REGIONAL COUNCIL 9
JOINT TASK FORCE MEETING
GROW EXISTING BUSINESS (GEB) TASK FORCE &
ENTREPRENEURSHIP (ESHIP) TASK FORCE
AUGUST 7, 2025
10 am to 11 am
IN-PERSON
1001 Research Park Blvd., Suite 301, Charlottesville
https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81441976801
Call 434-979-5610 x. 106 with connectivity issues.

AGENDA

1. Welcome (5 minutes)   Ray Knott, Chair, GEB | Rahul Keshap, Chair, ESHIP
   - Introductions
   - Roll Call
   - Public Comment

2. ACTION ITEM(s): Consent Agenda (3 minutes)
   - Growing Existing Businesses Meeting Minutes, April 4, 2025   Ray Knott
   - Entrepreneurship Meeting Minutes, January 7, 2025   Rahul Keshap

3. Update(s): (5 minutes)   Shannon Holland, Director
   - Region 9 Growing Existing Businesses Projects Dashboards
   - Region 9 Entrepreneurship Task Force Dashboards
   - Region 9 Project Pipeline

4. Task Forces DRAFT Goal and Objectives for Feedback (5 minutes)   Ray Knott | Rahul Keshap

5. Proposal Review (20 minutes)   Ray Knott | Rahul Keshap
   - FUEL Project Updates (Shannon Holland)
   - Project Discussion

6. 2025 Growth Plan Grant Opportunities (15 minutes)   Shannon Holland

7. Other Business (2 minutes)   Ray Knott

8. Adjourn (1 minute)   Rahul Keshap

REGIONAL COUNCIL 9
GROW EXISTING BUSINESS (GEB) TASK FORCE MEETING
APRIL 4, 2025
8 am to 9 am
IN-PERSON
1001 Research Park Blvd., Suite 301, Charlottesville
https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82872614666
Call 434-979-5610 x. 106 with connectivity issues.

MINUTES

GEB Task Force Members Present: Ray Knott (Chair), Francoise Seillier-Moiseiwitsch, Brian Cole, Tom Thorpe
GEB Task Force Members Absent: Paige Read
Council Members Present: n/a
Staff Present: Shannon Holland, Christie Taylor

1. **Call to Order**

   Ray Knott, GEB Task Force Chair, called the meeting to order at 8:00 AM.

   - **Roll Call**

   A roll call was performed. **A quorum was established, as noted above.**

   - **Public Comment**

   There was no public comment submitted before the meeting or offered at the meeting.

2. **ACTION ITEM: Consent Agenda**
   - Meeting Minutes, April 12, 2024
   - Meeting Minutes, January 25, 2025

   Brian Cole made a motion to approve the minutes of the April 12, 2024, and January 25, 2025 meetings, as presented. Francoise Seillier-Moiseiwitsch seconded the motion. The motion carried.

3. **Update:**
   - Region 9 Grow Existing Business Projects Dashboard

   Referring to the GEB dashboard in the meeting packet, Shannon Holland noted that since the last meeting, the Wine Industry Planning Grant closed and the Wine Industry Implementation Grant was awarded. The Wine Industry Implementation Grant contract is in process with an effective date of March11. Project VITAL contract has also been finalized. Both projects are just beginning with no issues, hence the greenlight status in the dashboard.

4. **Proposal Review**
   - Innovation Corridor Roadmap – Planning Grant Summary
   - Discuss Project and Scoring Rubric
     - Shannon Holland noted the following updates to the Innovation Corridor Roadmap proposal.
       - A Match Commitment Form from Orange County has been received.
       - Letters of Support from Euro Composites and Afton Scientific have been received.
     - Shannon Holland also summarized responses to questions presented during the scoring

process including:

A. **IMPACT**
- **Question**: Can you provide a stronger vision for an implementation grant?
- **Answer:** To our knowledge this type of study has not been done in our region. We have studied sectors but not the intersection of those sectors to identify unique advantages. We expect the grant to identify high-potential innovation-driven opportunities and provide recommendations for action items that can be implemented by GO Virginia and other funding sources.

B. **REGIONAL COLLABORATION:**
- **Question:** How were participating localities engaged?
- **Answer:** Discussions were held with all localities in Region 9 over the past several months. All localities support and will benefit from the data being reviewed for the entire region.

C. **READINESS:**
- **Question:** Has the consulting firm been identified? Are they qualified?
- **Answer:** The consulting firm, TEConomy, has been identified and is qualified, with extensive experience.
- **Question**: Will other private sector companies be engaged and will they have a role and can they be involved outside of the advisory board?
- **Answer:** Local economic developers will help connect to more private sector companies. Private sector companies beyond those listed will be engaged through interviews, focus groups, and other activities.

Feedback from the GEB Task Force included:
Francoise Seillier-Moiseiwitsch asked who is serving with an AI/Data Science background. Shannon Holland responded that UVA's Alex Gates, Associate Professor of Data Science, is serving this role.

It was discussed that TEConomy had experience in Virginia and Region 9. They had completed extensive innovation work for GO Virginia in 2018/2019 and were currently contracted with the TPI grant. TEConomy had also done similar projects and were selected from three strong candidates.

Overall, the task force was supportive of the project, but extensive discussion occurred around reducing proposal ambiguity and strengthening the private sector's influence. The Task Force wants to see private sector stakeholders on the Steering Committee or more robust engagement of the Advisory Committee to ensure adequate private sector influence. The Task Force suggests a deliberate cross-section of geographic and sector representation. If private sector companies cannot commit to the Steering Committee commitments, there needs to be a mechanism for having them inform the process in a meaningful way, as the committee is currently very heavy Economic Development. Practical experience is needed to yield a better work product, and more ready implementation grant.

Shannon Holland will discuss with the applicant team and deliver responses to the task force quickly so they can re-score the proposal before the Council Meeting.

5. **Growth Plan Feedback**
- 2025 Growth Plan – Cluster Scale Up Assessment by Sector
Shannon Holland gave a presentation. [Presentation is posted with these minutes at www.GOVirginia9.org.] The Growing Existing Business (GEB) Task Force was requested to assess the

impact that GEB-focused grant awards have had on each target sector by selecting a color from the stoplight spectrum to indicate the level of success achieved so far. After engaging of all the Task Forces, the results will be reviewed at the August Council meeting. DHCD's Cluster Based Economic Development Model was used to quickly evaluate progress and guide future priorities.

The Task Force was overall in agreement with the suggested assessments for the Cluster Scale Up strategy. They offered additional feedback including:

- Food & Beverage: There is an overarching concern for talent development, and they are curious of the influence current projects and Virginia Wine Coalition will have. In general, the sector and the region lack a talent-driver in this area.
- Finance & Business Services: Talent remains an issue, especially as return to office patterns continue, and employees refuse to relocate resulting in exits. CPAs, bankers, attorneys and similar occupations all have major shortfalls. Moreover, there is an issue with how data excludes a subset of jobs, like banking, where the industry relies on recruiters rather than posting jobs (posted jobs are what is captured for data).
- The Virginia Chamber is in the middle of its assessment which includes how AI will impact the state economy. Roque Castro is the Region 9 representative on that. There is an opportunity for a proposal on how AI will reshape our region's jobs. For example, software developers, something that has historically been a need, may no longer be applicable due to AI. From a Council recruitment perspective, it may be helpful to get someone in from that field.

The Task Force suggested a trend line be added to the graphic that corresponds with whether there is progress (green) or decline (red).

6. **Project Pipeline**
   - Talent Development - TPI Planning – should lead to talent implementation grants
   - Growing Existing Business - Innovation Corridor Roadmap, if approved, should lead to implementation grants
   - Entrepreneurship - REI and the Food & Beverage Business Accelerator grants should both lead to implementation grants

7. **Other Business**
   No other business was presented.

8. **Adjourn**
   The meeting was adjourned at 9:01 a.m.

REGIONAL COUNCIL 9
ENTREPRENEURSHIP TASK FORCE MEETING
JANUARY 7, 2025
12:30 – 1:30 PM
https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89266954721
Call 434-979-5610 x. 106 with connectivity issues
ALL-VIRTUAL

MINUTES

Entrepreneurship Task Force Members Present: Rob Archer, Tom Click, Ethan Dunstan, Pace Lochte,
Entrepreneurship Task Force Members Absent: Paige Read
Staff Present: Helen Cauthen, Shannon Holland, Christie Taylor

1. **Welcome**
   Tom Click called the meeting to order at 12:32 p.m. He announced that this meeting was all-virtual as allowed by the Governor's statement of an emergency due to the snowstorm. Tom Click shared that Council Chair, Ethan Dunstan, asked him to serve as Sites Task Force Chair until the next Annual Meeting, when a new chair will be nominated. Tom noted that today's meeting was a first step in increasing council engagement as discussed at the October Council Meeting. .

   - **Roll Call**
     A roll call was performed. **A quorum was established, as noted above.**

   - **Public Comment**
     No public comment was submitted prior to or offered during the meeting.

2. **ACTION ITEMS**
   - **Approve Meeting Minutes**
     Rob Archer made a motion to approve the Minutes as presented. Ethan Dunstan seconded the motion. The motion carried. Pace Lochte abstained.

3. **Update:**
   - **GO Virginia Program – Dashboard**
     Shannon Holland gave a brief overview on the new GO Virginia Program impact dashboard, noting the data presented is for closed projects only.
     https://public.tableau.com/app/profile/virginiadhcd/viz/GOVADashboard_17345526597 200/GOVADashboard.

   - **Region 9 Entrepreneurship Projects Update**
     A draft dashboard for the Entrepreneurship Task Force was provided in the meeting materials. Shannon Holland noted that it will be refined over time, but it has been created with the goal of communicating with task forces on related activities and success. The Status stoplight on active projects is an effort to highlight areas that may need members' attention. Shannon provided these highlights:

- Carver Food Enterprise is green because it has extended its contract to get more people involved to reach goals and metrics.
- Rural Entrepreneurship is yellow because there are concerns that the project is not focusing on target sectors and we have questions about transparency with staff.
- REI is orange because the project is not on track to deliver what the Council needs. Shannon Holland has participated on the planning committee with direct feedback on consultant selection, report content, and recommendations. Her feedback has not been heeded and isn't reflected in the deliverables. The report was presented to the Council in October but the Action Plan was not delivered at that point. Shannon has most recently been working to develop a strong deliverable to ensure we get good solid implementation grants from this planning grant. DHCD shares similar concerns, and they have already been brought in to help.

4. **Regional Entrepreneurship Initiative (REI) - Deliverables**
   REI Report/Plan - "Thrive in place", October 2024 https://www.govirginia9.org/about/reports/

   Shannon Holland met with the Venture Central Team and DHCD staff to react to the Action Plan proposed in early December and enclosed in the meeting packet. Highlights included:
   - The recommendations should first be validated with entrepreneur vs entrepreneurship support organizations
   - The action plan should demonstrate more clarity of assets already in the eco-system and what they are delivering and how they will be involved (Lack of asset map, e.g. omitting CvilleBioHub)
   - The report conflates start up ecosystem and scale up (GEB) efforts – is the council okay with this and if so, should it be delineated in the action plan
   - Action items should focus on Region 9 target traded sectors/ high growth traded sector
   - Recommendations:
     - # 1 & 2: Clarify why this is needed to catalyze efforts; Rec. 1 might be feasible if led by entrepreneurs vs ESOs; and 2 could be a subcommittee but it doesn't seem feasible that this infrastructure can be maintained and needed for target sectors in each county, especially if focused on target traded sectors
     - # 3: seems most aligned with GO Virginia but needs clarity on how it aligns with existing/prior GO Virginia efforts and/or can't be duplicative of SBDC programming. It must be tailored for needs of our region
     - # 5: not a fit; VCW – P could lead something like this already; youth e-ship training is too far from cash register and is workforce development
     - # 6: assumed this would be a core part of the plan itself; it's important so why wasn't it discussed in terms of asset mapping; a small effort might be included
     - # 7: Is in line with GO Virginia but report didn't outline what is or has been done in this area so there are no specifics as to what should be happening next, i.e. post federal grant just completed with is next?
     - # 8: Does a technical education effort lead to job candidates for employers? Needs to be validated by the sector leaders as some of the training listed received pushback from employers representing the sector. This isn't a finding of the report, but more an action-item that puts them in the workforce development space. Also seems it needs to be parsed out between beginner and growth employers.
     - # 9: GO Virginia can support some outreach efforts as far as programming, but not generalized economic development marketing.

Pace Lochte asked what happens if the project team doesn't revise this report. Shannon Holland shared that in Northern Virginia, the REI project submitted a subpar report and DHCD rejected that and made them rewrite it. Secondly, these planning grants are supposed to point Council toward promising implementation grant opportunities, and that would be lacking. Ethan Dunstan added concern for the amount of time staff has spent working with the team without that feedback being implemented, and the need for Task Force involvement earlier in the process to leverage staff's position.

Next steps: Based on feedback, Shannon Holland will:
- Complete validation of the report by entrepreneurs
- The Council could decide at its next meeting to accept or reject the report and action plan. Tom Click mentioned using the current "no" votes to push for revisions.
- Address high-growth traded sector entrepreneurs in the action plan.
- Inform the project team that they are flagged as "red light" on our dashboard.
- Hold an in-person meeting to discuss feedback from the Task Force and DHCD and emphasize urgency for revisions. Tom Click agreed to join.

5. **Feedback from Task Forces**
   Shannon Holland requested feedback and ideas for improving council processes to engage more closely in project development and review, including how to involve task force members earlier, allowing time for questions and feedback on proposals? Ethan Dunstan said that having Task Force Chairs should be helpful in getting earlier feedback on proposals in order to get to go/no-go sooner, before staff and Council members expend considerable time.

6. **Project Pipeline**
   The REI Action Plan was expected to provide leads to fill the pipeline.
   Pace Lochte suggested sharing project ideas from other regions as way to develop new project ideas. This could be done at task force meetings or council meetings.

7. **Adjourn**
   The meeting was adjourned at 1:30 p.m.

Growing Existing Businesses - Task Force Project Summary

Project	Active/ Closed	Status Prev QR	Status Most Recent QR	Grant Type	GO Virginia $ Approved	SubGrantee	Target Industry	Contract End Date	Extension Date
CvilleBioHub	Closed			ECB-PC	$ 83,540.00	CvilleBioHub	Biotech	8/31/2020	
Biotech Innovation Cluster Growt	Closed			Implementation - PC	$ 548,000.00	CvilleBioHub	Biotech	12/31/2021	
Project Rebound	Closed			ERR-FA	$ 80,000.00	Charlottesville Regional Chambe	All	1/31/2021	
Crafting a New Normal	Closed			ERR-FA	$ 44,000.00	TJPDC	Food/Bev	3/31/2021	6/30/2021
CvilleBioLab	Closed			ECB-PC	$ 100,000.00	CvilleBioHub	Biotech	4/30/2024	6/30/2024
Cluster Scale Up	Closed			Planning	$ 100,000.00	Nelson County	Food/Bev	12/30/2024	2/28/2023
Project VITAL	Closed	Green	Yellow	Implementation - PC	$ 4,302,887.00	CvilleBioHub	Biotech	10/1/2027	
Food & Beverage Business Accele	Active			Planning	$ 100,000.00	Venture Central	Food/Bev	2/1/2026	
Wine Industry Implementation Gr	Active	Green		Implementation - PC	$ 224,125.00	Nelson County	Food/Bev	3/11/2027	
Innovation Corridor Road Map	Active			Planning	$ 100,000.00	CVPED	Bio, IT/Comm, LM		

All GEB Projects – Committed /Actual

Project	ALL						GROW EXISTING BUSINESS OUTCOMES					
	Number of jobs created (2024-on)/ filled (pre-2024)	Actual Number of jobs created/ filled	Number of businesses served	Actual Number of businesses served	Number of existing businesses expanded	Actual Number of existing businesses expanded	Number of businesses attracted	Actual Number of businesses attracted	Number of businesses retained	Actual Number of businesses retained	Total funds raised by businesses served	Actual Total funds raised by businesses served
CvilleBioHub												
Biotech Innovation Cluster Growth												
Project Rebound	70	416	131	131	6	6	5	5	7	16		
Crafting a New Normal												
CvilleBioLab	31	35	100	281								
Cluster Scale Up		0										
Project VITAL												
Food & Beverage Business Accele	68	3	60	28	10	0	10	1	15			
Wine Industry Implementation Grant												
Innovation Corridor Road Map	20	2	104	10	25	1						
Total	189	456	395	450	41	7	15	6	22	16	0	0

Grow Existing Businesses (6.17.2025)

Project	Funding	Industry	Projected Businesses Served	Actual Businesses Served	Projected Jobs	Actual Jobs	Active/ Closed	Status Prev QR	Status Most Recent QR	Notes
Wine Industry Implementation NELSON COUNTY	$ 224,125.00	FB	104		20	0	Active		Green	
Project VITAL CVILLEBIOHUB	$ 4,302,887.00	Bio	60	18	68	3	Active	Green	Green	
Food & Beverage Business Accelerator VENTURE CENTRAL	$ 100,000.00	FB	0		0		Active	Green	Green	
Innovation Corridor Road Map CVPED	$ 100,000.00	Bio, IT & Comm, LM	0		0		Active			Begins July 1
	$ 4,727,012.00		164	18	88	3				

Entrepreneurship Task Force - Project Summary

Project	Active/Closed	Status Prev QR	Status Most Recent QR	Grant Type	GO Virginia $ Approved	SubGrantee	Target Industry	Contract End Date	Extension Date
Catalyst Accelerator Program	Closed			Implementation - PC	$ 475,200.00	UVA Rectors /Visitors	All	6/30/2021	9/30/2021
Young Entrepreneurs Program Resource	Closed			ECB-PC	$ 83,500.00	Fauquier County	All	9/30/2020	12/31/2020
Connector Platform	Closed			ERR-FA	$ 76,500.00	CBIC	All	12/31/2021	
Venture Central	Closed			Implementation - PC	$ 300,000.00	Charlottesville Regional Chamber of Commerce	All	2/28/2023	12/30/2023
Digital Business Resiliency	Closed			ERR	$ 131,220.00	CV SBDC c/o CIC	All	6/30/2022	
BEACON's Kitchen	Closed			ERR	$ 189,000.00	New Hill Development Corporation	Food/Bev	12/31/2023	9/30/2024
Carver Food Business Incubator	Active	Yellow	Green	Implementation - PC	$ 199,727.00	Culpeper County	Food/Bev	10/31/2024	
Rural Entrepreneur Ecosystem Building	Active	Yellow	Yellow	Implementation - PC	$ 200,000.00	CIC	All	4/30/2025	10/30/2025
REI	Active	Red	Yellow	Planning	$ 300,000.00	CIC & Venture Central	All	6/13/2025	
					$ 1,955,147.00				

All Entreprneurship Projects - Committed/Actual

Project	ALL						ENTREPRENEURSHIP									
	Number of jobs created (2024-on)/ filled (pre-2024)	Actual Number of jobs created/ filled	Number of businesses served	Actual Number of businesses served	Number of existing businesses expanded	Actual Number of existing businesses expanded	Number of new businesses created	Actual Number of new businesses created	Number of new mentors providing business assistance	Actual Number of new mentors providing business assistance	Number of new products released to production	Actual Number of new products released to production	Number of patents filed	Actual Number of patents filed	Number of patents awarded	Actual Number of patents awarded
Catalyst Accelerator Program	116	115	20	19												
Young Entrepreneurs Program Resource																
Connector Platform			100	1760												
Venture Central	72	98	18	75			18	16								
Digital Business Resiliency			240	523												
BEACON's Kitchen	37	24	8	60			13	14			10	4				
Carver Food Business Incubator	93	65	68	56							35	69				
Rural Entrepreneur Ecosystem Building	30	36	200	205	60	12	15	14								
REI																
Totals	348	338	654	2698	60	12	46	44								

Project	Funding	Industry	Projected Businesses Served	Actual Businesses Served	Projected Jobs	Actual Jobs	Active/ Closed	Status Prev QR	Status Most Recent QR	Notes
Carver Food Business Incubator CULPEPER COUNTY	$ 199,727.00	FB	68	56	93	65	Active	Green	Green	
Rural Entrepreneur Ecosystem Building CIC	$ 200,000.00	All	200	256	30	45	Active	Orange	Yellow	Met with grant team
REI CIC/VENTURE CENTRAL	$ 300,000.00	All	0		0		Active	Yellow	Yellow	Implementation proposal still pending
	$ 699,727.00		268	312	123	110				

Entrepreneurship – Active Projects (6.17.2025)

Project Pipeline

7.22.2025

Project			Region 9 Deadlines							
Planning Grant	Planning	End Date	2025			2026				
			7/16	9/24	12/9	3/18	5/13	7/15	9/23	12/10
REI (Eship)	Yes	6/13/2025	x							
Food & Beverage Business Accelerator (Eship)	Yes	2/1/2026			x	x				
Bio Bridge (TPI) (Talent)	Yes	2/1/2026			x	x	x			
Innovation Corridor Road Map (GEB)	Yes	7/1/2026				x	x	x		
GO TEC (Talent)	No			x						

Planning Grants are expected to be followed by an immediate and subsequent implementation grant unless findings indicate one should not be pursued. Deadline targets are projections by staff and not necessarily the grant leaders.

TASK FORCE CHARTER

7.22.2025

Since 2024, the Region 9 Council has undertaken initiatives to enhance the involvement of Task Force units, aiming to strengthen engagement among Council Members and leverage the Council's collective expertise. This document presents a draft summary outlining the goals, objectives, activities, and tools associated with this effort.

UNIFIED TASK FORCE GOAL:

Catalyze regional economic growth by stewarding grant proposals that address target sector gaps in talent, sites availability, and entrepreneurship and promote impact and success.

TASK FORCE OBJECTIVES:

Talent Development
Support and recommend grant proposals that strengthen the talent pipeline in Region 9's target industry sectors by encouraging collaboration among education, business, and workforce partners to develop in-demand skills, retain local talent, and attract new talent to the region.

Cluster Scale-Up

Recommend and support grant investments that accelerate the growth of Region 9's traded industry clusters by enabling the adoption of advanced technologies, fostering scale-up of high-growth firms, enhancing supply chain integration, and strengthening cluster ecosystems.

Innovation

Identify and support grant opportunities that drive innovation and entrepreneurship in Region 9's target sectors by advancing startup formation, research commercialization, and the development of innovation infrastructure and networks.

Site Readiness

Recommend and support strategic site development grant opportunities that improve the competitiveness of Region 9's target sectors to enable business attraction, expansion, and cluster growth.

TASK FORCE ACTIVITIES

- Growth & Diversification Plan

- o   Contribute to development
- o   Validate grant opportunities
- o   Identify success measure for objectives
- Proposals to Advance Growth & Diversification Plan
  - o   Support project development
  - o   Review proposals
  - o   Recommend grant awards at full Council Meeting
  - o   Foster active grants to successful outcomes
- Report at Council meetings, as needed

REGION 9 TOOLS:

- Growth & Diversification Plan
- Growth & Diversification Plan – Grant Opportunities Flyer
- Grant Pipeline
- Project Dashboard
- Cluster Based Economic Development Model
- Project Database of Outcomes (Committed vs Actual Outcomes)
- Other

GO Virginia Region9
Executive Project Summary

Complete this form and submit along with your proposal. It can be up to 2 pages.

Project Name: FUEL Project (Framework for a Unified Entrepreneur Landscape) - REI Implementation Plan Phase 1
Applicant: Venture Central, Inc.
Contact Name: Rebecca Haydock
Grant Timeline: (months/years) 2 years - January 1, 2026 through December 31, 2027

GO Virginia Amount Requested: $440,000
Match Amount Proposed: $ 250,600
Local Match Subtotal: $172,000
Match Breakdown: Cash: $250,600

Localities Served: City of Charlottesville, Counties of Albemarle, Culpeper, Fauquier, Greene, Louisa, Madison, Nelson, Orange, Rappahannock
Local Match Commitment From: City of Charlottesville, Counties of Albemarle, Culpeper, Fauquier, Greene, Louisa, Madison, Nelson, Orange, Rappahannock
Other Match Commitment From: Community Investment Collaborative

Letters of Support From: (28)
MUNICIPALITIES. City of Charlottesville, Counties of Albemarle, Culpeper, Fauquier, Greene, Louisa, Madison, Nelson, Orange, Rappahannock
ENTREPRENEUR SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS. Community Investment Collaborative, Central Virginia SBDC, Louisa County Chamber of Commerce, CvilleBioHub, 434 Accelerator, Central Virginia Partnership for Economic Development, Laurel Ridge Small Business Development Center
PRIVATE COMPANIES. Luna Labs, Laser Thermal, Owl Peak Technologies, Milkmade, Performance Med Technologies, Agrospheres
COMMUNITY PARTNERS. University of Virginia School of Engineering, GENEDGE Alliance, Charlottesville Angel Network, Charlottesville Business Innovation Council, University of Virginia Licensing and Ventures Group

Strategy: Grow Existing Business

Region 9 Target Sectors this project is focused on: Light Manufacturing, Biomedical & Biotechnology, Food & Beverage Manufacturing, IT & Communications, and Financial & Business Services

Region 9 Growth Plan Opportunities Targeted: (list separately below) in bullet format

Grow Existing Businesses
- #2 Support implementation grants from gaps identified through planning grants or other regional reports such as the CEDS Plans to be published in 2024.
- #3 Support sector led verticals to address business-identified and validated sector gaps to traded sector growth.

Entrepreneurship

- #1 Support recommended implementation grants that catalyze growth in target sector entrepreneurship as prioritized in the Regional Entrepreneurship Investment (REI) Plan in development.
  - o (Proposal will advance 3 of the 9 recommendations from the REI Action Plan Recommendations #1, #3, and #7b

Description: (in less than 150 words describe your project)

The Regional Entrepreneurship Initiative (REI) "Thrive in Place" Report identified critical gaps in our entrepreneur ecosystem. REI FUEL (Framework for a Unified Entrepreneurial Landscape) implements key recommendations to catalyze economic prosperity across Region 9's localities through three components:

- **FUEL Coalition** (Recommendation #1) establishes a region-wide coalition of business and government leaders to coordinate support for GO Virginia target sectors, creating unified goals and cross-communication capability.
- **FUEL Connection** (Recommendation #3) convenes c-suite leaders from traded sector companies in facilitated peer forums, with specialized programming for manufacturing and dual-use companies in response to demand.
- **FUEL Capital** (Recommendation #7) reduces capital access barriers through banker education, sector-specific CEO/CFO capital education programs, and ambassador engagement in wealthy communities to connect accredited investors with local opportunities.

This two-year initiative leverages partnerships between Venture Central, Community Investment Collaborative, Central Virginia SBDC and several others to create sustainable infrastructure supporting entrepreneurial growth across Region 9.

Return on Investment: -12.59% at Year 3; 205.93% at Year 5 (from ROI Worksheet)

GO Virginia Core Metrics and Committed Outcomes: (list metrics with committed numbers; see Core Outcomes Worksheet)

This project will track the following GO Virginia Core Outcomes across target industry sectors:

1. Number of jobs created: 55 in the first 3 years [STAFF NOTE: 2 year commitment – 20]
2. Number of existing businesses expanded: 15
3. Number of businesses served: 50
4. Total funds raised by businesses served: $6,000,000

List Other Outcomes or Deliverables, if any: regional engagement, goal setting, and communication platforms for economic development and cluster scale up activities

Highlight Major Grant Activities in Bullet format: see above

Project Name: FUEL Project (Framework for a Unified Entrepreneur Landscape) **Applicant:** Venture Central, Inc. **Contact Name:** Rebecca Haydock **Grant Amount Requested:** $440,000 for 2 years (1/1/26-12/31/27) **Match Amount Proposed:** $250,600 cash **Local Match:** $172,000 cash **Localities**: City of Charlottesville, Counties of Albemarle, Culpeper, Fauquier, Greene, Louisa, Madison, Nelson, Orange, and Rappahannock **Match Commitment Forms:** Yes. Form pending from CIC **Letters of Support:** **Municipalities:** City of Charlottesville, Counties of Albemarle, Culpeper, Fauquier, Greene, Louisa, Madison, Nelson, Orange, Rappahannock **Entrepreneur Service Organizations (ESO):** Community Investment Collaborative, Central Virginia SBDC (pending), Louisa County Chamber of Commerce, CvilleBioHub, 434 Accelerator, Central Virginia Partnership for Economic Development, Laurel Ridge Small Business Development Center **Private Companies:** Luna Labs, Laser Thermal, Owl Peak Technologies, Milkmade, Performance Med Technologies, Agrospheres **Community Partners:** University of Virginia School of Engineering, GENEDGE Alliance, Charlottesville Angel Network, Charlottesville Business Innovation Council, University of Virginia Licensing and Ventures Group See list at end of this document	**Date Original Submitted: 12.10.2024** **Region 9 Task Force Reviewing** ☐ Talent Development x Entrepreneurship x Growing Existing Business ☐ Sites **Individual Reviewer Name:** **Francoise Seillier-Moiseiwitsch** **REVIEWER FINAL SCORE: _____ / 100 POINTS** **In addition to scoring, provide any additional comments or questions here related to ways the proposal could be improved:**
REVIEWERS: Check all goals/opportunities demonstrated in proposal. **State Goals:** ☐ Higher Paying Jobs ☐ Out of state investment ☐ Transformative project ☐ Collaboration between government, business, education, etc. **Region 9 Project Categories:** ☐ Talent Development ☐ Innovation/Entrepreneurship ☐ Growing Existing Business ☐ Sites **Region 9 Target Industries:** ☐ Information Technology ☐ Food & Beverage Mfg. ☐ Financial & Business Services ☐ Light Mfg. ☐ Biotechnology	

STATE GRANT SCORING GUIDELINES	**Score each section up to the stated point value. Make notes, comments, concerns, to support rating.**
ECONOMIC IMPACT Refer to Application Questions: 1-4	**Up to 35 total points**
1 Proposal provides an adequate outline of the project and project activities.	
2. Project application demonstrates alignment with opportunities and target sectors identified in the Region 9 Growth Plan. If applicable, the proposal notes alignment with other collaborative planning efforts.	

3. Proposal outlines quantitative and qualitative outcomes/products and activities that are linked to those outcomes/products. The GO Virginia Outcomes Worksheet aligns with those described. The applicant has described a methodology for tracking these commitments.	
4. The 3- and 5-year Return on Investment (ROI) calculations are provided and are supported with an adequate description of variables used in the calculation such as Jobs, Salaries, etc.	
REGIONAL COLLABORATION Refer to Application Questions: 5-9	**Up to 30 total points**
5. The localities participating in the activities of the project are noted and their commitment adequately documented in match forms, narrative or letters of support. At least two localities are represented.	
6. The proposal describes how the grant team has engaged with local government, private sector and subject matter experts in validating the strategy and approach of the project.	
7. The project has an adequate range of partners, each with a documented meaningful role.	
8. The proposal identifies cost efficiency, repurposing of existing funds, leveraging of existing assets and other evidence of collaboration.	
9. This proposal explains how this project is additive and not duplicative.	
PROJECT READINESS Refer to Application Questions: 10-13	**Up to 20 total points**
10. Proposal includes a clear timeline and adequate milestones to track project and projected funds drawdown. The applicant has the ability to address issues and take remedial action as necessary.	
11. Projected expenses and uses of committed match are aligned with project activities.	
12. Potential barriers have been identified and the project administration team has a team in place to address those that arise.	
13. Pre-requisite activities undertaken by the project partners to increase effectiveness of this grant delivery are described and adequate.	
PROJECT SUSTAINABILITY Refer to Application Question: 14	**Up to 15 total points**
14. The proposal has identified a path forward for long-term sustainability beyond the grant period.	
BUDGET – SEE BUDGET WORKBOOK in proposal	**0 points**
Budget is reasonable and realistic for scope of project and stated efficiencies and Budget Narrative supports proposed budget. Adequate descriptions are provided in the workbook. ☐Yes ☐ No ☐ Needs clarification	
TOTAL POINTS AWARDED	**———— out of 100 points**

DRAFT 2025 Growth Plan Opportunities: The GO Virginia Region 9 Council invites grant proposals to accomplish any of the following objectives for regional target sectors: *Biomedical & Biotechnology; Financial & Business Services; Food & Beverage Manufacturing; Information Technology & Communication; Light Manufacturing*

Talent Development

1. Promote the creation of opportunities that prepare and grow an AI-ready workforce, advancing the competitiveness of the region's target sectors.
2. Establish comprehensive regional workforce coalitions or initiatives that enhance collaboration and efficiency within the Region 9 talent development ecosystem for the identified target sectors
3. Advance sector-specific talent pathways planning efforts, ensuring the alignment of education and training with industry specified needs in each target sector.
4. Implement talent pathway strategies that span from middle school career awareness programs to senior-level employment opportunities
5. Develop sector-driven credentialing, apprenticeship, upskilling, and internship programs designed to meet the demands of target industries
6. Assess and address regional target sector workforce needs to fill high demand occupations

Growing Existing Businesses

1. For each target cluster, re-evaluate member industries within each cluster as defined and identify gaps in growth to develop recommendations for future implementation grants.
2. Support implementation grants from gaps identified through planning grants or other regional reports
3. Support sector led initiatives that address business-validated sector gaps to traded sector growth.
4. Catalyze AI & technology adoption in target sectors that drive sector growth and competitiveness

Startups/Innovation/Commercialization

1. Establish coordinated sector specific incubators or accelerators when demand is validated (see REI report)
2. Widen founder education about capital sources and connect more capital (see REI report)

Sites

1. Create a regional site development plan for target sectors.
2. Support future projects from the regional sites plan, once completed.
3. Identify new potential sites in the region for these sectors.
4. Assess benefits of collaboration on site development, such as RIFA development opportunities.
5. Advance development of regionally significant sites.

Other

1. Support planning grants to assess, map, and drive the development of emerging industries for which this region may have a competitive advantage
2. Support implementation grants identified to address recommendations presentedin emerging industries planning grants