through main street businesses, but also through new and early stage high growth companies, through their previously awarded phase 1 and 2 grants from GO Virginia Region 2, exceeding their contracted metrics. The project has since evolved and assisted in developing additional relationships across the region, particularly in more rural areas. The Advancement Foundation has experienced much success with their Gauntlet program, a general business development initiative, which has launched 70 businesses in the last year, through a pandemic. Regarding their innovation mill, they have assessed around 75 potential high-growth companies, and are working directly with 40 companies, some of whom fall into the Ag/Technology sector. The Advancement Foundation hosted a conference inviting locality leaders, entrepreneurs, farmers, and economic developers in January 2020 to engage conversation of agriculture and technology opportunities in Region 2. Sandy Davis inquired if the 70 businesses launched in the last year are still active. Annette responded by stating they are all still open and discussed processes of the Gauntlet program. Chairman Smoot requested clarification on expectations of creating higher paying jobs with this initiative. Annette responded by stating as they refine and refocus on outcomes, she expects to attract environmental engineers, bio chemists, food scientists, and small scale processing engineers, all of whom would be an integral part of what they are expecting to build out in order to support local farmers and innovators.

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

The Advancement Foundation request totaled \$85,000 in GO Virginia Region 2 Enhanced Capacity Building funds, with a match of \$42,500.

The committee has recommended the proposal for review of the Region 2 Council.

Lynchburg Regional Business Alliance

Scott Tate continued by providing a brief overview of the new project proposal, *Site-specific Readiness for Amelon Industrial/IT Growth Center*, submitted by the Lynchburg Regional Business Alliance. The Lynchburg Regional Business Alliance is applying for a GO Virginia Region 2 site-specific readiness grant to build an Industrial/IT Growth Center on lot 6 of Amelon Commerce Center in Amherst County. Megan Lucas, Lynchburg Regional Business Alliance, and Victoria Hanson, Amherst Economic Development Administration, addressed concerns raised in the review process, stating there are support letters from additional municipalities, City of Lynchburg, Campbell County, and the Town of Amherst. Amherst intends on submitting a US EDA application in March, which will build the industrial building, this GO Virginia regional application will fund the site-specific readiness prior to the build out of the facility. Megan continued by discussing project deliverables and outcomes. Chairman Smoot inquired about the use of regional funds. Megan stated the funds will be used for site preparation which will include completing the detention pond, VDOT entrance work, VEQ requirements, and utility work to begin construction on the 40,000 square foot building. Chairman Smoot requested clarification on how GO Virginia funds will coincide with US EDA funds. Megan responded by stating the US EDA will not allow for funding of site readiness. Amherst County has already invested around \$400,000 in in-kind contributions to the site for real estate costs, preliminary grading, and due diligence. Chairman Smoot



inquired about which entity will own the building, Victoria stated the building will be owned by the Amherst County Economic Development Administration, however, the US EDA will have a large portion of control as they will have funded around half of the construction costs.

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

The Lynchburg Regional Business Alliance request totaled \$297,000 in GO Virginia Region 2 Per-Capita funds, with a match of \$526, 105.

Beverly Dalton motioned to recommend the proposal for review of the Region 2 Council, and Eddie Amos seconded. All were in favor and none opposed.

Special Updates

VIC Regional Entrepreneurship Initiative

Meredith Hundley began by providing an update on progress made within the Region 2 funded project, Regional Entrepreneurship Initiative. Meredith shares processes within the initiative, including the processes of review, engagement, synthesizing the information from the existing plans, into the creation of 3 sub-regional strategic investment plans and prioritizing projects they view would be beneficial for advancing innovation driven entrepreneurship in region 2. Staff are in the process of finalizing those projects now, with a request of any additional feedback on what the initiative is suggesting should be prioritized upon presenting these projects to the executive committee. Staff are envisioning this to be a continuous planning process in effort to grow the pipeline of projects that would further the entrepreneurial ecosystem in our region. Participation has been tough considering a pivot to online only collaborations, staff have distributed surveys that were not initially anticipated in place of focus groups and in person interactions. They surveyed 114 regional innovation-driven entrepreneurs to identify regional priorities, receiving responses from 35 individuals. 111 stakeholders from entrepreneurial support organizations across the region were invited to participate, with 81 stakeholders participating in 2020 sector representation. The coalition met quarterly and involved 26 representatives in local government, 16 involved in higher education, and 38 involved in entrepreneurial support organizations participated in meetings. Geographical representation involved the following localities, 37 stakeholders from the Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Highlands, 29 stakeholders from Lynchburg, and 28 stakeholders from the New River Valley. Following the survey, the team identified the following prioritized projects, technical assistance, startup pathways, startup studios, early-stage funding sources, industry-specific accelerator cohorts, technical talent for hire, hub-and-spoke structured co-working spaces, shared wetlabs, EXIT RAMP program, C-suite for hire, and broadband initiatives. Meredith stated there are several projects that staff have assisted in formation that have since received funding.

Broadband Task Force

Frank Smith, Roanoke Valley Broadband Authority, provided the committee with a brief overview of the Region 2 Broadband Task Force, stating the working group has recently added Scott Midkiff, CIO, Virginia Tech, and Keith Perry, CIO, Carilion Clinic, as well as two county administrators from Roanoke



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and Botetourt. The authority has built fiber optic network underground and are currently reviewing wireless applications for last mile. Currently, the region has 4 existing providers and 4 next generation providers on the network. The group has begun deployment of wireless access in Botetourt County through CARES funding. The group has recently responded to Roanoke County RFP for internet services and dark fiber. Additionally, members are working on grant applications for wireless related projects, involving Carilion and Virginia Tech, as well as public Wi-Fi areas to deploy. Finally, the authority is also collaborating with partners to begin planning stages in order to provide fiber internet to private residences in the region. Eddie Amos elaborated on the importance of adequate internet access in the more rural areas of Region 2 as citizens continue to have poor internet access which has in turn hindered our ability to promote economic development.

Council Business

Council Vacancies

Chairman Smoot announced there are 7 positions on the council whose term expired in January 2021. Of those individuals, 5 have expressed interest in serving an additional term, those members include Sandy Davis, Michael Friedlander, John Capps, John Putney, and Marty Muscatello. Watt Foster has indicated he will be leaving the council upon expiration of his term this month. Additional vacant positions on the council include 4 positions in the Roanoke/Alleghany region.

Chairman Smoot motioned to recommend the reappointment of the previously mentioned members of council with Eddie Amos seconding. The full council will convene on February 5, 2021 and will review this recommendation.

All were in favor and none opposed.

Staff Updates

Proposal Pipeline

John Provo provided the committee with a brief update regarding Region 2 proposal pipeline. Support staff are tasked with project development and technical assistance with applicants who are moving forward. Provo stated there are currently 7 active ongoing contacts who are developing proposals to bring before the council. Of the 7, 3-4 of those proposals are likely to come forward next quarter.