

**GOVA REGION 3
FULL COUNCIL
MEETING PACKET**

July 19, 2023



GO Virginia Region 3 Council Meeting

Date and Time: July 19, 2023
1:00 pm – 3:00 pm
Location: Virtual

Virtual Link: <https://tinyurl.com/3mj4n8zh>
Meeting ID: 696 808 2778
Password: 399681

Purpose Statement

“Create more high-paying jobs through incentivized collaboration, primarily through out-of-state revenue, which diversifies and strengthens regional economies.”

AGENDA

- | | |
|---|----------------|
| I. Call to Order and Chairman’s Opening Comments | Tim Clark |
| II. Roll Call and Confirmation of Quorum | Deborah Gosney |
| III. Public Comments | Tim Clark |
| a. Previously Submitted | |
| b. Submitted During Virtual Meeting | |
| IV. Declaration of Conflicts of Interest | Tim Clark |
| V. Approval of Meeting Minutes and Notes | Tim Clark |
| VI. Financial Report | Deborah Gosney |
| VII. GO Virginia Region 3 Project Funding Matrix Report | Deborah Gosney |
| VIII. GO Virginia Growth & Diversification Plan Status Report | Liz Povar |
| Special Appearances and Presentations | Tim Clark |
| IX. GO Virginia Region 3 Entrepreneurship Investment and Innovation Strategy Assessment – Dr. Erik Pages, Entrenworks Consulting | |
| X. GO Virginia Match Policy Update – Billy Gammel, GO Virginia Senior Program Administrator, Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development | |
| XI. GO Virginia Region 3 Council Resolution of Recognition – Nancy Pool | |
| Old Business | |
| XII. Approved Projects Update | Tim Clark |
| XIII. Project Pipeline (closed meeting if needed) | Tim Clark |



AGENDA (continued)

New Business

- XIV. Committee Reports Tim Clark
- a. Nominating Committee Report
 - i. Reappointment and Appointment of Region 3 Council Members
 - ii. GO Virginia Region 3 Council Committee Appointments for 2023-2024
- XV. Project Review Committee Jordan Miles
- a. RISE Build to Scale Initiative (Per Capita)
- XVI. Region 3 Council Operational Support – FY2023-2024 Tim Clark
- a. Memorandum of Understanding – Southside PDC
 - b. Consultant Services Agreement – The Riverlink Group

Program Director’s Report

Bryan David

- XVII. 2023 All Hands Meeting Recap Nancy Pool
- XVIII. GO Virginia State Board (6.13.23 meeting)
- a. Southern Virginia Partnership for Health Science Careers
 - b. Virginia’s Growth Alliance Site Development Project
- XIX. 2023 Growth & Diversification Plan Update
- XX. UVA Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service and the Karsh Institute for Democracy

Adjourn

MINUTES

**GO VIRGINIA REGION 3 FULL COUNCIL
MEETING MINUTES
Wednesday, April 19, 2023**

REGULAR BUSINESS

Call To Order

Chair Clark called the GO Virginia (GOVA) Region 3 Full Council meeting to order on Wednesday, April 19, 2023, at 1:00 p.m.

Roll Call and Confirmation of Quorum

Deborah Gosney conducted roll call. Chair Clark declared a quorum was present.

Region 3 Council Members

Members	In Person	Virtual	Absent	Members	In Person	Virtual	Absent
Robert Bates			X				
Scott Burnette			X	Randolph Lail	X		
Clark Casteel	X			Charles Majors	X		
Timothy Clark	X			James McClain	X		
Melody Foster	X			John Parkinson	X		
Kristin Gee			X	Alfreda Reynolds	X		
Amy Griffin	X			Jeremy Satterfield	X		
Keith Harkins	X			Sherry Swinson	X		
Rhonda Hodges	X			Lauren Willis			X

Region 3 Staff in Attendance

Name – Organization - Role	In Person	Virtual	Absent
Deborah Gosney - Southside PDC - Support Org. & Fiscal Agent	X		
Bryan David - UVA Weldon Cooper Center Contract Staff – Region 3 Program Director	X		
Ann Taylor Wright (CTW Consulting, LLC) - Southside PDC Contract Staff		X	
Liz Povar (The Riverlink Group) - Southside PDC Contract Staff		X	
Nancy Pool – Southside PDC Contract Staff	X		

Guests in Attendance

Name - Title	Organization	In Person	Virtual
Dr. Julie Brown- Vice President, Advanced Learning	Institute for Advanced Knowledge & Research	X	
Dr. John Creasy- Director	Southern Virginia Partnership for Health Sciences	X	
Dr. Jenifer Meno-Denneny- Research Associate	George Mason University- Center for Health Workforce		X
Dr. Caroline J Sutter- Co-Director	George Mason University- Center for Health Workforce		X
Andrea Devening- Program Manager	DHCD- GO Virginia		X
Cynthia Lawrence- Director	Carillion Clinic- Office of Workforce Development		X
Thomas Jordan Miles- Chair	Region 3 Project Review Committee		X

Public Comments

No written, nor verbal, public comments were received.

Declaration of Conflicts of Interest

Conflicts of interest potentially exist for activities benefiting and /or contracts issued to the following organizations and projects listed below:

Name	Organization(s)
Charles H. Majors	Mid-Atlantic Broadband; Institute for Advanced Learning and Research; Danville Regional Foundation
Randolph Lail	Mid-Atlantic Broadband
Dr. Amy Griffin	Virginia Ed Strategies
Rhonda Hodges	GO TEC; Patrick Henry Community College
Melody Foster	Longwood University; SOVA Innovation Hub; Mid-Atlantic Broadband
Keith Harkins	Southside Virginia Community College
Jeremy Satterfield	Microsoft; SOVA Innovation Hub
Alfreda Reynolds	Brunswick County; VGA Board Member
Clark Casteel	Danville Regional Foundation

Approval of Minutes

Chair Clark noted that the minutes of the January 18, 2022 Full Council meeting were received via email prior to the meeting and included in the meeting packet.

Melody Foster made a motion that the minutes from the January 18, 2022 Full Council meeting be approved as presented; the motion was seconded by Jeremy Satterfield and was approved unanimously.

Financial Reports

Deborah Gosney reviewed the Financial Reports and Funding Matrix that were included in the meeting packet for the period March 1, 2023 to March 31, 2023.

Randy Lail made a motion that the Financial Reports be approved as presented; the motion was seconded by Charlie Majors and was approved unanimously.

SPECIAL APPEARANCES & PRESENTATIONS

- Liz Povar, Principle- RiverLink: Presented the Growth & Diversification Plan Update
- Dr. Julie Brown, Vice President of Advance Learning-IALR: Presented GO TEC 2025 Project

OLD BUSINESS

Approved Projects Updates

Bryan David presented updates on all active projects. Additional details were provided in the meeting packet. Chair Clark asked members for questions or comments; there being none, there was no discussion regarding the updates.

Project Pipeline Updates

Bryan David reviewed the current project pipeline which was emailed to Council members prior to the meeting. Additional details can be found in the meeting packet. The following projects were discussed:

- GO Virginia Region 3 Entrepreneurship Investment & Innovation (EII) Strategy- Phase II (Per Capita): This application will be presented to the Council in July.
- SOVA Innovation Labs (Per Capita): This is an expansion of the SOVA Innovation Hub and will offer a makers space and co-working space in a campus style environment.

Chair Clark asked members for questions or comments; there being none, there was no discussion regarding the updates.

NEW BUSINESS

Nominating Committee Report

The Nominating Committee submitted the following recommendations: Tim Clark to serve a second term as Council Chair and Lauren Willis to serve as Vice-Chair.

Randy Lail made a motion to close the nominations and accept the Nominating Committees recommendations; the motion was seconded by Melody Foster and was approved unanimously.

FY24 Operating Budget

Bryan David reviewed the FY24 Region 3 operating budget.

Charlie Majors made a motion that the operating budget be approved as presented; the motion was seconded by John Parkinson and was approved unanimously.

Project Review Committee

Jordan Miles presented the Committee's recommendation to submit a Talent Pathway Initiative Planning Application for Health Science Careers not to exceed \$150,000. Dr. Cynthia Lawrence, Dr. Caroline Sutter, and council members discussed the need for a coordinated approach to solve issues with the lack of health care workforce.

Keith Harkins made a motion to authorize the Region 3 Program Director to continue developing the Region 3 Talent Pathway Plan for Health Science Careers and proceed as proposed; the motion was seconded by Amy Griffin and approved unanimously.

Program Director's Report

Bryan David presented the Program Director's Report as detailed in the meeting packet. Topics discussed were the Growth & Diversification Plan Update and the 2023 All Hands Meeting. There were no questions, nor comments, from the Council.

OTHER BUSINESS

None

ADJOURN

There being no additional business matters to go before the GO Virginia Region 3 Council, Chair Clark adjourned the meeting at **3:10 p.m.**

These minutes were approved on _____.

Deborah Gosney, Southside PDC
Executive Director

Tim Clark, GOVA Region 3
Council Chair

FINANCIAL REPORT

FY23 GO VA OPERATING BUDGET

GO Virginia Region 3

Report Period: March 1, 2023 to June 30, 2023

Draw Period: June 1, 2023 to June 30, 2023

GO VIRGINIA



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

FY 23 GO VIRGINIA FUNDS

Budget Categories	Operating Budget	Previously Paid Expenses	DHCD Request to be Submitted in Remittance 4	Total Expenses To Date	FY23 Available Funds
Program Operations					
Audit	\$ 1,170.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,170.00
Meetings & Facilitation					
All Hands Meeting	8,000.00	4,646.59	460.00	5,106.59	2,893.41
Meetings & Trainings	1,500.00	428.88	128.22	557.10	942.90
Total Meetings & Facilitation	9,500.00	5,075.47	588.22	5,663.69	3,836.31
Supplies	500.00	-	-	-	500.00
Salaries - SPDC	80,000.00	22,370.54	6,180.74	28,551.28	51,448.72
Contract Services					
SPDC UVA MOU	104,236.00	25,299.99	25,299.99	50,599.98	53,636.02
SPDC Contract Staff - Riverlink	9,000.00	750.00	-	750.00	8,250.00
SPDC Contract Staff - Nancy Pool	7,200.00	1,725.00	800.00	2,525.00	4,675.00
Total Contract Services	120,436.00	27,774.99	26,099.99	53,874.98	66,561.02
Marketing - Letterpress	31,900.00	8,457.40	2,645.00	11,102.40	20,797.60
Rent - SOVA Innovation Hub	5,415.00	1,339.50	446.50	1,786.00	3,629.00
Total Program Operations	248,921.00	65,017.90	35,960.45	100,978.35	147,942.65
Planning					
Technical Assistance					
All Hands Meeting	1,079.00	-	-	-	1,079.00
Total Planning	1,079.00	-	-	-	1,079.00
TOTAL	\$ 250,000.00	\$ 65,017.90	\$ 35,960.45	\$ 100,978.35	\$ 149,021.65

The Checking Account is comprised of:

\$47,039.72	Local Funds - Unexpended (Martinsville/Henry County)
391.69	Interest
\$47,431.41	
(35,960.45)	Checks to be Submitted in Remittance 4
<u>\$11,470.96</u>	Checkbook Balance at June 30, 2023

Checks To Be Submitted in Remittance 4	
9965 - SOVA Innovation Hub - Rent - June 2023	\$ 446.50
9966 - Southside Planning District Comm - Salaries - May	6,056.74
9967 - Letterpress Communications - Marketing/Survey	3,105.00
9968 - Nancy Pool - Contract Hours - May 2023	800.00
9969 - UVA - Executive Director - April to June 2023	25,299.99
9970 - SPDC - Reimb - Exec Mtg/Procurement	252.22
Total Checks To Be Submitted in Remittance 4	\$ 35,960.45

FY22 GO VA OPERATING BUDGET

GO Virginia Region 3

Report Period: May 1, 2022 to June 30, 2022

Draw Period: June 1, 2022 to June 30, 2022

GO VIRGINIA



VIRGINIA INITIATIVE FOR
GROWTH & OPPORTUNITY
IN EACH REGION

FY 22 GO VIRGINIA FUNDS

Budget Categories	Operating Budget	Previously Paid Expenses	DHCD Request Submitted in Remittance 2	DHCD Request To Be Submitted in Remittance 3	Total Expenses To Date	FY22 Available Funds
Program Operations						
Audit	\$ 1,170.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,170.00
Meetings & Facilitation						
All Hands Meeting	-	-	-	-	-	-
Council Meetings	1,500.00	321.32	-	59.50	380.82	1,119.18
Total Meetings & Facilitation	1,500.00	321.32	-	59.50	380.82	1,119.18
Supplies	500.00	-	-	-	-	500.00
Salaries - SPDC	80,000.00	12,429.92	6,586.63	-	19,016.55	60,983.45
Contract Services						
SPDC UVA MOU	101,200.00	-	25,299.99	25,299.99	50,599.98	50,600.02
SPDC Contract Staff - Riverlink	9,000.00	1,500.00	-	1,500.00	3,000.00	6,000.00
SPDC Contract Staff - Nancy Pool	7,200.00	1,162.50	-	525.00	1,687.50	5,512.50
Total Contract Services	117,400.00	2,662.50	25,299.99	27,324.99	55,287.48	62,112.52
Marketing - Letterpress	31,900.00	4,470.00	4,110.00	-	8,580.00	23,320.00
Rent - SOVA Innovation Hub	5,415.00	902.50	-	-	902.50	4,512.50
Total Program Operations	237,885.00	20,786.24	35,996.62	27,384.49	84,167.35	153,717.65
Planning						
Technical Assistance						
All Hands Meeting	12,115.00	11,240.00	-	-	11,240.00	875.00
Total Planning	12,115.00	11,240.00	-	-	11,240.00	875.00
TOTAL	\$ 250,000.00	\$ 32,026.24	\$ 35,996.62	\$ 27,384.49	\$ 95,407.35	\$ 154,592.65

The Checking Account is
is comprised of:

\$47,039.72	Local Funds - Unexpended (Martinsville/Henry County)
267.80	Interest
\$47,307.52	
(35,996.62)	Checks Submitted in Remittance 2 (June 23, 2022)
<u>\$11,310.90</u>	Checkbook Balance (Checks in Remittance 3 have not been released yet)

Checks Submitted in Remittance 2	
9849 - UVA MOU - January 2022 to March 2022	\$ 25,299.99
9851 - SPDC - Salaries - May 2022	6,586.63
9852 - Letterpress - Marketing - May 2022	4,110.00
Total Checks Submitted in Remittance 2	\$ 35,996.62

Checks To Be Submitted in Remittance 3	
9853 - UVA MOU - April to June 2022	\$ 25,299.99
9854 - Nancy Pool - May 2022	525.00
9855 - The Riverlink Group - April and May 2022	1,500.00
9856 - SPDC - Reimbursement for Meeting Meals	59.50
Total Checks To Be Submitted in Remittance 3	\$ 27,384.49

BRIDGE TO RECOVERY

Grant Agreement Term: July 1, 2020 - April 30, 2023

Report Period: June 1, 2023 to June 30, 2023

Sub-Grantee: Southern Virginia Regional Alliance

GO VIRGINIA



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

GO VIRGINIA GRANT FUNDS

Budget Categories from CAMS	GOVA Budget	Previously Paid	DHCD Request Drawdown #7 3/13/2023	Total Paid After Remittance	Grant Balance
SPDC Project Monitoring/Reporting	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 7,643.99		\$ 7,643.99	\$ 2,356.01
Administration	\$ 104,629.97	\$ 79,915.17	\$ 10,896.60	\$ 90,811.77	\$ 13,818.20
Contract Services	\$ 280,000.00	\$ 102,672.41	\$ 26,558.75	\$ 129,231.16	\$ 150,768.84
Fringe Benefits	\$ 63,052.22	\$ 50,187.18	\$ 6,971.70	\$ 57,158.88	\$ 5,893.34
Salaries	\$ 124,005.81	\$ 92,380.84	\$ 18,375.03	\$ 110,755.87	\$ 13,249.94
Other: Collaborative Support	\$ 103,707.00	\$ 45,625.00	\$ 6,250.00	\$ 51,875.00	\$ 51,832.00
Other: Subscriptions	\$ 75,933.00	\$ 60,704.51	\$ 3,410.73	\$ 64,115.24	\$ 11,817.76
Other: Website Updates	\$ 8,000.00	\$ 7,125.00		\$ 7,125.00	\$ 875.00
Other: Training/Marketing Program	\$ 5,672.00	\$ 4,083.98	\$ 216.62	\$ 4,300.60	\$ 1,371.40
Other: E-Commerce Assistance	\$ 100,000.00	\$ 49,500.00		\$ 49,500.00	\$ 50,500.00
Other: Marketing	\$ 50,000.00	\$ 49,881.63	\$ -	\$ 49,881.63	\$ 118.37
Awarded Total	\$ 925,000.00	\$ 549,719.71	\$ 72,679.43	\$ 622,399.14	\$ 302,600.86

REQUIRED MATCHING FUNDS

Budget Categories from CAMS	Committed Match	Previous Match	Current Match 3/13/2023	Total Match To Date	Match Balance
Construction	\$ 154,159.97	\$ 134,159.97		\$ 134,159.97	\$ 20,000.00
Fringe Benefits	\$ 36,761.83	\$ 36,761.83		\$ 36,761.83	\$ -
Salaries	\$ 121,262.74	\$ 121,262.74		\$ 121,262.74	\$ -
Other: Finance Costs for Cash Flows	\$ 26,000.00	\$ -		\$ -	\$ 26,000.00
Other: Upgrade Costs for Shop Local	\$ 10,000.00	\$ -		\$ -	\$ 10,000.00
Other: PPE Tool Kits	\$ 14,123.85	\$ 14,079.34		\$ 14,079.34	\$ 44.51
Other: Meeting Expense (Sites/Virtual)	\$ 20,000.00	\$ -		\$ -	\$ 20,000.00
Other: Finance & Procurement Admin	\$ 97,125.00	\$ 83,250.00	\$ 10,406.25	\$ 93,656.25	\$ 3,468.75
Other: Business Services Match Funds	\$ 331,977.31	\$ 271,977.31		\$ 271,977.31	\$ 60,000.00
Match Total	\$ 811,410.70	\$ 661,491.19	\$ 10,406.25	\$ 671,897.44	\$ 139,513.26

Status: GOVA funds are 67% expended. The final remittance request has been received and is being processed. Close out reports will be prepared and submitted in July.

SVRA SITE DEVELOPMENT

Grant Agreement Term: October 1, 2021 - September 30, 2023

Report Period: June 1, 2023 to June 30, 2023

Sub-Grantee: Southern Virginia Regional Alliance

GO VIRGINIA



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

GO VIRGINIA GRANT FUNDS

Budget Categories from CAMS	GOVA Budget	Previously Paid	DHCD Request Drawdown #1 2/13/2023	Total Paid After Remittance	Grant Balance
SPDC Project Monitoring/Reporting	\$ 35,000.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 35,000.00
Architectural and Engineering Fees	\$ 1,478,100.00	\$ -	\$ 83,550.00	\$ 83,550.00	\$ 1,394,550.00
Administration - IALR	\$ 21,800.00	\$ -	\$ 13,625.00	\$ 13,625.00	\$ 8,175.00
Awarded Total	\$ 1,534,900.00	\$ -	\$97,175.00	\$97,175.00	\$ 1,437,725.00

REQUIRED MATCHING FUNDS

Budget Categories from CAMS	Committed Match	Previous Match	Current Match 2/13/2023	Total Match To Date	Match Balance
Architectural and Engineering Fees	\$ 767,450.00		\$ 547,999.14	\$ 547,999.14	\$ 219,450.86
Match Total	\$ 767,450.00	\$ -	\$ 547,999.14	\$ 547,999.14	\$ 219,450.86

Status: GOVA funds are 6% expended. The project is nearing completion and invoices are starting to come in. Work is coming in under budget. DD#2 is expected soon.

ENTREPRENEURSHIP & INNOVATION IMPLEMENTATION

Grant Agreement Term: April 1, 2021 - June 30, 2023

Report Period: June 1, 2023 to June 30, 2023

Sub-Grantee: SoVa Innovation Hub

GO VIRGINIA



VIRGINIA INITIATIVE FOR
GROWTH & OPPORTUNITY
IN EACH REGION

GO VIRGINIA GRANT FUNDS

Budget Categories (FROM CAMS)	GOVA Budget	Previously Paid	DHCD Request Drawdown #6 6/21/2023	Total Paid After Remittance	Grant Balance
SPDC Project Monitoring/Reporting	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 2,668.31	\$ -	\$ 2,668.31	\$ 2,331.69
Other : Entrepreneurship training	\$ 129,000.00	\$ 64,279.60	\$ 15,657.37	\$ 79,936.97	\$ 9,651.00
Other : Youth entrepreneurship program	\$ 75,000.00	\$ 50,300.36	\$ -	\$ 50,300.36	\$ 36,975.40
Other : Program branding/marketing	\$ 115,000.00	\$ 122,632.84	\$ 10,762.64	\$ 133,395.48	\$ 16,616.82
Other : Regional scorecard implement	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 3,724.77	\$ -	\$ 3,724.77	\$ -
Other : Farmville innovation space	\$ 40,000.00	\$ 8,100.00	\$ -	\$ 8,100.00	\$ 13,900.00
Other : Consultants - out of region	\$ 80,000.00	\$ 47,857.10	\$ 20,342.50	\$ 68,199.60	\$ 23,199.60
Awarded Total	\$ 449,000.00	\$ 299,562.98	\$ 46,762.51	\$ 346,325.49	\$ 102,674.51

REQUIRED MATCHING FUNDS

Budget Categories (FROM CAMS)	Committed Match	Previous Match	Current Match 6/21/2023	Total Match to Date	Match Balance
Administration	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 4,637.50	\$ 4,637.50	\$ 9,275.00	\$ 725.00
Other : Entrepreneurship training	\$ 75,000.00	\$ 45,938.10	\$ 30.00	\$ 45,968.10	\$ 19,898.88
Other : Youth entrepreneurship program	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 1,620.00	\$ 2,080.00	\$ 3,700.00	\$ 1,300.00
Other : Program branding/marketing	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 3,347.62	\$ 618.07	\$ 3,965.69	\$ 6,310.59
Other : Regional scorecard implement	\$ 20,000.00	\$ 48,146.81	\$ -	\$ 48,146.81	\$ (19,161.80)
Other : Farmville innovation space	\$ 50,000.00	\$ 49,871.73	\$ -	\$ 49,871.73	\$ -
Other : Project Development/Admin	\$ 110,000.00	\$ 12,798.55	\$ 615.22	\$ 13,413.77	\$ 96,586.23
Match Total	\$ 280,000.00	\$ 166,360.31	\$ 7,980.79	\$ 174,341.10	\$ 105,658.90

STATUS: GOVA funds are 71% expended. The final remittance has been received and is being processed.

EXPERIENCE WORKS

Grant Agreement Term: October 1, 2021 - September 30, 2023

Report Period: June 1, 2023 to June 30, 2023

Sub-Grantee: Institute for Advance Learning & Research

GO VIRGINIA



VIRGINIA INITIATIVE FOR
GROWTH & OPPORTUNITY
IN EACH REGION

GO VIRGINIA GRANT FUNDS

Budget Categories from CAMS	GOVA Budget	Previously Paid	DHCD Request Drawdown #3 5/10/2023	Total Paid After Remittance	Grant Balance
SPDC Project Monitoring/Reporting	\$ 15,018.00	\$ 1,340.38	\$ 2,887.00	\$ 4,227.38	\$ 10,790.62
Administration - IALR	\$ 37,082.00	\$ 1,885.44		\$ 1,885.44	\$ 35,196.56
Contract Services	\$ 25,000.00	\$ -	\$ 4,280.00	\$ 4,280.00	\$ 20,720.00
Fringe Benefits	\$ 21,000.00	\$ 5,342.98		\$ 5,342.98	\$ 15,657.02
Salaries	\$ 60,000.00	\$ 18,224.94		\$ 18,224.94	\$ 41,775.06
Supplies	\$ 10,500.00		\$ 602.07	\$ 602.07	\$ 9,897.93
Taxes and Insurance	\$ 19,278.00			\$ -	\$ 19,278.00
Travel	\$ 12,000.00		\$ -	\$ -	\$ 12,000.00
Other: Internship Stipends	\$ 252,000.00		\$ -	\$ -	\$ 252,000.00
Other: EXCITE Teacher Stipends	\$ 30,000.00		\$ -	\$ -	\$ 30,000.00
Other: Biz Meals for Sector Camp	\$ 13,500.00		\$ -	\$ -	\$ 13,500.00
Other: Work Readiness Bootcamps	\$ 20,250.00			\$ -	\$ 20,250.00
Awarded Total	\$ 515,628.00	\$ 26,793.74	\$ 7,769.07	\$ 34,562.81	\$ 481,065.19

REQUIRED MATCHING FUNDS

Budget Categories from CAMS	Committed Match	Previous Match	Current Match 5/10/2023	Total Match To Date	Match Balance
Contract Services	\$ 63,000.00	\$ -	\$ 5,400.00	\$ 5,400.00	\$ 57,600.00
Fringe Benefits	\$ 14,000.00	\$ 3,942.01		\$ 3,942.01	\$ 10,057.99
Salaries	\$ 40,000.00	\$ 13,191.69		\$ 13,191.69	\$ 26,808.31
Supplies	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 755.10	\$ 595.21	\$ 1,350.31	\$ 1,649.69
Travel	\$ 7,380.00	\$ 2,561.19		\$ 2,561.19	\$ 4,818.81
Other: Internship Stipends	\$ 102,434.00		\$ 164,650.00	\$ 164,650.00	\$ (62,216.00)
Other: EXCITE Teacher Stipends	\$ 18,000.00			\$ -	\$ 18,000.00
Other: Career Expo and Camps	\$ 10,000.00		\$ 52,125.98	\$ 52,125.98	\$ (42,125.98)
Match Total	\$ 257,814.00	\$ 20,449.99	\$ 222,771.19	\$ 243,221.18	\$ 14,592.82

Status: GOVA funds are 7% expended. A project extension request is in process. The bulk of expenses are related to summer camp activities. Summer 2022 camp expenses have not been fully reported (due to IALR staff turnover) and will be submitted soon for reimbursement. The project extension will allow time for all invoices to be received for the summer 2023 activities.

CONTROLLED ENVIRONMENT AG (CEA)

Grant Agreement Term: March 15, 2022 - June 30, 2023

Report Period: June 1, 2023 to June 30, 2023

Sub-Grantee: Institute for Advance Learning & Research

GO VIRGINIA



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

GO VIRGINIA GRANT FUNDS

Budget Categories from CAMS	GOVA Budget	Previously Paid	DHCD Request Drawdown #	Total Paid After Remittance	Grant Balance
SPDC Project Monitoring/Reporting	\$ 750.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 750.00
Planning	\$ 77,053.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 77,053.00
Awarded Total	\$ 77,803.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 77,803.00

REQUIRED MATCHING FUNDS

Budget Categories from CAMS	Committed Match	Previous Match	Current Match	Total Match To Date	Match Balance
Salaries	\$ 28,263.25				\$ 28,263.25
Contract Services	\$ 2,955.00				\$ 2,955.00
Outreach	\$ 8,075.00				\$ 8,075.00
Match Total	\$ 38,543.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 38,543.00

Status: IALR is still awaiting invoices from Virginia Tech to submit first/final draw request. It is anticipated by mid July.

SEED INNOVATION HUB

Grant Agreement Term: January 2, 2023 - January 1, 2025

Report Period: June 1, 2023 to June 30, 2023

Sub-Grantee: Longwood University Real Estate Foundation

GO VIRGINIA



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

GO VIRGINIA GRANT FUNDS

Budget Categories from CAMS	GOVA Budget	Previously Paid	DHCD Request Drawdown #	Total Paid After Remittance	Grant Balance
SPDC Project Monitoring/Reporting	\$ 12,000.00				\$ 12,000.00
Equipment	\$ 611,438.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 611,438.00
Contingencies	\$ 50,866.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 50,866.00
		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Awarded Total	\$ 674,304.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 674,304.00

REQUIRED MATCHING FUNDS

Budget Categories from CAMS	Committed Match	Previous Match	Current Match	Total Match To Date	Match Balance
Construction	\$ 2,062,987.00			\$ -	\$ 2,062,987.00
A&E	\$ 150,000.00			\$ -	\$ 150,000.00
Site Work	\$ 155,235.00			\$ -	\$ 155,235.00
				\$ -	\$ -
Match Total	\$ 2,368,222.00			\$ -	\$ 2,368,222.00

Status: Contract has been executed. No draw activity to date. GOVA funds will be utilized for furnishing thus will be last dollars expended. **No remittance activity is expected until mid to late 2024.**

VIRGINIA'S GROWTH ALLIANCE (VGA) REFRESH

Grant Agreement Term: May 1, 2022 - August 31, 2023

Report Period: June 1, 2023 to June 30, 2023

Sub-Grantee: Virginia's Growth Alliance

GO VIRGINIA



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

GO VIRGINIA GRANT FUNDS

Budget Categories from CAMS	GOVA Budget	Total Paid to Date	DHCD Request Drawdown #3 5/9/2023	Total Paid After Remittance	Grant Balance
SPDC Project Monitoring/Reporting	\$ 1,000.00	\$ -	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ -
Studies	\$ 99,000.00	\$ 15,000.00	\$ 21,000.00	\$ 36,000.00	\$ 63,000.00
Awarded Total	\$ 100,000.00	\$ 15,000.00	\$ 22,000.00	\$ 37,000.00	\$ 63,000.00

REQUIRED MATCHING FUNDS

Budget Categories from CAMS	Committed Match	Total Paid to Date	Current Match Drawdown #3	Total Match To Date	Match Balance
Contract Services	\$ 36,000.00	\$ 6,512.50	\$ 8,725.00	\$ 15,237.50	\$ 20,762.50
Other: Advisory Committee	\$ 15,000.00	\$ 3,723.53		\$ 3,723.53	\$ 11,276.47
Match Total	\$ 51,000.00	\$ 10,236.03	\$ 8,725.00	\$ 18,961.03	\$ 32,038.97

Status: GOVA funds are 63% expended. Studies are nearing completion.

MBC MIDDLE MILE CONSTRUCTION

Grant Agreement Term: TBD

Report Period: June 1, 2023 to June 30, 2023

Sub-Grantee: Mid-Atlantic Broadband

GO VIRGINIA



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

GO VIRGINIA GRANT FUNDS

Budget Categories from CAMS	GOVA Budget	Previously Paid	DHCD Request Drawdown #	Total Paid After Remittance	Grant Balance
Construction	\$ 5,000,000.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 5,000,000.00
		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Awarded Total	\$ 5,000,000.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 5,000,000.00

REQUIRED MATCHING FUNDS

Budget Categories from CAMS	Committed Match	Previous Match	Current Match	Total Match To Date	Match Balance

Match Total	\$ 5,000,000.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 5,000,000.00
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Status: EDA application for \$4M was denied. An NTIA application has been submitted. GOVA funds are on hold until the matching funds are awarded. The deadline to execute the contract has been extended to September 1, 2023.

GUPTON INITIATIVE

Grant Agreement Term: July 15, 2022 - July 14, 2023

Report Period: June 1, 2023 to June 30, 2023

Sub-Grantee: The Commonwealth Alliance for Rural Colleges

GO VIRGINIA



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

GO VIRGINIA GRANT FUNDS

Budget Categories from CAMS	GOVA Budget	Previously Paid	DHCD Request Drawdown #4 2/1/2023	Total Paid After Remittance	Grant Balance
SPDC Project Monitoring/Reporting	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 769.00	\$ -	\$ 769.00	\$ 2,231.00
Market & Feasibility Study	\$ 91,900.00	\$ 18,260.88	\$ 15,217.40	\$ 33,478.28	\$ 58,421.72
Travel	\$ 4,300.00	\$ -		\$ -	\$ 4,300.00
				\$ -	
Awarded Total	\$ 99,200.00	\$ 19,029.88	\$ 15,217.40	\$ 34,247.28	\$ 64,952.72

REQUIRED MATCHING FUNDS

Budget Categories from CAMS	Committed Match	Previous Match	Current Match Drawdown #4 2/1/2023	Total Match To Date	Match Balance
Marketing/Advertising/Promotions	\$ 10,000.00		\$ -		\$ 10,000.00
Salaries	\$ 45,000.00	\$ 25,750.00		\$ 25,750.00	\$ 19,250.00
Match Total	\$ 55,000.00	\$ 25,750.00	\$ -	\$ 25,750.00	\$ 29,250.00

Status: GOVA funds are 35% expended. Project activities are nearing completion.

CRC REDO

Grant Agreement Term: October 24, 2022 - October 23, 2023

Report Period: June 1, 2023 to June 30, 2023

Sub-Grantee: Commonwealth Regional Council

GO VIRGINIA



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

GO VIRGINIA GRANT FUNDS

Budget Categories from CAMS	GOVA Budget	Previously Paid	DHCD Request Drawdown #	Total Paid After Remittance	Grant Balance
SPDC Project Monitoring/Reporting	\$ 1,000.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,000.00
Contract Services	\$ 64,000.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 64,000.00
Awarded Total	\$ 65,000.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 65,000.00

REQUIRED MATCHING FUNDS

Budget Categories from CAMS	Committed Match	Previous Match	Current Match	Total Match To Date	Match Balance
Administration (CRC)	\$ 2,500.00				\$ 2,500.00
Contract Services	\$ 30,000.00				\$ 30,000.00
Salaries	\$ 12,000.00				\$ 12,000.00
Match Total	\$ 44,500.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 44,500.00

Status: Planning is underway. No remittance requests to date.

SVCC: Expansion of GO TEC: Mechatronics Instructor

Grant Agreement Term: June 1, 2023 - May 31, 2025

Report Period: June 1, 2023 to June 30, 2023

Sub-Grantee: Southside Virginia Community College

GO VIRGINIA



VIRGINIA INITIATIVE FOR
GROWTH & OPPORTUNITY
IN EACH REGION

GO VIRGINIA GRANT FUNDS

Budget Categories from CAMS	GOVA Budget	Previously Paid	DHCD Request Drawdown #	Total Paid After Remittance	Grant Balance
SPDC Project Monitoring/Reporting	\$ 2,000.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 2,000.00
Salaries & Fringe	\$ 137,732.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 137,732.00
Awarded Total	\$ 139,732.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 139,732.00

REQUIRED MATCHING FUNDS

Budget Categories from CAMS	Committed Match	Previous Match	Current Match	Total Match To Date	Match Balance
Equipment	\$ 132,438.00				\$ 132,438.00
Dual Enrollment Tuition	\$ 90,770.00				\$ 90,770.00
Match Total	\$ 223,208.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 223,208.00

Status: New project. Contract has been executed. No remittance requests to date.

P&HCC: Expansion of GO TEC: Welding Instructor

Grant Agreement Term: June 1, 2023 - May 31, 2025

Report Period: June 1, 2023 to June 30, 2023

Sub-Grantee: Patrick & Henry Community College

GO VIRGINIA



VIRGINIA INITIATIVE FOR
GROWTH & OPPORTUNITY
IN EACH REGION

GO VIRGINIA GRANT FUNDS

Budget Categories from CAMS	GOVA Budget	Previously Paid	DHCD Request Drawdown #	Total Paid After Remittance	Grant Balance
SPDC Project Monitoring/Reporting	\$ 2,000.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 2,000.00
Salaries & Fringe	\$ 116,545.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 116,545.00
Awarded Total	\$ 118,545.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 118,545.00

REQUIRED MATCHING FUNDS

Budget Categories from CAMS	Committed Match	Previous Match	Current Match	Total Match To Date	Match Balance
Equipment	\$ 129,264.00				\$ 129,264.00
Match Total	\$ 129,264.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 129,264.00

Status: New project. Contract has been executed. No remittance requests to date.

PROJECT FUNDING MATRIX

GO VIRGINIA REGION 3 PER-CAPITA PROJECTS

Project Name	G & D Plan Investment Strategy	Project Status	Award Amount	Budget Project Type	Date of Award	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23
						Per Capita	Per Capita	Per Capita	Per Capita	Per Capita	Per Capita
						757,401	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	84,413.65
											1,000,000
											1,084,413.65
GO TEC Phase 1	Workforce Dev	Closed	648,000	Per Capita	02/13/18	617,172.79					
SOVA Innovation Hub	Startup Ecosystem	Closed	80,000	Per Capita-ECB	07/25/18	79,919.80					
GO TEC Phase 2A	Workforce Dev	Closed	1,320,787	State Competitive	03/12/19						
E&I Strategic Initiative	Startup Ecosystem	Closed	100,000	Per Capita-ECB-REI	10/09/19	60,308.41	17,353.71				
Operation Last Mile Drone	Cluster Scale Up	Closed	75,000	COVID ERR Fund	04/15/20						
IALR Common Platform	Workforce Dev	Closed	90,140	Per Capita-ECB	04/15/20		88,914.96				
GO TEC Phase 2B	Workforce Dev	Closed	3,575,741	State Competitive	06/23/20						
MBC Middle Mile Planning	Broadband	Closed	100,000	Per Capita-ECB	08/04/20		99,017.68				
Bridge to Recovery	Cluster Scale Up	Active	925,000	COVID ERR Fund	06/23/20						
E&I Implementation	Startup Ecosystem	Active	449,000	Per Capita-REI	03/16/21		449,000.00				
SVRA Site Development	Site Development	Active	1,534,900	Per Capita	09/23/21		345,713.65	1,000,000.00	189,186.35		
ExperienceWorks	Workforce Dev	Active	515,628	Per Capita	09/23/21				515,628.00		
Controlled Environment Ag (CEA) Planning	Cluster Scale Up	Active	77,803	Per Capita-ECB	11/29/21				77,803.00		
SEED Innovation Hub	Startup Ecosystem	Active	674,304	Per Capita	12/15/21				217,382.65	456,921.35	
VGA Refresh	Site Development	Active	100,000	Per Capita-ECB	01/19/22					100,000.00	
MBC Middle Mile Construction	Broadband	Approved	5,000,000	State Competitive	03/10/22						
Gupton Initiative**	Workforce Dev	Active	99,200	Per Capita-ECB	06/23/22					34,200.00	
CRC REDO	Startup Ecosystem	Active	65,000	Per Capita-ECB	8/18/2022					65,000.00	
GO TEC Virginia 2025	Workforce Dev	Approved	3,474,821	State Competitive	12/13/2022						
PHCC GO TEC Welding Instructor	Workforce Dev	Approved	119,733	Per Capita	3/14/2023					119,733.00	
SVCC GO TEC Mechatronics Instructor	Workforce Dev	Approved	139,732	Per Capita	3/14/2023					139,732.00	
VGA Site Development	Site Development	Approved	326,225	Per Capita	6/13/2023						326,225.00
SoVA Partnership for Health Sciences Careers	Workforce Dev	Deferred	133,000	Talent Pathways							
TOTAL PROJECT FUNDING			19,624,014			757,401.00	1,000,000.00	1,000,000.00	1,000,000.00	915,586.35	326,225.00
Available Balance						\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$84,413.65	\$758,188.65
** This is a multi-region grant; only \$34,200 is R3 per capita allocation.											

G&D Plan Status Report



DATE: July 12, 2023

TO: GO Virginia Region 3 Council

FROM: R. Bryan David, Program Director

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'RBD', is placed over the name 'R. Bryan David' in the 'FROM' field.

RE: GO Virginia Region Growth & Diversification Plan Status Report

Attached is the quarterly status report reflecting the implementation of the Region 3 Growth & Diversification Plan. The report captures the status of the plan's goals, objectives, and strategies.

RECOMMENDATION:

For the Region 3 Council's information. No action is needed.

Region 3 Growth and Diversification Plan Goals Status June 2023

Program Strategies	Goals	Status	Color Legend
SITE DEVELOPMENT	Support Sustainable Regional Economic Development Systems in Eastern and Northern Sub-Region		
	Increase the number of Business-Ready Sites to Tier Ratings 3, 4 & 5		
	Increase the number of Business-Ready properties (sites & buildings) for business services and health care sectors		
	Increase the marketability of unique properties in the Region		Early Stage
TALENT EVOLUTION	Monitor and advance the implementation of GO TEC		At Risk
	Support sector-based partnerships by identifying career paths for cross-walks incorporating new and emerging target sectors		Delayed
	Support apprenticeship model implementation		On Track
	Develop an approach to talent attraction and retention		Completed

Region 3 Growth and Diversification Plan Goals Status June 2023

Program Strategies	Goals	Status	Color Legend
ENTREPRENEURIAL ECOSYSTEM	Monitor and advance the implementation of the SOVA Rise Collaborative		
	Support programmatic emphasis on agribusiness and health care sectors		
	Identify and support efforts to grow emerging business sectors		Early Stage At Risk
	Sustain the designation of “significant” and increase the designation of “moderate” and “limited” in the entrepreneurial hubs within Region 3.		Delayed On Track Completed
Organizational Strategies	Goals		
LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT	Anticipate the future		
	Ensure strong and sustained leadership for the Council and the Region		
	Support Sustainable Regional Economic Development Systems in Eastern and Northern Sub-Region		
	Build regional coalitions of strategic partners		
	Continue to build a multi-faceted communication strategy to reach diverse audiences		

SPECIAL APPEARANCES & PRESENTATIONS



DATE: July 12, 2023

TO: Region 3 Council

FROM: R. Bryan David, Program Director

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'RBD', is placed to the right of the 'FROM:' line.

RE: GO Virginia Region 3 Entrepreneurship Investment and Innovation Strategy Assessment – Dr. Erik Pages, Entreworks Consulting

As previously communicated to the Region 3 Council and Executive Committee, the Entrepreneurship Investment and Innovation Strategy project principals, L. Mathena from SOVA Rise Collaborative/Mid-Atlantic Broadband Communities Corp. and S. McGuire from Longwood University Small Business Development Center, engaged a third-party subject matter expert in entrepreneurial ecosystem development in rural areas for the Entrepreneurship Investment & Innovation (EII) Strategy project. This engagement aimed to assess the current project, provide recommendations on the next steps for implementing Region 3's EII Strategy, and suggest updates to the strategy.

Dr. Erik Pages from Entreworks Consulting (<https://entreworks.net/>) was selected for this assessment. He is a nationally recognized third-party expert in entrepreneur ecosystem development with particular experience in rural regions.

He conducted his fact-finding, in-region interviews, and research during the first part of this year. His findings were presented to the Board of Directors of the Mid-Atlantic Broadband Communities Corporation, which supports the SOVA Rise Collaborative and the SOVA Innovation Hub. Dr. Pages' report was well-received by the Board members and other stakeholders. He also presented the report to the Region 3 Executive Committee at its meeting on June 21st.

I have arranged for Dr. Pages to present his assessment and recommendations to the Region 3 Council during the July 21st meeting. Dr. Pages will be providing his presentation virtually.

Attached is a copy of his report entitled: Building the Region's Entrepreneurial Ecosystem: The Southern Virginia Regional Investments in Startups and Entrepreneurs (SOVA RISE) Initiative.

RECOMMENDATION:

For Region 3 Council's information. No action is needed.



RISE
COLLABORATIVE

Building the Region's Entrepreneurial Ecosystem: The Southern Virginia Regional Investments in Startups and Entrepreneurs (SOVA RISE) Initiative

May 2023

Draft Report Prepared for:

GO Virginia Region 3

EntreWorks Consulting

About This Report

This report was prepared for the GO Virginia Region 3 Council, a regional network of business leaders, educational institutions, economic developers, government-elected officials, and staff. Additional key partners include the SOVA RISE team, the SOVA Innovation Hub, and Longwood University. Erik R. Pages of EntreWorks Consulting led this project and authored the report.

This work was informed by inputs from local partners, SOVA RISE customers, local entrepreneurs, and other community leaders. We are grateful for their support of this work, and their commitment to supporting the region's entrepreneurs and innovators.

To learn more, visit:

SOVA RISE
www. <https://sovarise.com/>

EntreWorks Consulting
www.entreworks.net

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In the 2010s, a number of factors drove community leaders in Southern Virginia to examine new approaches to community and economic development. Traditional economic engines, such as tobacco and textiles, were sputtering, and new organizations, such as the statewide GO Virginia network, Microsoft’s TechSpark program, and the Mid-Atlantic Broadband Cooperative (MBC) were pioneering new approaches that placed greater emphasis on technology, innovation, and entrepreneurship as drivers of regional economic prosperity.

These forces helped to spur the creation of the Southern Virginia Regional Investments in Startups and Entrepreneurs (SOVA RISE) initiative to help support business startup and growth across a 13-county region of Southside Virginia. With seed investments from the GO Virginia Region 3 Council, SOVA RISE embraced an ambitious agenda to help start and grow new local companies, while also building a robust regional ecosystem to help local people embrace entrepreneurship, creativity, and innovation.

SOVA RISE first opened for business in 2020, and its early operations began in the midst of challenging global pandemic. These constraints led the SOVA RISE team to embrace a unique mix of virtual and hybrid programs, eventually moving to in-person programs in 2022 and 2023. Despite these challenges, SOVA RISE has had major impacts, and is changing the region’s perspectives on community building. Thanks to SOVA RISE, entrepreneurship and innovation are “on the map” across Southern Virginia. Local people, including students, are learning the basics of business building, and innovative new companies are starting up across the region. In addition, SOVA RISE is embracing new ways of “doing economic development,” encouraging a broad regional perspective and bringing new partners and communities to the table.

As SOVA RISE moves into its next phases of operation, the team is seeking to build on the important foundations constructed over the past few years. Moving forward, SOVA RISE will continue to operate its core programs, such as the RISE Business Bootcamp, the Grapevine business network, and various regional business pitch competitions. It will also seek to serve new communities and partners via new initiatives related to youth development, business mentoring, technology workforce training, and the continued buildout of regional innovation hub network.

SOVA RISE has helped to change regional conversations about innovation, technology, and entrepreneurship. Innovation is no longer something that occurs elsewhere—in places like Silicon Valley or the Northeast Corridor. Innovators and entrepreneurs exist everywhere, and they are becoming an important force in Southern Virginia, thanks in part to SOVA RISE’s pioneering work and ideas.

This report presents an early assessment of an innovative effort to build a robust entrepreneurial ecosystem in a region encompassing fifteen localities (including 2 cities and 13 counties) and served by three planning district commissions of Southside Virginia. The Southern Virginia Regional Investments in Startups and Entrepreneurs (SOVA RISE) program launched during a time of great transformation and uncertainty, opened for business, thanks to critical seed investments from the GO Virginia, a regionally led, statewide economic development program funded through the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD).

The GOVA Region 3 Council (comprised of public and private sector representatives from across the region) supported initial investments in SOVA RISE to develop a more innovative region, and as part of a statewide focus on supporting entrepreneurship and innovation, especially in Virginia's rural regions. Thanks to these initial investments, SOVA RISE and its partners are supporting important regional transformations. Local people, businesses, and communities are embracing new regional visions that place innovation and entrepreneurship at the heart of the region's economic transformations.

In an effort to assess program impacts and chart new program directions, SOVA RISE and GO Virginia Region 3 engaged EntreWorks Consulting, an Arlington, VA-based consultancy, to assess SOVA RISE's early impacts, and to suggest potential new directions that build on this early progress.

This report offers an assessment that reviews SOVA RISE's diverse and ambitious program portfolio, which has sought to build enthusiasm and excitement about innovation while also helping new area businesses start up and achieve rapid growth. It provides a preliminary accounting of early impacts, showing that SOVA RISE is changing the regional conversations about economic and community development, and helping to spur new excitement about business startup and growth as drivers of regional prosperity. It next offers suggestions for future initiatives that refine existing program offerings and support new investments in key areas such as youth development and small business capital access. These new efforts can help to build on the important foundations built during the first phases of SOVA RISE.

Background and History

The initial concepts and planning for the SOVA RISE initiative date back to the mid to late 2010s, as local leaders began to rethink some of the region’s economic development assumptions, priorities, and strategies. This “rethink” was stimulated by several factors. The regional economy continued to struggle due to downturns in past economic anchors, such as manufacturing and tobacco. At the same time, economic development organizations were beginning to embrace new strategies that placed greater emphasis on home-grown innovation, entrepreneurship, and talent development. New funding sources, from the Virginia Tobacco Region Revitalization and new area foundations, also helped support these shifts.

As planning for SOVA RISE commenced, the project team was not working in a vacuum. The region was home to several programs and initiatives that were seeking to place greater emphasis on entrepreneurship and innovation as economic development drivers. For example, the Longwood University Office of Community and Economic Development (LOCED) Small Business Development Center (LSBDC) have long supported these objectives, and remain a key driver behind SOVA RISE.

Other early entrepreneurship-focused “green shoots” included the Mid-Atlantic Broadband Cooperative (MBC), which opened for business in 2004 in South Boston, supporting the regional rollout of broadband services as part of wider economic and community development strategy. In South Boston, the Microsoft TechSpark program, providing technical and digital training, began in 2018. Other communities around the Southern Virginia region were also testing various support programs, such as local business pitch competitions. In Danville/Pittsylvania County, the Dan River Regional Foundation backed investments into the Dan River Region Entrepreneur Ecosystem (DREEE) effort. These projects included support for The Launch Place, a focused investment pool for new technology companies seeking to locate in or near the region.

These initial pilot efforts were further spurred by the GO Virginia Region 3 Council, part of statewide network investing in regional programs to increase the quantity and quality of high-paying jobs. Across the Commonwealth, nearly all GO Virginia regions have embraced innovation and entrepreneurship as core parts of their investment programs. SOVA RISE would ultimately become the key vehicle for supporting entrepreneurship and innovation in Region 3.

SOVA RISE Concept: Emergence and Refinement

Prompted by GO Virginia and other local leaders, MBC and Longwood University initiated a planning effort to support a new regional entrepreneurship and innovation investment strategy. This proposal was presented to the GO Virginia Regional Council, and was ultimately approved for investment in late 2020.¹ This analysis provided a deep dive in the Region 3 entrepreneurial ecosystem, and presented a detailed work plan that has driven SOVA RISE's operations ever since. This assessment identified major gaps in the region's entrepreneurship-related capacities. Challenges related to several core issues:

- Awareness and Understanding: Local people were not aware of opportunities related to entrepreneurship and an innovation mindset was missing.
- Networks and Connectivity: Existing assets, community leaders, and programs were poorly connected to one another, and had limited histories of strong partnerships.
- Capacity: Many essential ecosystem building blocks, such as focused training programs, did not exist in Region 3.
- Infrastructure: Essential infrastructure, especially broadband, was lacking in many parts of the region.

In response to this assessment, the initial project team envisioned an ambitious multipronged strategy that would not only introduce new innovation and entrepreneurship programs to a rural region with limited past experience in promoting entrepreneurship. At the same time, the team would also support continued rollout of essential broadband infrastructure. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, the team sought to pioneer new ways of doing business. In addition to embracing regionalism, they also set up a new collaborative governance structure that engaged multiple partners in the shared mission of ecosystem building.

The initial strategy included six priority investment areas:

- 1) Connecting entrepreneurship resources via a regional network of business service providers.
- 2) Supporting existing businesses via revamped business retention and expansion efforts.
- 3) Developing new training programs for youth and adult business owners and aspiring entrepreneurs.

¹ Regional Entrepreneurship Initiative, *Entrepreneurship and Innovation Investment Strategy*, Prepared for the GO Virginia Region 3 Council in Collaboration with GO Virginia Region 3 Entrepreneurs and Ecosystem Builders by Mid-Atlantic Broadband Communities Corporation and Longwood University Office of Community and Economic Development, 2020.

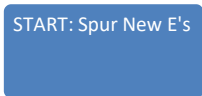
- 4) Enhancing regional capital resources for new and growing businesses.
- 5) Expediting the rollout of regional broadband projects.
- 6) Funding a regional ecosystem builder to support this ongoing work.

With approval of funding from GO Virginia Region 3, the SOVA Innovation Hub and Longwood began work on items 1-5, and agreed to leverage existing staff to fill the responsibilities of the recommended regional staff person. The new collaborative began offering programs in April 2021. Initial programs focused on new training tools, such as the CO.STARTERS entrepreneurship curriculum, and community awareness events, such as various business pitch competitions.

These early interventions aligned with the original vision for the strategy: to create “space for founders to come together: asking questions, sharing ideas, receiving encouragement, and making community-powered connections.” Formal programming was developed and implemented based on learnings from the burgeoning field of entrepreneurial ecosystem building, which seeks to develop a new “community-driven approach” to promoting entrepreneurship and economic development.²

Using this framework, the SOVA RISE initiative operates according to a logic model similar to those guiding other ecosystem building efforts. The outlines of this model are presented Figure 1 below:

FIGURE 1: Entrepreneurial Ecosystem Building Logic Model & Sample Metrics



START: Spur New E's

² For background, see <https://www.eleadershipproject.com/launch>

As Figure 1 indicates, an entrepreneurial ecosystem building strategy seeks to influence regional development patterns via a multi-step strategy. Its initial focus concerns awareness and understanding of entrepreneurship and related opportunities. Via training, marketing and community-focused programming, ecosystem builders hope to encourage more local people to consider entrepreneurship as a career option. This series of steps seeks to generate local “buzz” about innovation and entrepreneurship in general, and more specifically about the role of business startups in supporting personal development and community economic development.

Building a strong pipeline of aspiring entrepreneurs and new businesses can be an especially important step in regions, like Southern Virginia, where a strong recent tradition of local entrepreneurship may be lacking. At this phase of ecosystem building, impacts are measured through activity measures and input measures, such as attendance at workshops, customer satisfaction surveys, media mentions and so on. The SOVA RISE initiative utilizes these measures: the number of supported programs/events, the number of ongoing entrepreneurial training events, and the number of communities, businesses, and individuals participating in network programs.

At this stage, increasing diversity and inclusion is also a core program goal. These outcomes are measured by tracking the diversity of program participants, and by engaging with underserved groups which might include new communities, new target populations (e.g., veteran or women entrepreneurs), and area youth.

Beyond awareness, the next phase of ecosystem building focuses on building “better entrepreneurs,” i.e., providing specialized training and other support for new and growing businesses. Here, the goal shifts from generating excitement and interest to helping potential entrepreneurs be better informed about what it takes to start and grow a new venture. At this phase, key activity measures include the number of participants in training programs, participants in specialized programs, such as sector-specific training, and various talent and education metrics, such as credential and degree completions.

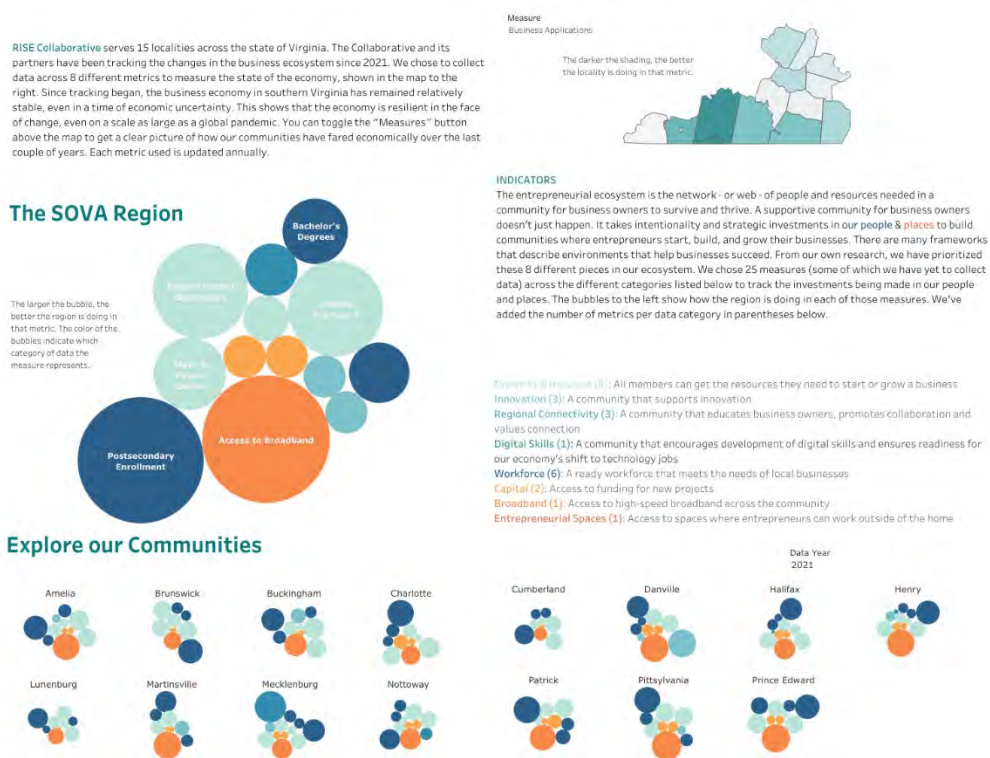
As more local people get excited about entrepreneurship and as more people take the leap into starting a business, the goals of ecosystem building become more closely aligned to traditional economic development metrics. At this phase, goals focus on helping businesses survive longer and achieve success in the form of faster growth, creating new innovations, or entering new markets. SOVA RISE tracks these outputs and outcomes via a variety of metrics, including new business starts, the creation of high-growth firms, the ability of local firms to access outside capital, and the increase in innovation-related activities, tracked by measures such as new patents or the creation of local technology jobs.

As the entrepreneurial pipeline develops, ecosystem building efforts should ideally have larger ripple effects on the wider regional economy. These outcomes are the primary focus of the GO Virginia investment program. Key measures would include job and wealth creation, economic diversification, and overall improved economic growth rates.

Beyond these traditional economic development metrics, ecosystem building also seeks to support a more connected and collaborative region. Measuring these impacts can often be more challenging, and may require tools such as social network mapping and related analysis.

All of these performance measurement categories are included in the metrics used to assess the SOVA RISE initiative. These measures are used to feed into a Regional Entrepreneurship Scorecard (see Figure 2) that will drive future ecosystem planning and development efforts.

FIGURE 2: The SOVA Regional Entrepreneurship Scorecard



THE SOVA RISE PROGRAM: CURRENT OFFERINGS AND ACTIVITIES

The SOVA RISE seeks to support multiple goals, and its program offerings reflect the varied objectives it seeks to support. Helping local people start and grow businesses remains job Number 1, but other goals also matter. These include engaging area youth, developing the local talent base, developing relevant infrastructure such as incubators and accelerators, enhancing regional partnerships, and marketing the region as a place where innovators and entrepreneurs thrive.

This ambitious set of missions requires an equally ambitious mix of program offerings focused in six key areas:

- Entrepreneurial Training
- Supporting Aspiring Entrepreneurs & Existing Business Growth
- Ecosystem Connections
- Access to Capital
- Broadband Expansion
- Resource Navigation

Entrepreneurial Training

Providing training to aspiring entrepreneurs and new business owners has been the prime focus area during the RISE Initiative's early stages. This emphasis reflected the team's recognition that many residents were unaware of potential opportunities related to business startup.

At present, the RISE team has opted to utilize training tools and curricula first developed as part of the CO.STARTERS program. CO.STARTERS has operated since 2008, and was first developed to support community development in Chattanooga, TN. Chattanooga's great success with local revitalization stimulated interest in learning from this model, and, as a result, many communities also sought to replicate Chattanooga's success with entrepreneurial development. Thanks to this strong interest, CO.STARTERS has grown rapidly and now operates in more than 350 communities around the US.

The CO.STARTERS team has always embraced a community-centric approach that seeks to not only empower individual business owners, but also seeks to connect them to a wider community of peers and support providers, i.e., the ecosystem. This approach also aligned with the goals of the SOVA RISE team. In addition, the adoption of CO.STARTERS tools helped the team deliver programs more quickly than developing new in-house programs and curriculum.

SOVA RISE currently deploys three separate programs that use CO.STARTERS tools and materials. These include the CO.STARTERS Business Idea workshop, which is designed to help participants develop and refine new business ideas; the CO.STARTERS Generator targeted to middle school, high school, and college students, and the CO.STARTERS Business Bootcamp, an eight-week online training program.

The RISE Business Bootcamp can be considered the “flagship” of SOVA RISE programming for entrepreneurship training. In addition to offering an introduction to business basics, the course also creates important peer connections that will help new business owners grow while also building out a more robust regional ecosystem. Courses are led by instructors from the Longwood SBDC network and Hampden-Sydney College, with guest lectures from local entrepreneurs and business service providers. Each cohort typically ends with a capstone Business Pitch competition. The Business Bootcamp is powered by the CO.STARTERS Core program.

RISE Generator programs target students in the region’s colleges and K-12 systems. This program is on-line and open to individual students, and it can also be offered by schools or community organizations. At present, the program is offered at four area high schools (Amelia County, Brunswick County, Halifax County and Lunenburg County). Students in these programs also participate in Business Pitch competitions and other events such as the Student Ideas Summit, a flexible event that can work as an in-class experience or be expanded into an all-day immersive event to generate new ideas, network, and connect with peers.

For college students, RISE project team members have integrated CO.STARTERS Core and Generator programs into existing entrepreneurship courses, such as those offered at Longwood University’s Cormier Honors College, Averett University, or Hampden-Sydney’s Flemming Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation. At Longwood Honors, all students are required to participate in Citizen 110, which is a social entrepreneurship course which gives students from all majors experience with entrepreneurship coursework. At Hampden-Sydney, all students are required to participate in the Compass experiential learning program; any students opt to pursue entrepreneurship under this umbrella. At Averett University, Dr. Peggy Wright and her team are working to implement new bachelor’s and master’s degree programs in entrepreneurship.

Area college students benefit from training and professional development, but they also benefit from interacting with students, faculty, and mentors affiliated with other educational institutions and community businesses/organizations. For example, RISE’s March 2023 Collegiate Business Pitch competition, including student teams from four area colleges and universities. This year’s winner, Sara Wall of Swam, came from Patrick & Henry College,

successfully pitched her concept for Swam, a retailer of environmentally safe consumer products.

Thus far, each of the RISE training programs culminate in business pitch competitions, which serve multiple purposes. They serve as a capstone for training, and prompt program participants to apply what they learned in a public setting. They also help to publicize SOVA RISE programs, get students and their networks excited about entrepreneurship, and generate additional “buzz” about this work. Last but not least, pitch competition winners receive cash prizes that help them finance business startup and growth. The RISE team has identified a goal to expand its event portfolio to include Demo Days and Mentor Meetups, which do not have the emphasis on winning/losing and will help fill gaps between training and capital access (through pitch competitions, microloans, or traditional small business lending).



One of the more recent RISE business pitch competitions attracted some unusual participants. Frankie Martinez, Jr. of Frankie’s Spicy Farm, a South Boston-based purveyor of unique hot sauces. This business may not sound unusual, but its founder is only nine years old. Frankie and his parents, Alejandra and Frankie Sr., recently moved from Florida, and got the business bug soon after settling in Halifax County. Frankie signed up for the RISE Collaborative Generator program, designed for high schoolers and powered by CO.STARTERS, where he not only learned business basics but also won a young entrepreneur grant worth \$1,000. Frankie, through his mom, Alejandra, used LSBDC consulting to establish the business and plan for growth. Frankie is now seeking loans to help grow his business, and keeping busy with school, community theater, and the important business of being a kid.

Supporting Aspiring Entrepreneurs & Existing Business Growth

While training programs bring new knowledge to new and existing business owners, these firms also need coaching and technical assistance to help them grow. SOVA RISE also supports this mission through several core activities. The ongoing work of the Longwood SBDC (LSBDC) team forms the foundation for this work. LSBDC was a prime mover in the creation of SOVA RISE and its team of counselors serve as the program’s primary ambassadors. LSBDC is part of the statewide and national network of centers with the mission of providing education, consulting, and research services to new and existing businesses across Southern Virginia. First opened in 1989, the LSBDC typically serves around 500 customers per year.

Most of LSBDC’s services are commonly found in other SBDC offices around the US, but few of these other offices are leading regional ecosystem building efforts such RISE. LSBDC staff embraced the RISE effort from the start, recognizing that it could “elevate our work and help to access other resources.”³ The team also viewed RISE as a means to build connections, and to better network the region’s entrepreneurs. Finally, the RISE network brings “people power” with better capacity to organize events, publicize the ecosystem, and to build enthusiasm.

This partnership has proved fruitful for all parties. LSBDC counselors provide the bulk of training and counseling within the RISE network, and RISE has helped them to engage new customers and new communities. LSBDC staff, many with decades of local experience, note a new energy in the region, noting that they are busier than ever. The customer base is growing, and changing, too. The LSBDC team is serving more minority and women entrepreneurs, and also seeing an uptick in non-profit startups as well. It is estimated that LSBDC provided over 1,000 hours in consulting and training to support the RISE Winter 2023 Business Bootcamp and follow-on pitch competition.

RISE’s Grapevine Entrepreneur network is one feeder into this system. Started in 2021,⁴ Grapevine serves as a peer network for Black and Brown and women entrepreneurs. The Network supports a monthly virtual convening where members share ideas, learn about successful local businesses and their business models, and provide support to one another. In addition to regular peer networking, Grapevine members have participated in national events focused on inclusive ecosystem building and also sponsored a successful Summit for Black and Brown Business Allies in November 2022.

The Grapevine Network emerged directly from inputs provided to the SOVA RISE team in 2021. At this time, a series of focus groups and listening sessions sought to better understand the challenges facing the region’s Black and Brown entrepreneurs.⁵ The inputs were sobering. Participants noted that many residents felt unprepared to consider business startup or uncertain about how to get started and get needed support. Even worse, when Black and Brown residents did start a new venture, they typically felt unwelcome or even actively discouraged by community leaders. A number of needs and challenge areas were identified but one common thread linked them: a need for a “safe space” where Black and Brown entrepreneurs could connect, learn from one another, and support each other in their entrepreneurial journeys. This impulse led to the Grapevine, which was originally called the “Minority Engagement Workgroup” but was renamed by members of the group

³ LSBDC Staff Interview, March 7, 2023.

⁴ The Grapevine brand was adopted in 2022.

⁵ SOVA Minority Focus Group findings report.

Grapevine members and RISE Business Bootcamp participants view these networks as a primary means to grow their companies. Tara Lucas, better known as “The Cheesecake Lady,” offers a case in point. A longtime baker, Tara loved classic New York cheesecakes, but could not find them near her home in Henry County. She baked from home for a long time, selling her cheesecakes to friends, family, and neighbors. But, she recently decided the time was right for a major expansion, via purchase of a retail and catering location, Sweetcakes, located in Martinsville.

This expansion was helped with winnings from the Martinsville-Henry County Startup MHC business pitch competition, where Tara won more than \$5,000 in startup funds, and additional funds from RISE’s March 2023 pitch competition. Thanks to her participation in RISE programming, she has a ready-made network of peers, many of whom also own downtown retail businesses, where she can share ideas and learn new ways of doing business.

Mentoring and coaching support represent a third leg of SOVA RISE’s entrepreneur support program portfolio. Most successful business owners can point to the role of a mentor who supported them during the ups and downs of business building. This handholding and support is especially important for minority business owners. For a variety of reasons, Black and Brown entrepreneurs are less likely to seek outside help for their companies. In fact, while 70% of

White business owners use outside professional services, only 58% of Black business owners do so.⁶ Minority business owners, especially those with new companies, are also less likely to know about support opportunities, and thus have limited access to formal networks and funding opportunities. SOVA RISE’s outreach efforts uncovered similar obstacles facing local business owners.

The SOVA RISE team is responding with the development of a regionwide mentor network to be officially unveiled in June 2023, with mentoring and other volunteer and guest speaker opportunities for local leaders who want to support RISE entrepreneurs. Recruitment is now underway, with RISE seeking a diverse set of mentors who can provide one-on-one coaching, and help to support various events such as pitch competitions, school programs, and virtual mentor swarms.

⁶ McKinsey Institute for Black Economic Mobility, *Building Supportive Ecosystems for Black-Owned U.S. Businesses*, October 29, 2020. Available at : <https://www.mckinsey.com/industries/public-and-social-sector/our-insights/building-supportive-ecosystems-for-black-owned-us-businesses>

Ecosystem Connections

SOVA RISE may be best known across Southern Virginia for its extensive work to build out and to better connect the region's ecosystem encompassing aspiring entrepreneurs, existing business owners, community leaders and champions, and business service providers. Ecosystem effectiveness is not driven by the number of local programs and initiatives. Connections are what matters. As Kauffman Foundation researchers have noted:

A vibrant entrepreneurial ecosystem is not simply a collection of isolated elements—the connections between the elements matter just as much as the elements themselves. To adopt culinary parlance, recipes matter more than the inventory of ingredients. This applies to programs, companies, and individuals, and the connectivity between them is another gauge of entrepreneurial vibrancy.⁷

Events, meetups, advocacy, and outreach are the main means to develop this connectivity, and SOVA RISE has embraced all of these methods. Meetups are a primary outreach tool for SOVA RISE, and the team sponsors a series of activities that can be accessed at the SOVA RISE online events calendar.⁸ Regular events include in-person, virtual, and hybrid meetups hosted by the SOVA Innovation Hub and other locations, along with meetups focused on different target groups (e.g., Grapevine) populations or communities (e.g., the monthly Brunswick County Rise and Shine meetup). These in-person sessions are supplemented by numerous webinars and virtual meetups where outside experts and coaches may also share ideas and insights.

Quarterly stakeholder calls, targeted to community partners, serve as a more direct means to connect the ecosystem. At these virtual meetups, business service providers, educators, and economic developers share program ideas, successes, and challenges. These sessions improve business services as partners share ideas and resources while learning from one another.

Meetups and connections help to support a larger mission of storytelling, i.e., spreading the word about the good things happening in the SOVA ecosystem. The Entrepreneurship on the RISE podcast highlights local champions, and outside experts who might offer insights on business building or the business of ecosystem building.

⁷ Dane Stangler and Jordan Bell-Masterson, *Measuring an Entrepreneurial Ecosystem*, March 2015, p. 4. Available at : <https://www.kauffman.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Measuring-an-Entrepreneurial-Ecosystem.pdf>.

⁸ <https://sovarise.com/meetups/>

Regional Entrepreneurship Scorecard

Building a robust ecosystem requires the tracking and sharing of progress or the lack thereof. The SOVA RISE team tracks its progress through the Regional Entrepreneurship Scorecard, which assesses regional performance on a host of performance measures such as those noted in Figure 1 above. The scorecard tracks key regional economic trends that affect small business performance and regional economic growth patterns. In addition to assessing economic performance across Region 3, the scorecard also includes data snapshots for each county within Region 3.

The scorecard serves the RISE team as a business analytics tool, but it is a key part of the RISE storytelling effort. Data from the scorecard is used to inform community leaders on RISE's impacts and how they affect the wider economy. The results are also used to engage the community and to inform potential funders of program results and progress.

SOVA RISE Innovation Hub Network

The SOVA RISE ecosystem buildout also contains a physical component in the form of hub facilities designed to serve as local anchors inside a regional hub and spoke network. The SOVA Innovation Hub currently operates as the central node in this network. This world-class facility hosts the SOVA Hub team, and also includes office space for MBC, Microsoft TechSpark, GO Virginia Region 3, and many local business owners and remote workers. The current SOVA Innovation Hub facility (encompassing 15,000 square feet of space) is ultimately intended to anchor a larger SOVA innovation campus with makerspaces and additional space for community uses.

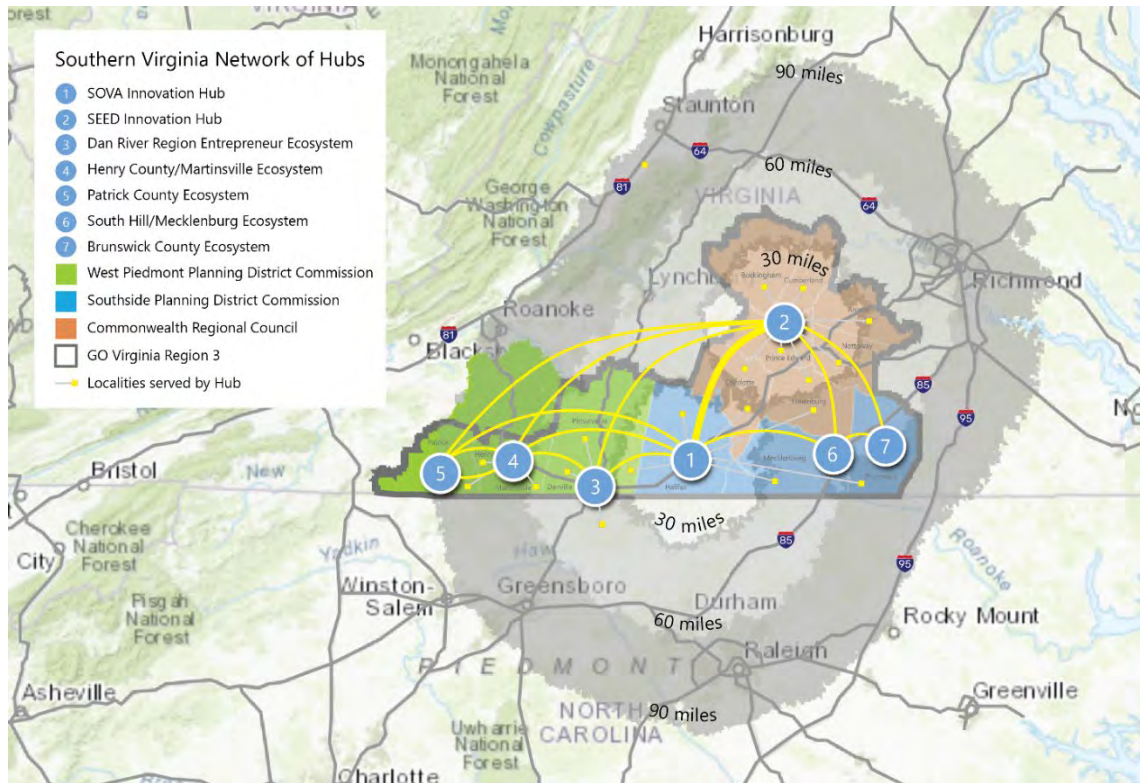


The SOVA Innovation Hub is part of a regional network that will ultimately include key hubs across the GO Virginia Region 3 service area, which includes 3 Planning District Commissions.:

- Farmville's SEED Innovation Hub: This facility, slated to open in Fall 2023, supports a partnership between Longwood University and Hampden-Sydney College. It will be located adjacent to the Longwood campus in downtown Farmville.
- Danville-Pittsylvania Hub: This node in the network engages multiple sites, including Danville's River District Association, Averett University, Danville Community College, the Danville-Pittsylvania County Chamber of Commerce, Danville and Pittsylvania County Economic Development, Danville Regional Foundation, and other partners.

- Western Region Hub: This hub is anchored by Patrick and Henry College’s IDEA Center, and includes other key partners in the wider region surrounding Martinsville.
- Lawrenceville: At present, the Brunswick County Industrial Development Authority is developing plans to create a new eastern hub facility in downtown Lawrenceville.

FIGURE 3: The SOVA Innovation Hub Network



These physical hubs play an essential role in ecosystem development. In addition to offering meeting and office space and other services, the hubs are the physical embodiment of the ecosystem. This role has both symbolic and practical dimensions. In terms of symbolism, the hubs send a message that this location embraces and supports innovators and entrepreneurs. On the practical side, hubs serve as the ecosystem’s “front door.” Local people seeking business help and support will know that they can get it directly at the hub facility.

Access to Capital

Capital is the fuel for business startup and growth. Most businesses get started with the owner’s savings and perhaps some funding from friends and family. This level of support can typically get a business started, but outside capital will likely be needed if the entrepreneur seeks to achieve faster growth.

SOVA RISE has supported a focused strategy to improve capital access across the region. Its current strategy addresses both capital demand and capital supply. On the demand side, RISE programming, such as training and coaching, seeks to create more “capital ready” entrepreneurs. These business owners have a strong credit history, a track record of success, and a clear and compelling business model or business plan that guides their growth trajectory. Such capacities do not emerge overnight, so much of the early stages of RISE have focused on creating a pipeline of new business startups and growing entrepreneurs.

On the capital supply side, the RISE team is working with key funders across the region. Many regional banks are supporting RISE programs and plan to invest in the program’s successful entrepreneurs. Key partners currently include Benchmark Community Bank, American National Bank & Trust, and First Citizens Bank. These partners have contributed matching funds, event support, and have also served as judges for various business pitch competitions.

On their own, these connections to area bankers provide real benefits to local entrepreneurs who gain opportunities to meet bankers in person and to learn the steps and requirements needed to access business loans. Bankers also benefit from gaining insights into the local marketplace and building a larger and more diverse base of customers.

RISE also enhances the local capital landscape by providing direct funds to local business owners who win various business pitch competitions. Winners have used funds to purchase equipment, expand marketing efforts, and to fuel business growth. The team also seeks to build connections to other capital sources, such as those managed by Virginia Community Capital and the Lake Country Development Corporation.

Most of these current initiatives have addressed issues related to debt capital. This early focus makes sense as bank loans are a primary outside capital source for new businesses. However, robust ecosystems host a diversity of capital sources, which might include debt capital, grants, and equity capital resources.

On this latter front, SOVA RISE is now supporting a project to assess the region’s capacity to host an angel investor’s network. While data sources are limited, some analyses suggest that rural areas are seeing recent increases in local angel investing activity.⁹ In addition, many rural communities, especially in Appalachia, are enjoying early success with newly formed angel

⁹ Alicia Robb, Rural Entrepreneurship and the Challenges Accessing Financial Capital, Report prepared for the US Securities and Exchange Commission, September 10, 2021, pp. 14-15. Available at : https://www.sec.gov/files/2021_rural_report_508_compliance_final.pdf

groups.¹⁰ This recent experience suggests that angel investing might also gain a foothold in Southern Virginia.

Broadband Expansion

SOVA RISE’s origins trace back to forward thinking and planning from MBC, the region’s lead provider of middle mile broadband access and services. Thus, it is not surprising that broadband rollout remains a top priority for both MBC and SOVA RISE. As a non-profit with a mission focused on economic development, for MBC, broadband is “critical economic development infrastructure.” For RISE, it is that and more. Without broadband access, local entrepreneurs face significant barriers to business success. The link between broadband access and rural business development is quite strong. In fact, recent research shows that business startup rates, especially for women entrepreneurs, are higher in rural locales with robust broadband services.¹¹ Related research also shows that rural communities benefit from locally owned entities like MBC, and that local business owners play an especially important role in promoting the local use and adoption of broadband.¹²

These results suggest that MBC’s important investments in broadband infrastructure should have transformative effects on the regional ecosystem and the larger regional economy. Robust broadband opens new markets and brings in new ideas, fueling business startup and growth along the way. Broadband can also help to develop, attract, and retain talent. Its role in talent attraction is especially important as remote work is not feasible without world-class broadband access.

MBC, SOVA Innovation Hub, and RISE Collaborative are supporting closing the digital divide via several approaches. MBC continues to expand its middle-mile network, in cooperation with new entrants to middle-mile space (e.g. electric cooperatives that are building last-mile broadband), and in service to its OTTP content customers and Internet Service Provider (ISP) customers. MBC continues to aggressively roll out new services and new capacities that are having large-scale regional impacts. As of March 2021, MBC-supported broadband projects have helped to attract 2,000 jobs and more than \$3.3 billion in new investment to the MBC service area. SOVA Innovation Hub’s facility offers incremental, intermittent broadband access

¹⁰ <https://www.appalachianinvestors.org/>

¹¹ See Silke Schmidt, “How Important is Broadband Access for Rural Entrepreneurs?” January 15, 2023. Available at: <https://aae.wisc.edu/2023/01/15/how-important-is-broadband-access-for-rural-entrepreneurs/> and Steven Deller, Brian Whitacre, and Tessa Conroy, “Rural Broadband Speeds and Business Startup Rates” American Journal of Agricultural Economics, September 2021. Available at: <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/ajae.12259>

¹² University of Texas at Austin, Technology and Information Policy Institute, “Broadband and Entrepreneurship in Small and Rural Communities.” Available at: <https://texastipi.org/project/broadband-and-entrepreneurship-in-small-and-rural-communities/>

through free public WiFi and affordable access to coworking space. The future SEED Innovation Hub will be a destination for internet access in the Farmville region. RISE promotes availability of WiFi at hubs and community gathering places across the region, to prevent lack of broadband from being a barrier for entrepreneurs wishing to participate in virtual training. It is widely accepted that without quality internet access, businesses will struggle to start and grow in the digital age.

Resource Navigation

Resource navigation is the final piece of the strategy, but this work was not funded in the current SOVA RISE program portfolio. The original recommendation to hire one regional position has now evolved as the RISE program has grown. Resource navigation refers to “a systematic way to identify, organize, and display business building resources.”¹³ Resource navigation is a core component of effective ecosystem building. Ecosystems are complicated and often engage dozens, if not hundreds, of partners and stakeholders. At the same time, the process of building a business is also complicated, requiring knowledge on multiple topics such as finance, marketing, and production.

These market characteristics create complications as aspiring entrepreneurs and business owners must wade through an alphabet soup of support programs as they seek help and support. In fact, among the most common complaints from business owners is that they do not know where to go for help and when they do seek out a resource, they often get “the run-around” via numerous referrals and false leads.

Effective resource navigation addresses these market gaps. It seeks to offer clear and easy access to support resources by making them more readily available in easier to use formats. In reality, this means sharing resources via a variety of media and dissemination tools. It also means “meeting the entrepreneurs where they are,” i.e., using communication channels that local entrepreneurs also use. This means sharing resources in person, via trusted partners, via traditional media, via social media, via online tools and so on. It may also mean actively partnering with local government, libraries, schools, faith-based organizations, and other social service providers.

SOVA RISE embraces all of these methods. It relies heavily on key partners like LSBDC, banks, and economic development agencies. It also utilizes its robust website that contains easy to access guides and maps to various support resources.

¹³ <https://www.joinsourcelink.com/solutions/resource-navigator/>

Impacts

SOVA RISE opened for business at a difficult time: amidst a global pandemic where most meetups were virtual and personal networking opportunities were limited. These limitations can have an especially adverse effect on ecosystem building efforts which focus on connections, collaborations, and peer learning. Collaboration and connections can be nurtured over Zoom, but they work best when in-person networking also happens.

Faced with these challenging startup conditions, the SOVA RISE team behaved like entrepreneurs, pivoting to utilize and capitalize on changed market circumstances. The early phases of the RISE initiative primarily took place on-line, and Zoom meetups, webinars and other on-line connections remain essential. These on-line linkages are especially important due to the rural nature and long distances that characterize GO Virginia Region 3. Thanks to on-line programming, initial connections across a large, diverse region can be nurtured.

When compared to other types of economic development policies, entrepreneurial ecosystem building efforts have some unique characteristics. The projects proceed over a long time frame, of at least five to ten years. It takes time to build a program network and to change the local business culture to be more “entrepreneur friendly.” At the same time, they engage multiple organizations and partners. One organization is not “in charge” or the sole leader of the ecosystem.

Finally, ecosystem building has multiple effects and impacts. It influences individuals, businesses, communities, and regional economies. For individuals, potential program impacts might include the acquisition of new knowledge and skills, better career outcomes, and the decision to start a new business or non-profit venture. Business outcomes resemble those found in other economic development programs. Examples include job creation/retention, increases in sales/revenue, and better business outcomes in the form of new innovations, new markets, and new customers. At the community level, impacts could include more startups, better talent attraction/retention, improved community attitudes, and the creation/take up of new programs focused on business startup and growth. Regional and ecosystem level outcomes seek to assess connectivity in the ecosystem, often assessed via social network mapping, and changes in broader economic measures such as regional GDP growth, increased per capital income, increases in new and growing businesses, and overall improved performance. As seen with other economic development investments, these latter impacts typically require many years to appear in regional economic data.

In its first two years of work, the SOVA RISE effort is showing promising impacts on all of these fronts. Details on these activities are presented below.

For Individuals

SOVA RISE has excelled in expanding local awareness of the importance of innovation and entrepreneurship as drivers of local talent development and community prosperity. During its pandemic era startup phases in 2021, SOVA RISE programming engaged 289 community residents via workshops and training programs. All of those engaged were based in rural areas, and students made a significant share (around 25%) of program participants.

In 2022, program operation rapidly ramped up as the number of program participants jumped nearly 275% to a total customer base of 1,083 residents. Students remain an important program target, but community-based programs have expanded greatly in 2022. SOVA RISE programs are targeting previously underserved entrepreneurs, with women and minority residents accounting for, respectively 87% and 61% of program customers.

In 2023, SOVA RISE has already sponsored more than a dozen events and meetups that have engaged hundreds of area students, business owners, and aspiring entrepreneurs. These events include numerous programs targeting students at the high school and college level, such as the Collegiate Business Pitch Competition, the Student Idea Summit, and Brunswick County's monthly Rise and Shine events targeting area high school students.

For Businesses

The many workshops and meetups supported via SOVA RISE contribute to the region's talent pipeline as more people get excited about entrepreneurship and they learn what it takes to succeed as a business owner. But, the real goal is for program customers to move from excitement and awareness to the practical step of starting a business and nurturing its growth.

On this front, SOVA RISE is showing important early progress. The project has supported 122 area business owners who have tapped into SOVA RISE programs, workshops, and support services. Many of these business owners have also utilized services provided by the SBDC network and other economic development partners. These firms operate in numerous industries, with many developing capacities in key sectors such as manufacturing, professional services, and ag/forestry.

Business owners who have participated in SOVA RISE bootcamps and other events gain new business knowledge, but they get other benefits as well. Many point to a new "sense of community" as often lonely business owners connect to a network of like-minded people. As one Bootcamp attendee noted, the connections we made via CO.STARTERS were "kind of

magical.”¹⁴ Participants also report that they have developed critical new business skills and that they have greater confidence in their business prospects. In fact, program surveys show that RISE Bootcamp participants report massive jumps in personal confidence and confidence in the availability and quality of local resources available to support them. When surveyed prior to the program, 44% felt confidence in their business skills and only 16% felt confident that they could access support resources. After the program, this same group reported large jumps in levels of business confidence (86%) and confidence in their ability to access needed resources (68%). Thanks to the Bootcamp, these new business owners are confident and ready for their business development journey.

These connections provide moral and emotional support, but they lead to new business as well. Program participants have used RISE-driven connections to raise outside financing, find new customers, and find new partners. As one RISE-backed business owner noted, RISE helped “. . . a small-town guy, such as myself, (to move) from a local spotlight to a national stage.”¹⁵

For Communities

SOVA RISE’s primary “customers” are aspiring entrepreneurs and local small business owners, but RISE programs also have impacts at the community level. RISE operates in a large service area, and has opted to create local partnerships to support targeted community level work. In many cases, some Region 3 communities are served by existing networks and resources. When this happens, RISE has embraced collaborations with these trusted local partners. For example, in Martinsville/Henry County, key partners include Patrick and Henry College (and its Dalton IDEA Center) and the Martinsville-Henry County Minority Business Consortium. In Danville, RISE partners with Dan River Ecosystem effort and other local organizations such as The Launch Place and IALR.

In other communities, such as Brunswick County, RISE has introduced new programming that is changing how local leaders view their community development missions. In Lawrenceville, the monthly Rise & Shine networking event is generating local excitement, connecting students, residents, and local business owners. Brunswick is now considering development of an innovation hub facility that will serve as the eastern anchor of the RISE innovation hub network. Community leaders in Brunswick County note that the RISE team has “brought new ideas” while also respecting traditions. As one community leader noted: “they get rural” and understand how we work.¹⁶

¹⁴ Program Participant Interview, April 18, 2023.

¹⁵ In-Depth RISE Support Letter, February 10, 2023.

¹⁶ Interview March 2023

Ecosystem building efforts build community by nurturing entrepreneurs, but other community building pathways also exist. Programs like RISE also help to improve local quality of life by seeding the creation of new businesses such as eating and drinking places and other types of local services and retail. These new amenities improve quality of life for existing residents while also increasing a community's attractiveness to new residents. Region 3's future prosperity depends on supporting business development and growth, but it will also depend on the region's ability to attract and retain talented people. By nurturing entrepreneurs who bring new ideas and new concepts to the region, RISE is also helping to develop local amenities that make Region 3 a better place to live, work, play, and visit.

These impacts can be viewed in Blackstone, which hosted the inaugural cohort of the RISE Business Bootcamp by using the LSBDC facilitators trained in CO.STARTERS as the curriculum for a "Community Business Launch" (CBL) cohort in Spring 2021. Hosted by Downtown Blackstone Inc., this effort supported nine downtown businesses as part of a larger community revitalization strategy. This team started four businesses that now operate in downtown Blackstone, bringing new energy and dynamism to the community.¹⁷ Businesses in this cohort have continued to be engaged through ongoing LSBDC consulting and invitations to RISE programs and events.

For the Region and its Entrepreneurial Ecosystem

GO Virginia has designated Region 3 as an official service area, but not all parts of Region 3 have a long history of collaborations focused on economic and community development. In addition, GO Virginia regions do not always coincide with those of other designated regional entities. For example, Region 3 is also home to two workforce investment areas, three planning district commissions, at least two regional economic development organizations, thirteen counties, and two independent cities.

Knitting this diverse and large region can be a challenge, especially in issue areas where regional competition resembles a zero-sum game. For example, in corporate relocation projects, only one community typically "wins" the deal as the new firm picks one specific new location. Entrepreneurial development flips this script. Entrepreneurs can and do start businesses anywhere, and all parts of Region 3 can participate in and benefit from these activities. These factors help to explain why entrepreneurship has become an important part of economic development strategies across rural America.¹⁸

¹⁷ <https://sovarise.com/blog/costarters-blackstone-entrepreneurs/>

¹⁸ For background, see Don Macke, *Strategies for Rural Prosperity*, E2 Entrepreneurial Ecosystems by Network Kansas, 2023.

RISE's work to build a region-wide entrepreneurial ecosystem has united partners from across the region, and from differing networks and perspectives. Key partners include businesses, trade associations, elected officials, educators, workforce professionals, non-profit organizations, faith-based organizations, and many others. As they work together to support local entrepreneurs and to build out the ecosystem, they gain experience working together, setting the stage for collaborations in other areas as well.

The RISE team actively embraces this regional perspective. RISE is not seeking to "lead" regional planning or replace existing organizations. It identifies underserved markets or program gaps, and stays focused within its market niches. Interviewed community leaders applauded RISE for "bringing new capacities and skills" to the region, while "working well with others."

The region's emerging innovation hub network may be the best example of this regional collaboration and its spin-off effects. South Boston's success with the SOVA Innovation Hub and related SOVA RISE programming has helped to spur the establishment of similar facilities in Farmville and Lawrenceville. Existing centers such as Martinsville's Dalton IDEA Center hosted by Patrick & Henry Community College, and Danville's River District Association (RDA) network also form important nodes in the regional hub network. New partnerships are also emerging. These include closer linkages between RISE and programming at the Southern Virginia Higher Education Center (SVHEC) and in the Martinsville-Henry-Patrick ecosystem. These hub facilities can host RISE-backed activities, but they will also support other programming, especially workforce training, as well.

In addition, RISE is connecting local entrepreneurs and ecosystem champions to other partners in the Commonwealth and across the US. The RISE team is now collaborating with CIC to enhance capital access opportunities across southern Virginia, and is also partnering with national organizations such as Forward Cities. Many of the US's leading ecosystem builders have also joined the RISE podcast to share ideas and learn from RISE's work in Region 3. In 2024, the Grapevine network will be highlighted as a national model during the annual Rural RISE network convening in Maine.

Future Plans and Ideas

SOVA RISE has made important strides in its first two years of operations, even in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic. It has helped put entrepreneurship and innovation "on the map" in GO Virginia Region 3. Local people are getting excited about new opportunities to pursue lifelong dreams of business ownership, while also boosting the performance of local companies

and enhancing their impact on local and regional economies. These activities also help to build better connected and more resilient communities as residents come together to support local businesses and to take control of their communities' new economic directions.

RISE's early work should be considered a "down payment" on the build-out of a robust and resilient entrepreneurial ecosystem. Future work can and will build on this important foundation. Going forward, SOVA RISE seeks to enhance and expand current initiatives, which also introducing new programs that can enhance the program's impacts in terms of business growth and improved economic development outcomes at the community and regional levels.

Enhancing Existing Programming

The current SOVA RISE program portfolio has proved successful in enhancing the region's talent pipeline for innovation and entrepreneurs. Residents, including students, are engaged, and are now considering entrepreneurship as a career option and seeking coaching to help them start and grow new ventures.

This early engagement has been fostered by RISE's active event, training, and workshop schedule, which includes CO.STARTERS programs (both virtual and in-person), pitch competitions, meet-ups, and other affiliated events. This work will continue with a series of refinements to improve existing efforts and to reach out to new partners and customers.

First, RISE intends to expand its training and workshop offerings, while also adding a few improvements to better address the frequently cited challenges facing local business owners. This list includes supply chain management, target industry expansion, and digital transformation. Digital skills development is an important issue facing small business owners across the US. Recent surveys find that many firms, especially Main Street businesses, lack essential skills. According to a February 2023 survey from Small Business Majority, forty percent of businesses lack a website, and more than half (52%) do not use social media. Sixty-five percent of these firms do no online advertising, and less than a quarter of surveyed firms use accounting or finance software.¹⁹

Investments in digital fluency are clearly needed. RISE will support this training via its existing suite of programs, such as RISE Business Bootcamp, and will rely heavily on its strong partnership with the Microsoft TechSpark team headquartered at the SOVA Innovation Hub.

¹⁹ Small Business Majority, "Digital transformation: Survey finds lack of digital fluency in key areas, need for additional support," February 21, 2023. Available at: <https://smallbusinessmajority.org/sites/default/files/research-reports/Survey-small-businesses-lack-digital-fluency-need-additional-support.pdf>

The GO-TEC program, started in GO Virginia Region 3 with headquarters at IALR in Danville and now expanding statewide, can also support this work. RISE hopes to fund a small group of Digital Skills Coaches to help deliver training and consulting services in conjunction with access to technology (equipment and training) available at existing or future hubs throughout the region.

Second, RISE seeks to deepen its work with existing partners and to engage with new groups and entrepreneurs. In early 2024, the Farmville SEED Hub will open for business, offering a new venue and home for innovation in the Farmville area. Programming will also be expanded at other hubs, such as those in Danville and Martinsville.

As these hubs assume a more important role in the ecosystem, they will take on new roles and responsibilities. The development of maker spaces presents one option for program expansion in the hub network. Farmville's SEED Hub will contain maker space, and several other maker spaces operate in the region at the Dalton IDEA Center, the South Boston Higher Education Center, and Danville's IALR. RISE hopes to better connect programming across these existing facilities and to add additional equipment and new spaces where demand is highest. Among other things, the RISE team will assess the feasibility of new commercial kitchen facilities or small-scale manufacturing spaces.

Finally, RISE intends to significantly increase investments in youth entrepreneurship education. Early programs in Amelia, Brunswick, Halifax, and Lunenburg counties have enjoyed success, and have shown strong demand from area students. Expanding these programs will require new investments in teacher training, and new partnerships with school systems and local colleges. SVHEC has been identified as a potential partner to develop curriculum, certificate programs, and workshops in collaboration with LSBDC and other RISE partners.

In addition to working in new locations, RISE will also target new audiences. Student engagement will be a priority, and planning for new targeted outreach focused on inclusion of veteran entrepreneurs and LGBTQ+ entrepreneurs is also underway (pending a nascent partnership between RISE and StartOut, a national entrepreneurship support organization). This effort to support veteran entrepreneurs seeks to support the many veterans who reside in Region 3, and will leverage Fort Barfoot's location in Nottoway County, and will partner with local veteran's service organizations, and state-level partners such as the Veterans Business Outreach Center based at Old Dominion University and the APEX Accelerator Program at Virginia State University.

Developing New Initiatives

Beyond expanding the reach and impacts of existing programs, RISE also intends to introduce new programs and initiatives over the coming years. Two new initiatives are set to begin in 2023. At present, RISE is preparing to unveil a new regional mentorship network of local subject matter experts. This team will supplement the LSBDC consulting team, and will include local people with knowledge in areas such as accounting, finance, insurance, and marketing.

Capital access will also be a top priority in 2023 and beyond. In addition to ongoing research on the feasibility of local angel investor networks, RISE is partnering with the Charlottesville-based Community Investment Collaborative (CIC) to expand financial literacy training and to expand CIC's microenterprise loan program within Region 3. RISE also intends to expand partnerships at the state, regional, and national levels, especially with leading CDFIs such as Virginia Community Capital and others seeking new investment opportunities in Virginia or across the southeastern US.

These focused strategies will be supported via new investments to establish a Community-Based Ecosystem Navigator program, where RISE partners will community-based organizations to work with local entrepreneurs and to connect business owners with critical resources and support. Ultimately, community navigators will be the local "face" of RISE. Navigators will provide basic support services and referrals to help local businesses start and grow.

Over the next two years, RISE hopes to engage at least four community navigators located across the region. They will help to broaden RISE's reach, while also respecting local needs, preferences, and traditions. As in other regions, these local partners will serve multiple roles: as connectors, as mentors, as service providers, as researchers, and as community champions.²⁰

In addition to boosting its own internal capacity via new hires, RISE also seeks to strengthen its existing governance structure to better engage the region's entrepreneurs and community leaders. These steps embrace one of the key lessons learned from successful ecosystem building efforts: the most robust ecosystems are managed "by entrepreneurs for entrepreneurs." In an effort to embrace this vision, RISE will establish a new Advisory Board, led by successful local entrepreneurs, who will provide guidance on program operations and serve as champions for the regional ecosystem. In addition, RISE will also create several new

²⁰ Eliza Salmon, "Do Ecosystem Builders Have the Potential to be Strong Community Navigators?" Forward Cities Blog, May 26, 2021. Available at : <https://forwardcities.org/impact/stories/story/do-ecosystem-builders-have-the-potential-to-be-strong-community-navigators/>

“Entrepreneur in Residence” positions for local entrepreneurs who seek to become more engaged in this work as mentors, partners, and champions.

Budget Needs

SOVA RISE has enjoyed important success in its first years of operations. These results are especially impressive when the small size of the SOVA RISE team is considered. For much of its existence, RISE has operated with the equivalent of three full time staff members, supported by partners, especially LSBDC counselors who have served as the primary coaches for local business owners and engaged community members who have volunteered their time and resources.

This small group has succeeded through RISE’s startup phase, but a more systematic and sustainable program model is needed. RISE can no longer rely on “all nighters” and well-meaning existing staff going “above and beyond” and regional volunteers contributing time and talent to drive program operations and expansion. More capacity—in the form of additional staff—will be required. New staff members may be employees or consultants for RISE, but they should also be hosted with partner organizations as well. For example, the Community Navigator initiative will rely heavily on navigators based with local community partners.

Specific staffing needs for program expansion are detailed below. Overall costs are estimated to approach \$1 million per year, with support provided by existing investors such as GO Virginia Region 3, MBC, and Longwood University. Additional funding support will be generated from new partners and additional contributions (both cash and in-kind) from existing training partners.

Continuation of existing programs will require investments to support the current RISE team and its core partners at LSBDC. Annual costs for this team are estimated at approximately \$220,000. The team will continue to support core programs, and continue to promote RISE’s outreach and marketing efforts.

Expanded training programs, in areas such as digital skills and financial literacy, and an expanded rollout of existing programs such as the RISE Business Bootcamp, will require investments in both new trainers and new training tools. In some cases, RISE can rely on staff already working with key partners at area higher education institutions to support this work, but funding is needed to defray program costs and support key personnel. Annual costs for this expanded training work are estimated at approximately \$200,000 to \$250,000. This amount represents additional investments, beyond current operating budgets, to support steady managed growth in program activities and reach.

The initial GO Virginia Region 3 investments in SOVA RISE have had a catalytic impact across the region. They are generating buzz and excitement about future growth prospects, as more local people are embracing entrepreneurship as a path to personal and community success. New businesses are starting, new jobs are being created, and a business culture that embraces innovation and new ideas is taking hold.

RISE is not just helping aspiring entrepreneurs and local business owners; it is pioneering new ways of doing business. It is embracing regionalism, while also recognizing the critical role of grass roots innovations sparked at the community level. These effects are transforming individuals, businesses, and communities, and they are also spurring new investments, such as those supporting the Farmville SEED Hub and proposed new hubs in Lawrenceville and elsewhere.

These impacts are generating buzz in Southern Virginia, and are also rippling across the Commonwealth and across the US. RISE's important work is inspiring other Virginia regions in their own efforts to build entrepreneur ecosystems, and is also being recognized as a national model for rural development.





DATE: July 12, 2023

TO: Region 3 Executive Committee

FROM: R. Bryan David, Program Director

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'RBD', is positioned to the right of the 'FROM:' line.

RE: GO Virginia Match Policy Update – Billy Gammel, GO Virginia Senior Program Administrator, Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development

The GO Virginia State Board modified local match and match ratios policies in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. For every project starting in April 2020, the local government (political subdivision) minimum match requirement was waived in its entirety, and the match ratio was relaxed from 1:1 (grant dollar to match dollar) to 2:1 to 1:1 (grant dollar to match dollar).

At its meeting on June 13th, the GO Virginia State Board moved ahead to modify the policy related to local match and the minimum match requirement. These modifications will continue allowing Region 3 to use, subject to State Board approval, the match waiver, and reduced match ratio due to fiscal stress.

The GO Virginia staff liaison to Region 3, Billy Gammel, will briefly overview the new policy and how it will apply to the Region 3 projects going forward. Also, this will allow the Region 3 Council to meet Billy Gammel, who replaces Andrea Devening as the Department of Housing and Community GO Virginia staff member assigned to Region 3.

RECOMMENDATION:

For Region 3 Council's information. No action is needed.





DATE: July 12, 2023

TO: GO Virginia Region 3 Council

FROM: R. Bryan David, Program Director

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'RBD', is placed over the 'FROM:' line.

RE: GO Virginia Region 3 Council Resolution of Recognition – Nancy Pool

Recently, Nancy Pool shared with us that she's decided to step back from her GO Virginia Region 3 work. She feels she's accomplished much and personally benefited from working for the Region 3 Council since its start, but she feels it's time now.

A Resolution of Recognition has been prepared and will be introduced by Chairman Clark for adoption by the Region 3 Council at the July 19th meeting.

RECOMMENDATION:

For the Region 3 Council's information.

GO VIRGINIA REGION 3 COUNCIL

RESOLUTION OF RECOGNITION

WHEREAS, Nancy Pool, was a founding supporter and has been a trusted advisor to the GO Virginia Region 3 Council since its inception; and

WHEREAS, she served the Council comprised of area business leaders, and owners, K-12 representatives, higher education administrators, workforce development and training partners, and local government officials with distinction; and

WHEREAS, her commitment to the best interests of Region 3 coupled with her knowledge and vast experience in business collaboration with regional economic development efforts have made her an asset to the Region and to the Commonwealth; and

WHEREAS, her vision for the future of the Region has been pivotal in the implementation of the goals set forth by the Virginia Growth and Opportunity Board; and

WHEREAS, her unwavering determination to strengthen the Region's economy has greatly contributed to the realization of this program's mission; and

WHEREAS, her strong advocacy for Region 3 and the Commonwealth of Virginia's economy has been instrumental in achieving the Council's mission, and

WHEREAS, her insight and intimate knowledge of the Region's unique public and private sector relationships has been vital to the Region's success; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board does hereby express its gratitude to Nancy Pool for her many contributions to the Virginia Growth and Opportunity program;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this resolution be included in the minutes of this meeting and that a copy thereof be presented to Nancy Pool as a permanent testament of our affection, esteem, and high regard for her unwavering dedication to the Region.



Tim Clark, Chair
GO Virginia Region 3 Council

OLD BUSINESS

APPROVED PROJECT UPDATE



DATE: July 13, 2023

TO: Region 3 Executive Committee

FROM: R. Bryan David, Program Director

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'RBD', is placed over the 'FROM:' line.

RE: Approved Projects Update

The approved projects currently being implemented are listed below with a brief status statement:

- Bridge to Recovery – The project is beginning the close-out process. The final remittance request has been received and is being processed by the Southside Planning District Commission. A project overview report is planned at the in-person Region 3 Council on October 18th.
- ExperienceWorks – A project extension is in process, and there has been a delay in disbursing the grant for Summer 2022 camp expenses because of grantee staff turnover. The project extension will also include Summer 2023 activities eligible for Region 3 grant funds.
- Genedge Retooling Virginia Manufacturing for Strategic Industries – the project was recently extended and will be completed by June 30, 2023. When received, a project overview report will be distributed and presented to the Executive Committee and Region 3 Council.
- Innovation Commercialization Assistance Program (ICAP) Virginia Small Business Development Center Network – proceeding according to scope, schedule, and budget with no adverse issues anticipated. As of April 2023, no business in Region 3 has been advised as part of the project. (see attached map)
- Entrepreneurship Investment and Innovation Strategy – proceeding as planned according to scope, schedule, and budget with no adverse issues anticipated. A project extension was requested and granted through June 30, 2023. The project is expected to be completed by the deadline.
- Virginia Growth Alliance – Refresh/Restart: A Strategy for Regional Economic Development – project recently completed and approved by the VGA Board of Directors. Project close-out will be initiated, and a presentation to the Region 3 Council will be made at the October 18th meeting. No adverse issues are anticipated.



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- GO Virginia Region 3 Controlled Environment Agriculture (CEA) Strategy and Roadmap – as project principals, the Institute for Advanced Learning and Research (ILAR) and Virginia Tech are proceeding as planned according to scope, schedule, and budget with no adverse issues anticipated. A draft report has been completed and circulated among the project team members. The Situational Awareness Work Group will be convened in late August or early September for a presentation and discussion of the report and its recommendations.

The report will be presented to the Region 3 Executive Committee at its September meeting and the Region 3 Council at its October 18th meeting.

- Mid-Atlantic Broadband Communities Corporation Middle Mile Fiber Expansion Project (GO VA Regions 3 & 4) – the federal source of funds for the project was changed from the US Economic Development Administration to the National Telecommunications Information Administration (NTIA). MBC applied with the assistance of the Southside Planning District Commission in September 2022. Announcements of the grant awards were anticipated in June 2023.

The GO Virginia State Board approved an extension of its award until September 1, 2023, to accommodate the NTIA delayed announcement.

- SEED Innovation Hub – Following the US Economic Development Administration award in August 2022, the GO Virginia contract was finalized in November. Project principals are waiting for US EDA funding disbursement authorization—no change since the last report.

Representatives from SEED Innovation Hub, Commonwealth Regional Council, GO Virginia Region 3, and the US Economic Development Administration have been invited to present on the project at the Virginia Association of Planning District Commission's summer conference in late July.

- Virginia College Fund/Virginia Commonwealth University (The Gupton Initiative) – proceeding according to scope, schedule, and budget with no adverse issues anticipated. The project was completed as of June 30, 2023, and project close-out will be initiated.

The report will be presented to the Region 3 Executive Committee at its September meeting and the Region 3 Council at its October 18th meeting.



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- Commonwealth Regional Council Strategy and Business Plan for Regional Economic Development Organization - proceeding as planned according to scope, schedule, and budget with no adverse issues anticipated.

The project consultants held meetings with the REDO Advisory Board (CRC members) and Working Committee (county administrators and economic developers) on April 29th. A Working Committee meeting was held again on June 5th. Meetings for each group have been set for the duration of the project.

- Southern Virginia Regional Alliance – proceeding as planned according to scope, schedule, and budget with no adverse issues anticipated. The due diligence expenses for the sites in the scope of work are coming under budget. There may be an opportunity to redirect these Per Capita funds to other regionally competitive sites subject to a contract modification by DHCD GO Virginia staff.

RECOMMENDATION:

For the Region 3 Council's information. No action is needed.

Attachments

PROJECT PIPELINE



DATE: July 13, 2023

TO: Region 3 Council

FROM: R. Bryan David, Program Director

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'RBD', is placed over the 'FROM:' line.

RE: **Project Pipeline Report**

Below is information about projects that are in varying stages of development, as evidenced by the data presented:

I. SOVA Innovation Labs (Per Capita)

- the SOVA Innovation Hub has been developing plans to expand the SOVA Innovation Campus in South Boston for the past year. This expansion would involve acquiring and adaptive reusing an adjacent structure and developing the greenspace adjacent to its existing building.

- the redevelopment of the adjacent structure styled “The Labs” is contingent on a pending grant application with the US Economic Development Administration. The SOVA Innovation Hub is acquiring the property from the South Boston Volunteer Fire Department as part of the grant process.

- staff-level discussions with principals from the SOVA Innovation Hub and Mid-Atlantic Broadband Communities on the potential for GO Virginia Region 3 Council funding support for furniture, fixture, and equipment for the “The Labs” project. This funding support would be similar to the Per Capita grant awarded to the SEED Innovation Hub in Farmville

- the Tobacco Region Revitalization Commission approved a grant for the project for \$400k at its January 2023 meeting

II. Region 3 Leadership Development Project – preliminary discussions have been held with principals at the University of Virginia’s Sorenson Institute for Leadership and the Virginia Institute for Government (Cooper Center units) about developing a community leadership program in Region 3. This program would complement and align with the SOVA Rise Collaboratives training for entrepreneurs. These discussions and those with other Region 3 stakeholders have shown heightened interest in pursuing an Enhanced Capacity Building feasibility study to better frame the program, outcomes, and partner organizations.

Project development will continue.

RECOMMENDATION:

For the Region 3 Council’s information. No action is needed.

NEW BUSINESS



DATE: July 12, 2023

TO: Region 3 Council

FROM: Tim Clark, Chair, Nominating Committee

RE: Nominating Committee Report for Reappointments/Appointments for Region 3 Council Members

The Nominating Committee (T. Clark, R. Lail, and S. Swinson) has prepared a recommendation for the reappointment and appointment of members to the Region 3 Council. Seven (7) current members are eligible for reappointment, and their four-year term would span from 2023 to 2027. Additionally, three (3) vacant positions are available for appointment, also for the same four-year term.

The following individuals are recommended for reappointment and appointment to the Region 3 Council for a four (4) term from 2023-2027:

Sheldon Barr	President	VCU Health Community Memorial Hospital	Appointment
Robert Bates	Market Leader/Vice President	Benchmark Community Bank	Reappointment
Kristin Gee	General Counsel & Corporate Secretary	Kyanite Mining Corporation	Reappointment
Dr. Amy Griffin	Deputy Executive Director	Virginia Association of School Superintendents	Reappointment
Dr. Keith Harkins	Vice President-Academic & Workforce Programs	Southside Virginia Community College	Reappointment
Charles Majors	Chairman of Board	American National Bank	Reappointment
John Parkinson	CEO	Drake Extrusion, Inc.	Reappointment
Dale Wagoner	County Administrator	Henry County	Appointment

Attached is the Region 3 Council member roster effective July 1, 2023.

RECOMMENDATION:

Approve the reappointment and appointments of Region 3 Council as recommended by the Nominating Committee for a four (4) year term from 2023-2027.





VIRGINIA COUNCIL CERTIFICATION FORM

Regional Council: **Region 3**

Certification Period: **7/1/2023** TO **6/30/2023**

Representing the following: (Please enter a "1" in the appropriate category; members may represent more than one category but please select ONE that represents their primary "voice".)

Name	Title	Organization	New or Unexpired Term	Reappointment or Appointment Status	Private Sector Business	Education	Civic/Community Leader	Local or Regional Economic Development	Workforce Development (private citizen member of the local workforce development board)	Local Government Representative	Regional Planning Entities	Non-Profits or Others	Optional/Other
Timothy Clark	President	Blair Construction, Inc.	7/1/2021 - 6/30/2025	Reappointment	1								
Randolph Lail	Chairman of the Board	Benchmark Community Bank_Mid-Atlantic Broadband Communities Corporation	7/1/2021 - 6/30/2025	Reappointment	1								
James McClain	President/CEO	SW Virginia Energy Industries	7/1/2021 - 6/30/2025	Reappointment	1								
Clark Casteel	President/CEO	Danville Regional Foundation	7/1/2021 - 6/30/2025	New Appointment for unexpired term (7.1.22)								1	
Sherry Swinson	Executive Director, Baliles Center at Hull Springs, Longwood University	Longwood University	7/1/2021 - 6/30/2025	Reappointment		1							
Lauren Willis	Senior Administrative & Compliance Officer	Bank of Charlotte County	7/1/2021 - 6/30/2025	Reappointment	1								
Melody Foster	Executive Director	Commonwealth Regional Council	7/1/2021 - 6/30/2025	New Appointment							1		
Rhonda Hodges	Vice President, Workforce, Economic & Community Development	Patrick Henry Community College (West Piedmont Workforce Development Board0	7/1/2021 - 6/30/2025	New Appointment					1				
Alfreda Reynolds	Director of Economic Development	Brunswick County	7/1/2021 - 6/30/2025	New Appointment				1					
Sheldon Barr	President	VCU Health Community Memorial Hospital	7/1/2023 - 6/30/2027	New Appointment (1st Term)	1								
Robert Bates	Market Leader/Vice President	Benchmark Community Bank	7/1/2023 - 6/30/2027	Reappointment (1st Term)	1								
Kristin Gee	General Counsel & Corporate Secretary	Kyanite Mining Corporation	7/1/2023 - 6/30/2027	Reappointment (1st Term)	1								
Dr. Amy Griffin	Deputy Executive Director	Virginia Association of School Superintendents	7/1/2023 - 6/30/2027	Reappointment (2nd Term)			1						
Dr. Keith Harkins	Vice President - Academic & Workforce Programs	Southside Virginia Community College	7/1/2023 - 6/30/2027	Reappointment (1st Term)		1							
Charles Majors	Chairman of the Board	American National Bank	7/1/2023 - 6/30/2027	Reappointment (2nd Term)	1								
John Parkinson	CEO	Drake Extrusion, Inc.	7/1/2023 - 6/30/2027	Reappointment (2nd Term)	1								
Jeremy Satterfield	TechSpark Community Engagement Manager	Microsoft Corporation	7/1/2023 - 6/30/2027	Reappointment (1st Term)	1								
Dale Wagoner	County Administrator	Henry County	7/1/2023 - 6/30/2027	New Appointment (1st Term)						1			
VACANT			7/1/2023 - 6/30/2027	New Appointment (1st Term)	1								
Subtotal					11	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	

Total Membership Per Bylaws	19
Private Sector as Percentage of Total Membership	58%

Membership Total **19**





DATE: July 12, 2023

TO: Region 3 Council

FROM: Tim Clark, Chair, Nominating Committee

RE: GO Virginia Region 3 Council Committee Appointments for 2023-2024

In keeping with past practice and Region 3 Council By-Laws, the Region 3 Council Chair appoints standing committee members. The following individuals will be serving on the Region 3 Council's standing committees for 2023-2024:

Executive Committee

- Tim Clark, Chair
- Lauren Willis, Vice Chair
- Randy Lail
- Rhonda Hodges**
- Clark Casteel**

Communications Committee

- Sherry Swinson
- Appointment in process

Project Review Committee

- Jordan Miles, Chair*
- Amy Griffin*
- James McClain*
- Neil Burke*

Entrepreneurship and Innovation Strategy Committee

- John Parkinson*
- Alfreda Reynolds*

Personnel Committee

- Randy Lail, Chair*
- Charley Majors*
- Tim Clark**

Nominating Committee

- Tim Clark, Chair*
- Sherry Swinson*
- Randy Lail*

*Continue on the committee for FY2023-2024

**New appointment

RECOMMENDATION:

For the Region 3 Council's information. No action is needed.





DATE: July 13, 2023

TO: Region 3 Council

FROM: R. Bryan David, Program Director

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'RBD', is placed over the 'FROM' line.

RE: Project Review Committee

The Project Review Committee met on Monday, July Tuesday, January 10th, to review application the following project application:

RISE Build to Scale Initiative – The GO Virginia Region 3 Council has long identified the development of an entrepreneurship ecosystem as a top priority for economic development in Southern Virginia. The proposed project would serve all aspiring business founders and existing businesses throughout Region 3 with access to training and resources.

The project is the next phase of the SOVA Rise Collaborative, which continues and expand an entrepreneurship ecosystem in Region 3 and will include the following programs over two years (2023-2025):

- Launch the RISE Navigator Program
- Expand the RISE Entrepreneurship Training Pipeline
- Extend Outreach and Storytelling

The Project Review Committee recommends approval of the project as proposed.

It should be noted the GO Virginia Region 3 Executive Committee reviewed with the project principals an early working draft of the application at its meeting on March 15th, and it authorized the Program Director to continue its development. The project principals again briefed the Executive Committee at its meeting on June 21st. The Executive Committee members agreed that the scope and goals for this next entrepreneurship-related Region 3 project were aligned with Growth & Diversification Plan and the adopted Entrepreneurship & Innovation Investment (EII) Strategy.

The Region 3 Entrepreneurship & Innovation Investment Committee (John Parkinson, Alfreda Reynolds, and staffed by Liz Povar) met with the project principals in early June to review the project scope of work, schedule, budget, and deliverables. The committee members provided some input and agreed the project should proceed with submitting the formal application.

A summary of the project and the complete application will be provided under separate cover before the Region 3 Council meeting on July 19th. This is done as each application has many pages and attachments.

RECOMMENDATION:

For the Region 3 Council's information.





DATE: July 13, 2023

TO: Region 3 Council

FROM: R. Bryan David, Program Director

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'RBD', is placed over the 'FROM' line.

RE: Region 3 Council Operational Support – FY2023-2024

- a. **Memorandum of Understanding – Southside Planning District Commission**
- b. **Consultant Services Agreement – The Riverlink Group**

Each year, the Region 3 Council approves operational support agreements with the Southside Planning District Commission (SPDC) and The Riverlink Group. The SPDC serves the Region 3 Council as its designated *Support Organization* and fiscal agent and fulfills other operational duties. The Riverlink Group, through Liz Povar, provides staff support to the Program Director to manage the Region 3 Council's overall economic development and grant program.

It should be noted that The Riverlink Group's services have been procured following Virginia Procurement Act protocols. The SPDC is a political subdivision and can be directly retained by the GO Virginia Region 3 Council.

RECOMMENDATION:

Approve the Memorandum of Understanding for the Southside Planning District Commission and the Consultant Services Agreement, respectively, as presented.



MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
(MOU) BETWEEN
GO VIRGINIA REGION 3
COUNCIL AND
SOUTHSIDE PLANNING DISTRICT
COMMISSION ADDENDUM #6

This **Addendum (#6)** is entered into this **19th day of July 2023** by the GO Virginia Region 3 Council, hereinafter called the “**COUNCIL**” and the **Southside Planning District Commission**, a political subdivision of the Commonwealth of Virginia, hereafter called the “**SPDC**”.

WHEREAS, the SPDC serves as the Support Organization and Fiscal Agent for the COUNCIL; and

WHEREAS, at the regular meeting of the COUNCIL on **July 19, 2023**, COUNCIL MEMBERS approved the renewal of the Support Organization MOU in the amount of **\$80,000** for the period beginning **July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024 (FY24)** in accordance with the **FY24** Capacity Building Budget approved by the COUNCIL on **April 19, 2023** and the GO Virginia State Board on **June 13, 2023**.

WHEREAS, both parties agree that by signing this MOU Addendum (**#6**), all provisions and requirements of the original MOU dated July 1, 2017 between the COUNCIL and SPDC remain in effect for the said extension; and

WHEREAS, Addendum (**#6**) is contingent upon the execution of the **FY24** Commonwealth of Virginia Capacity Building Contract totaling **\$250,000** between the COUNCIL, the SPDC, and the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development; and

WHEREAS, both parties agree that the SPDC may engage in outside contract services for technical assistance outside its fee for services and for other contract services as approved by COUNCIL in accordance with the approved **FY24** COUNCIL Capacity Building Budget; and

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, each of the undersigned individuals represents that the terms of this Addendum (**#6**) have been approved by the COUNCIL and the SPDC, in accordance with its own organizational requirements.

GO Virginia Regional 3 Council

Southside Planning District Commission

Tim Clark, Chair

Deborah Gosney, Executive Director



Southside Planning District Commission
GO Virginia Region 3 Support Organization/Fiscal Agent
FY24 CONSULTANT SERVICES AGREEMENT

- I. This is an **AGREEMENT** between the **SOUTHSIDE PLANNING DISTRICT COMMISSION-GO VIRGINIA REGION 3 SUPPORT ORGANIZATION** (Client) and **THE RIVERLINK GROUP** (Consultant).
- II. *Scope of Services:* Consultant agrees to provide the following GO Virginia Region 3 staff support services:
 - *Entrepreneurship and Innovation Strategy*
 - *Project Pipeline Developments*
 - *Special Projects and Technical Services as Requested*
- III. *Compensation:* **Beginning July 1, 2023** the Southside Planning District Commission agrees to compensate Consultant at the retainer **rate of \$750.00 per month for an average of 15 hours per month**. Work will begin **July 1, 2023** and run parallel to the timeline established in the MOU between the GO Virginia Region 3 Council and the SPDC through **June 30, 2024** and may be extended thereon subject to review of costs associated with services and commitment of funding sources.

Consultant will track hours utilizing a timesheet format that appropriately tracks tasks performed. Invoices and timesheets will be submitted monthly. Billable hours will include direct time on tasks including telephone conversations, and travel time to meetings and the delivery of proposal or materials if necessary. Time will be rounded to the nearest quarter hour.
- IV. *Independent Consultant:* Consultant acknowledges that services rendered under this agreement shall be performed by TRG as an independent consultant. Consultant is responsible for the payment of all federal, state, and local income taxes related to fees for service.
- V. *Confidentiality:* Both parties agree to adhere to generally accepted confidentiality practices and to provide each other with their best efforts in fulfillment of this AGREEMENT. Consultant agrees not to disclose private information about the organization. "Private information" does not include information available in the public domain. All work product or intellectual property created by Consultant remains the property of the Client.
- VI. *Conditions of Agreement:* It is understood that this is a work at home position for the Independent Consultant. Consultant shall perform all duties requested and agreed to by both parties and shall submit work in good faith. Consultant agrees to participate in all scheduled in-person meetings and events as needed to provide support.

This Agreement is contingent upon the execution of the **FY24** Commonwealth of Virginia Capacity Building Contract totaling \$250,000 between the Southside Planning District Commission, Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development, and GO Virginia Region 3 Council.

This AGREEMENT expires **June 30, 2024** and both parties can agree to renew the AGREEMENT for the next fiscal year. This contract may be renegotiated or terminated within 14 days of receiving written notice at the request of either party. There is no penalty for exiting this AGREEMENT.

The parties affirm that they have read, and agree to be bound by, the provisions of this AGREEMENT.

Deborah Gosney

Deborah Gosney (Jun 23, 2023 11:18 EDT)

Deborah B. Gosney, Executive Director
Southside Planning District Commission

Jun 23, 2023

Date

Elizabeth G. Povar

Elizabeth Povar, Principal
The RiverLink Group

Jun 24, 2023

Date

The SPDC is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

PROGRAM DIRECTOR'S REPORT



DATE: July 13, 2023

TO: Region 3 Council

FROM: R. Bryan David, Program Director

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'RBD', is written over a light blue rectangular background.

RE: 2023 All Hands Meeting Recap

Nancy Pool will provide a recap of this year's installment of the All Hands Meeting to the Region 3 Council's meeting on July 19th.

Letterpress Communications prepared and managed a follow-up survey for registrants and others who were invited. Attached is a copy of a presentation to the Executive Committee on the survey results.

RECOMMENDATION:

For the Region 3 Council's information. No action is needed.



All-Hands 2023 Registrant Survey

May 16 - June 29

All-Hands 2023 Registrants & Survey Participants

Registrant & Participant Stats

Registrants - 102

- *Two cancelled before event.*

Survey Participants - 28

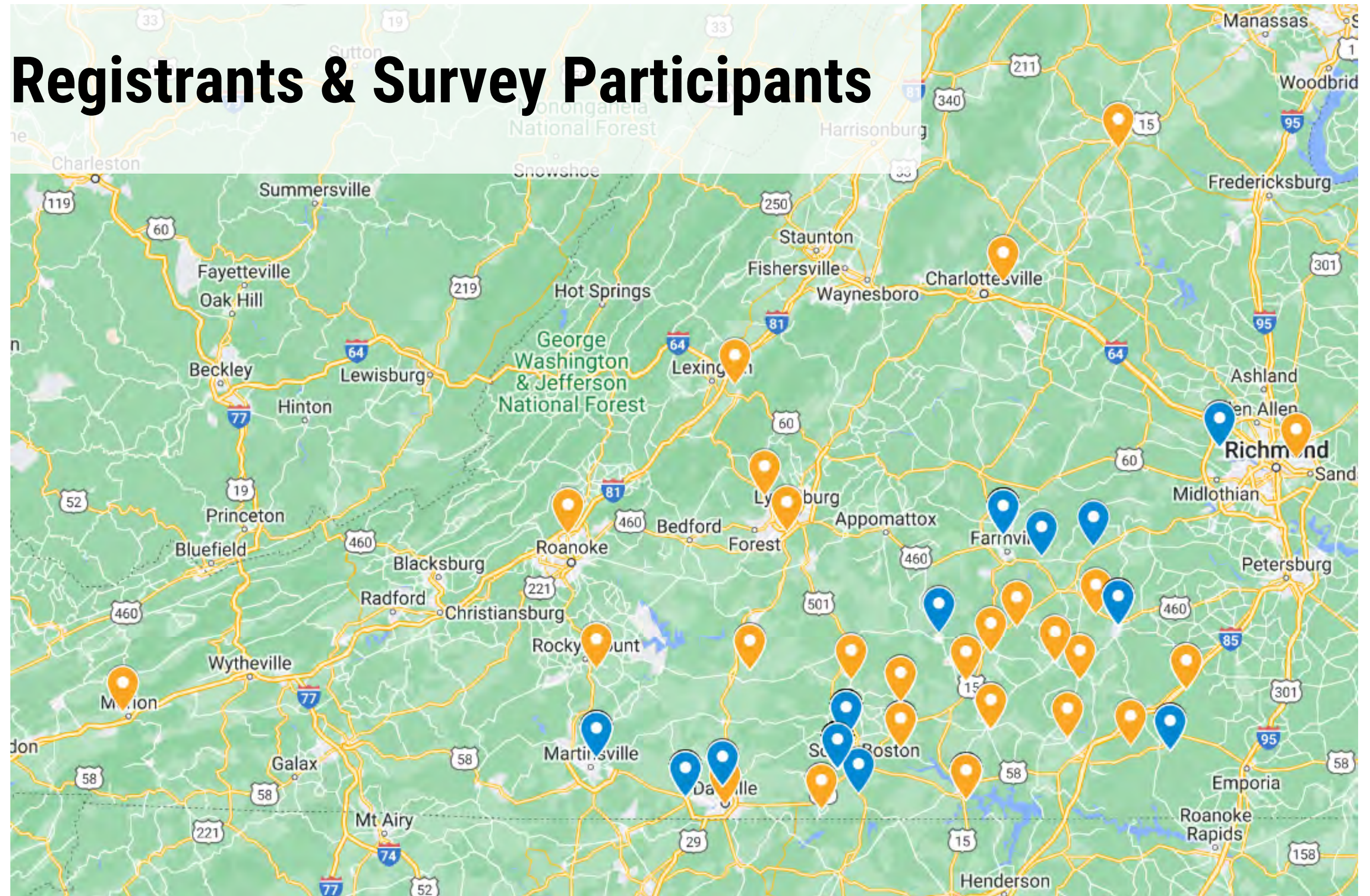
- 78.6% attended
- 21.4% didn't attend

Map Color Key

- **Orange** - Registrants
- **Blue** - Survey Participants

Reference Link:

[Full Survey Results by Participant](#)



Key Takeaways

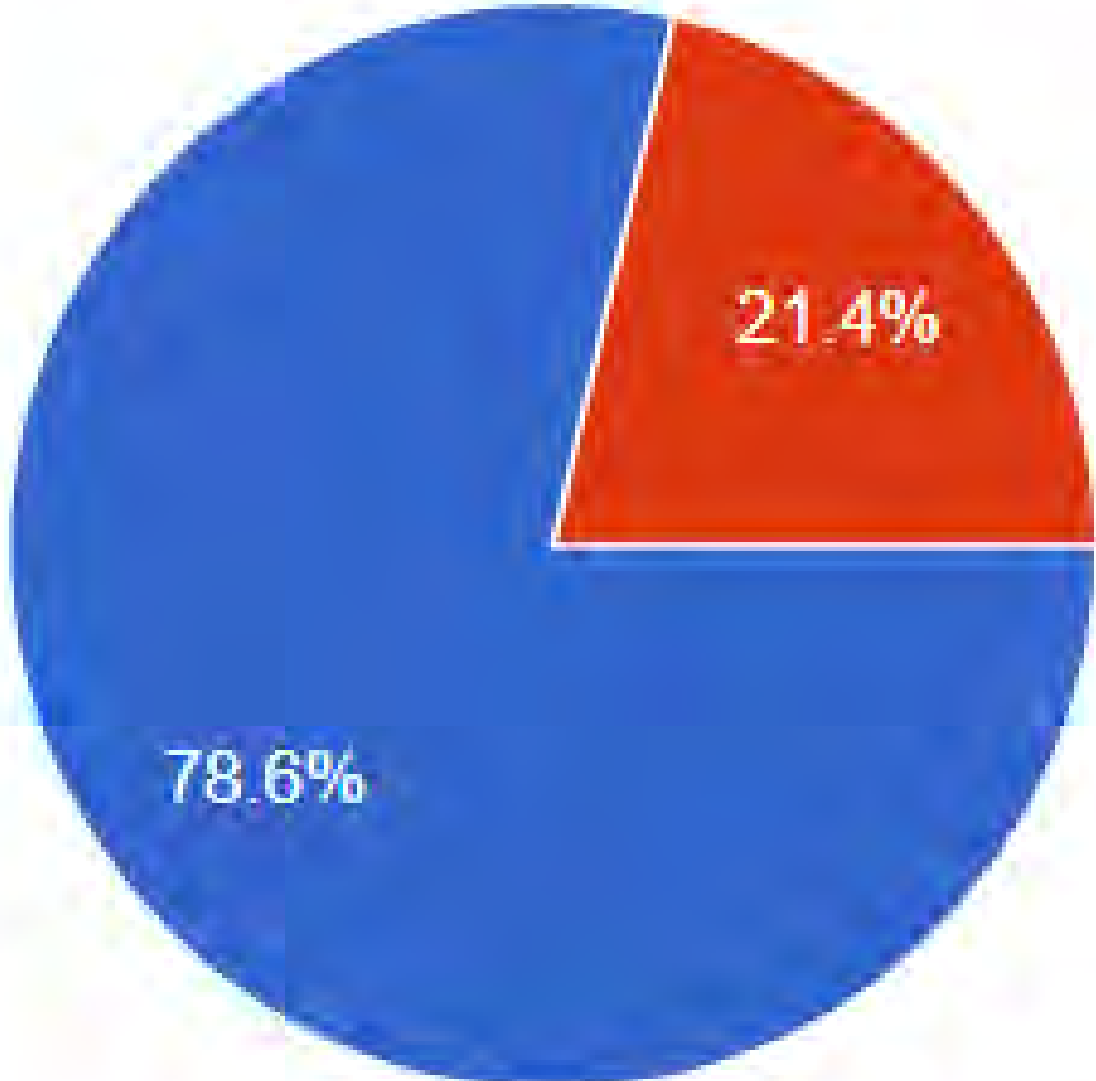
- The majority of survey participants like the new event format.
- Some would like to see the event go back to daytime.
- The keynote speaker was a hit!
- The majority of survey participants felt the event was worthy of their time.

Recommendations

- Set a date/time for 2024 now and put out a save the date.
- If the event will be in the evening, consider including a hotel room block/special rate for folks with a longer drive.
- Consider a small event charge (\$5-15) to ensure more registrants actually attend.
- Continue the format of a keynote/panel with networking time.

Did you attend the May 4, 2023 GO Virginia Region 3 All Hands meeting?

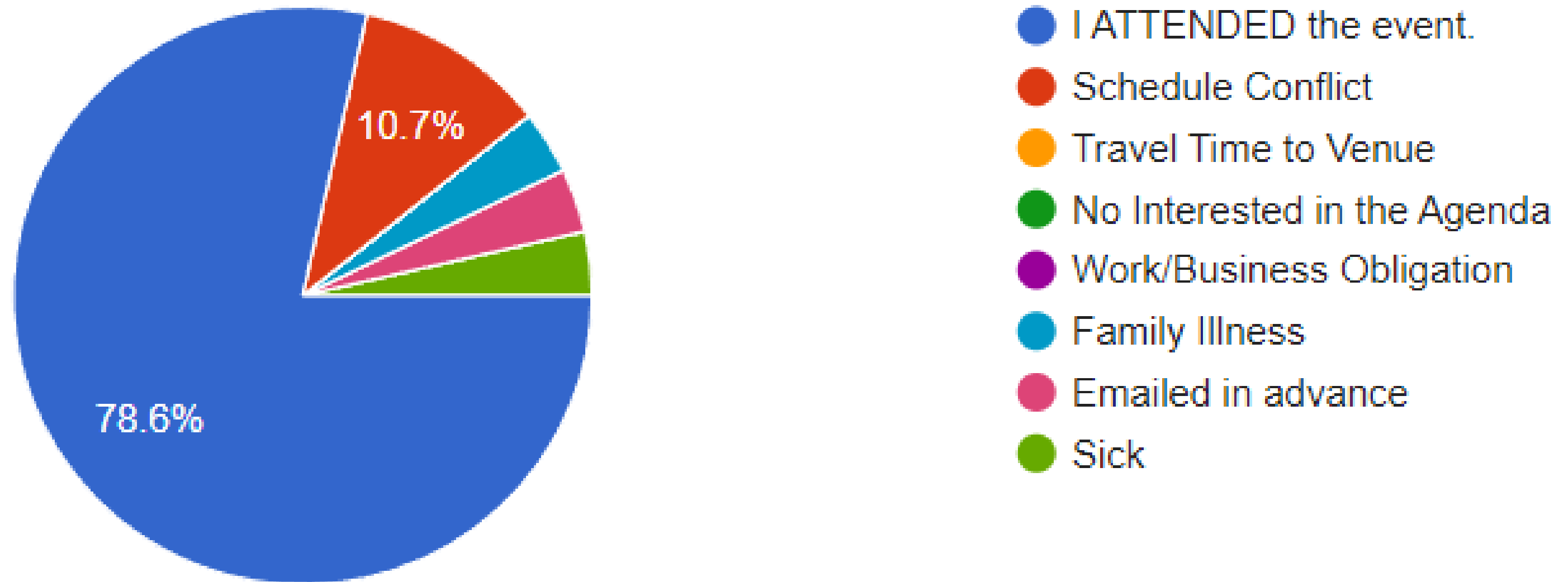
28 responses



- Yes
- No

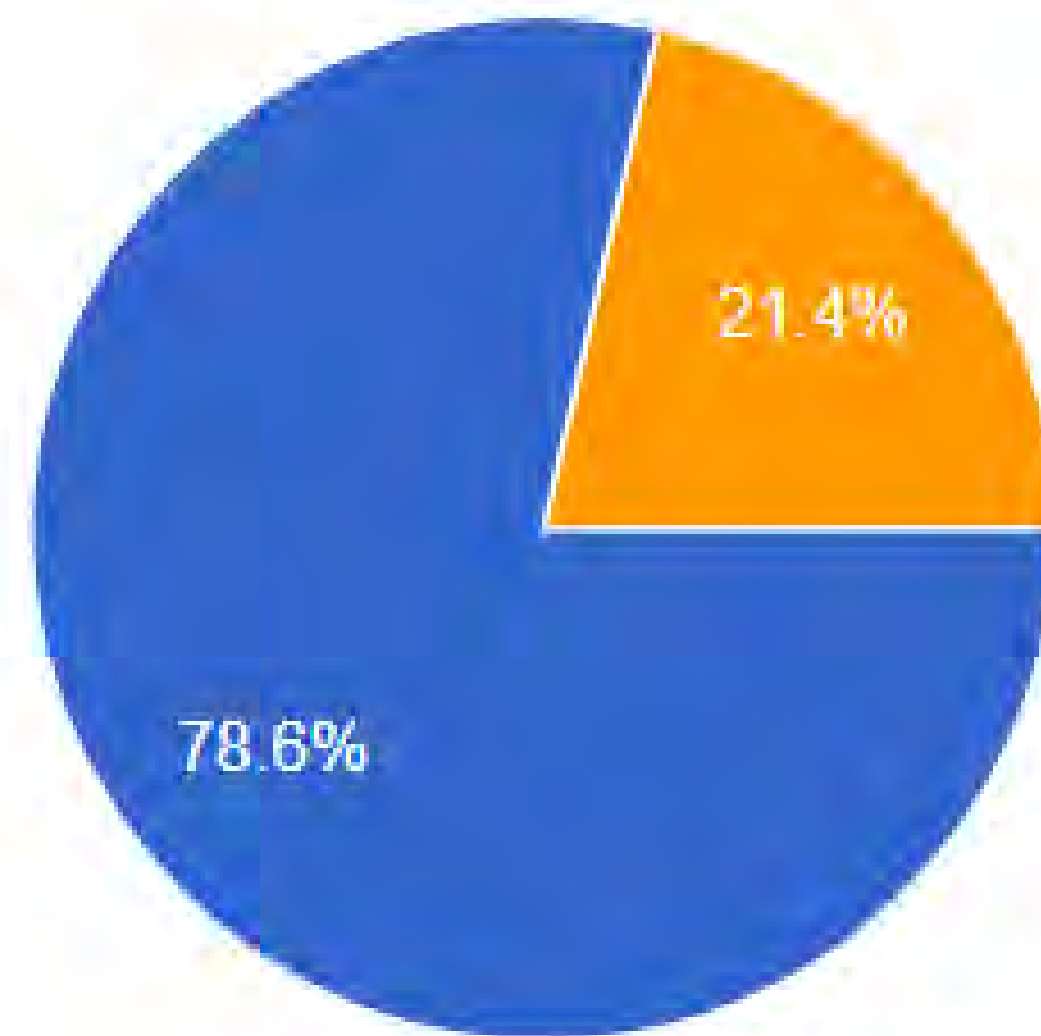
If you did not attend, please indicate the reason.

28 responses



Was the event a worthwhile use of your time?

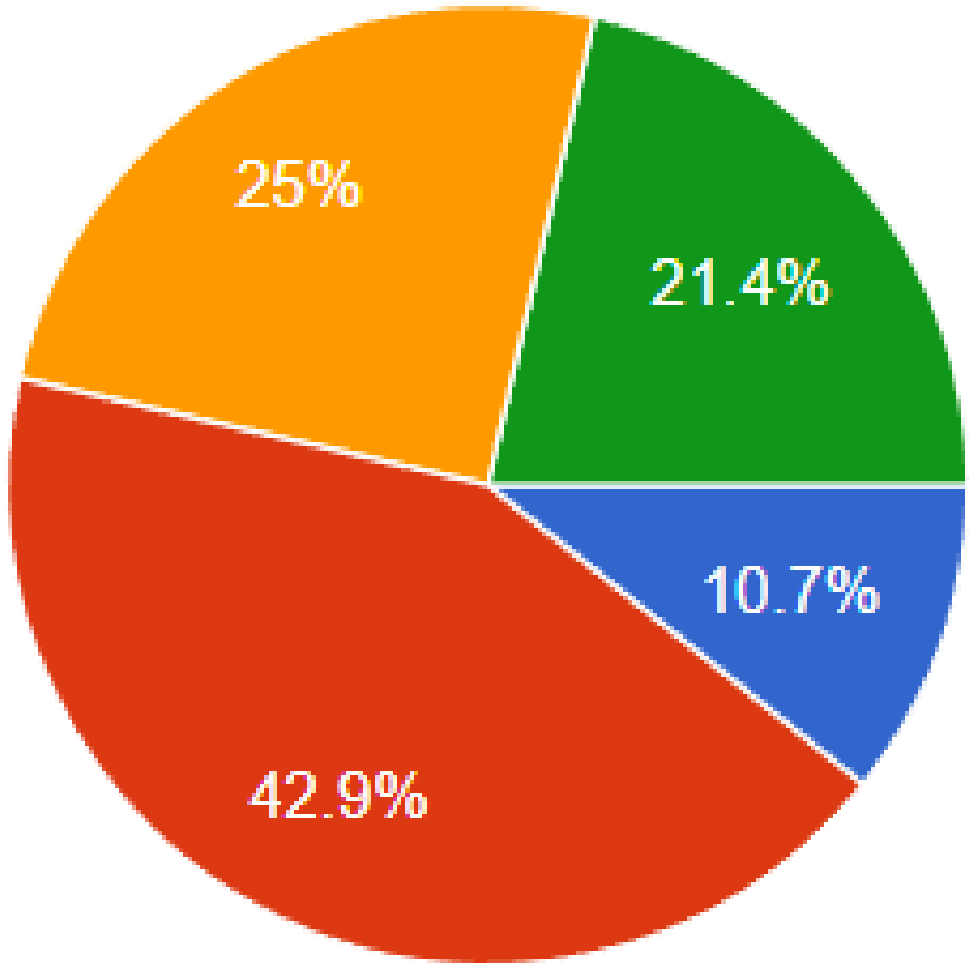
28 responses



- Yes
- No
- I did not attend the event.

What was the *most* valuable to you?

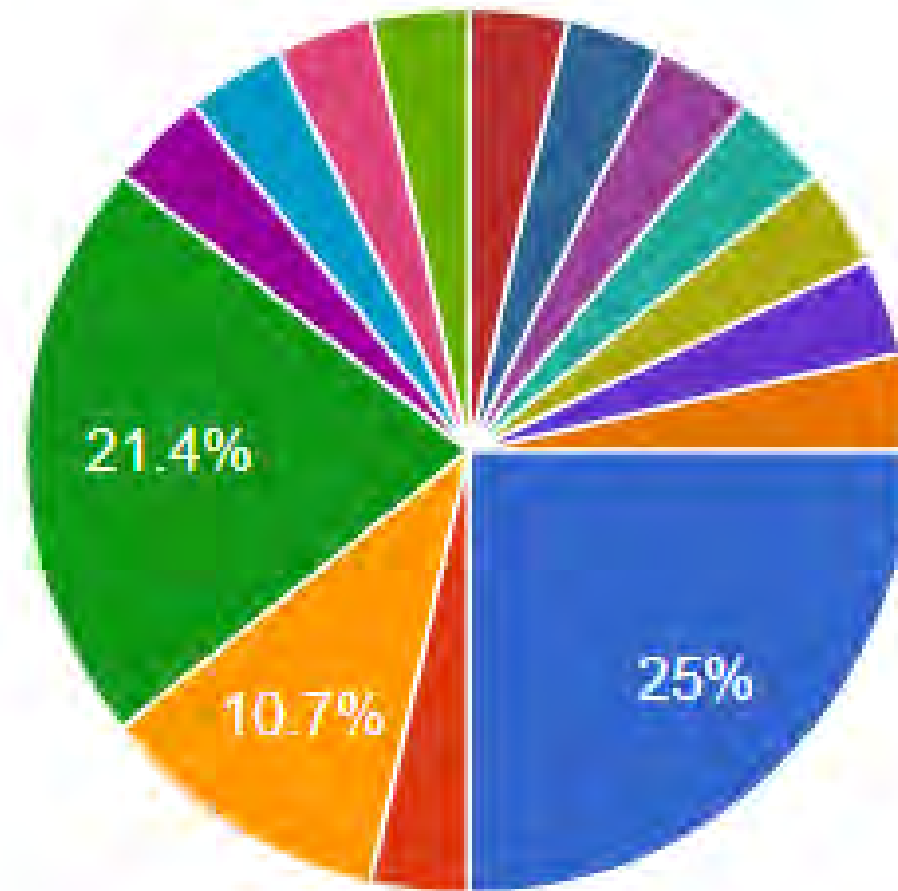
28 responses



- Panel Presentation - Region 3 Entrepreneurs
- Keynote Speaker - Micah White
- Networking
- I did not attend the event.

What was the *least* valuable to you?

28 responses



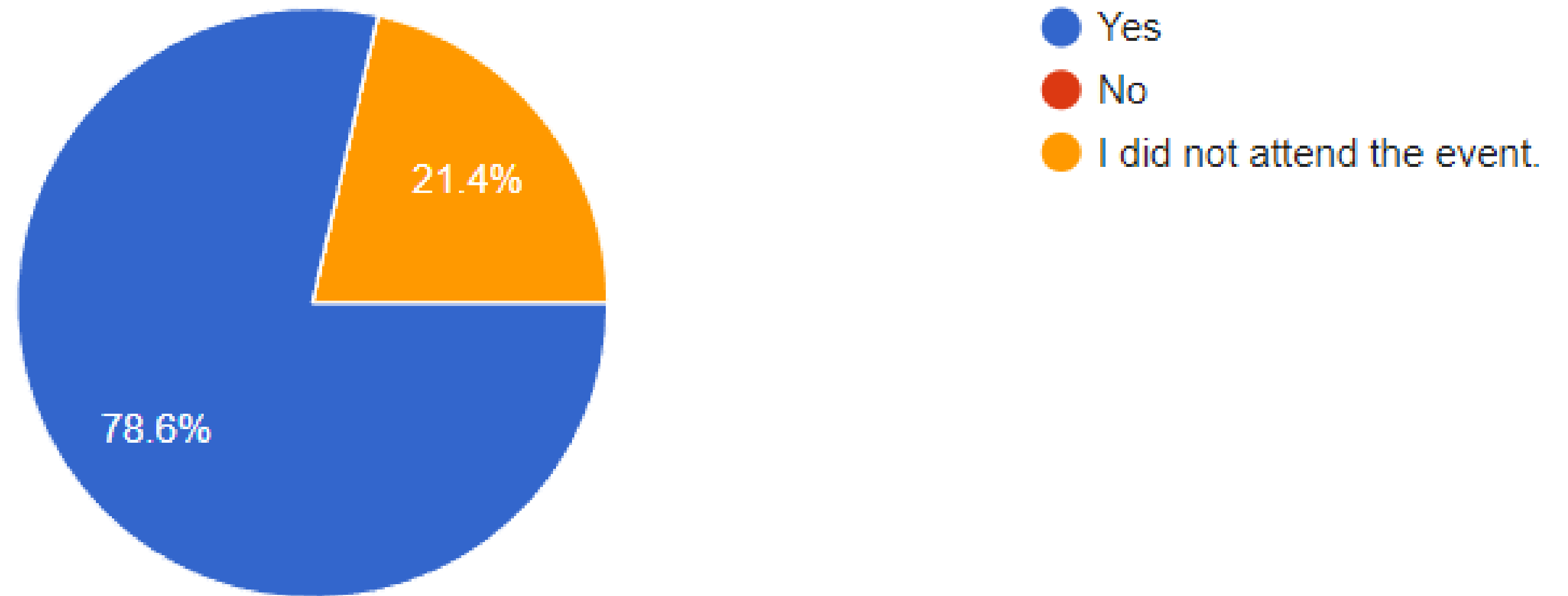
- Panel Presentation - Region 3 Entrepr...
- Keynote Speaker - Micah White
- Networking
- I did not attend the event.
- Everything was valuable
- Everything was valuable!
- None
- I found it all to be valuable

1/2 ▼

Note: The majority of the added comments were positive comments about the event as a whole.

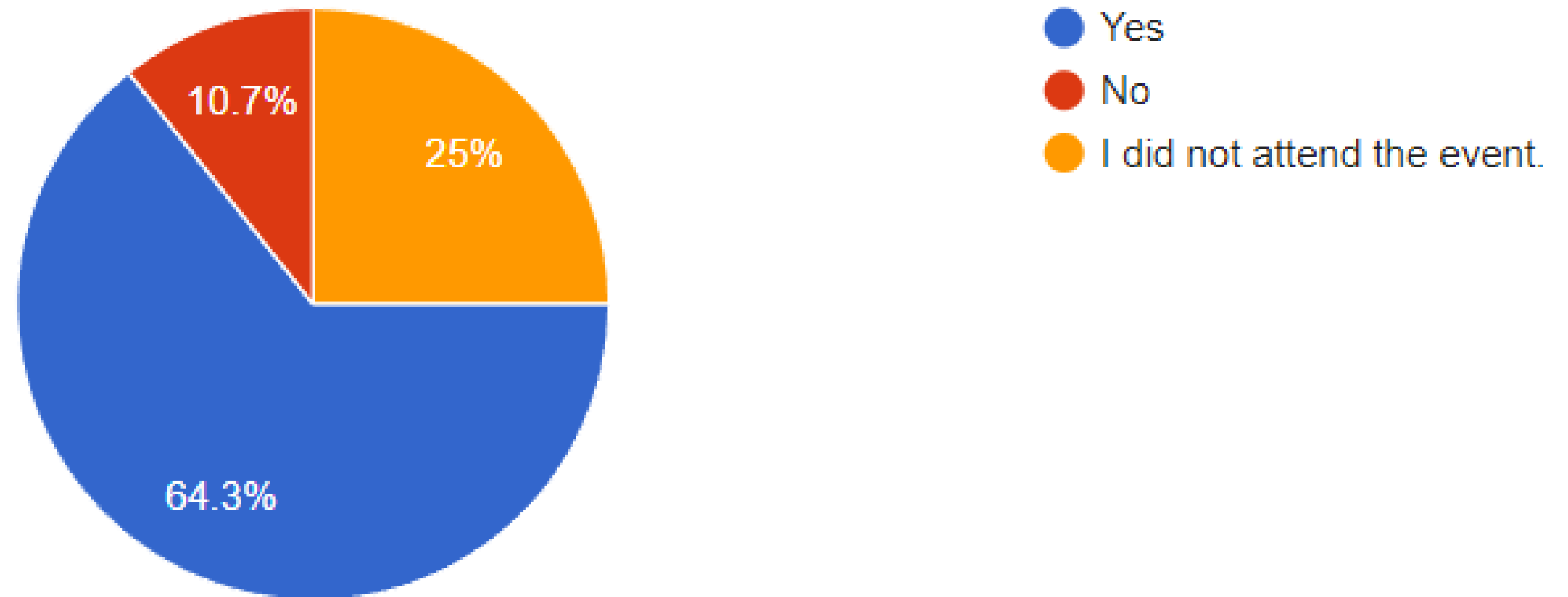
Did the evening include adequate time and opportunity for networking?

28 responses

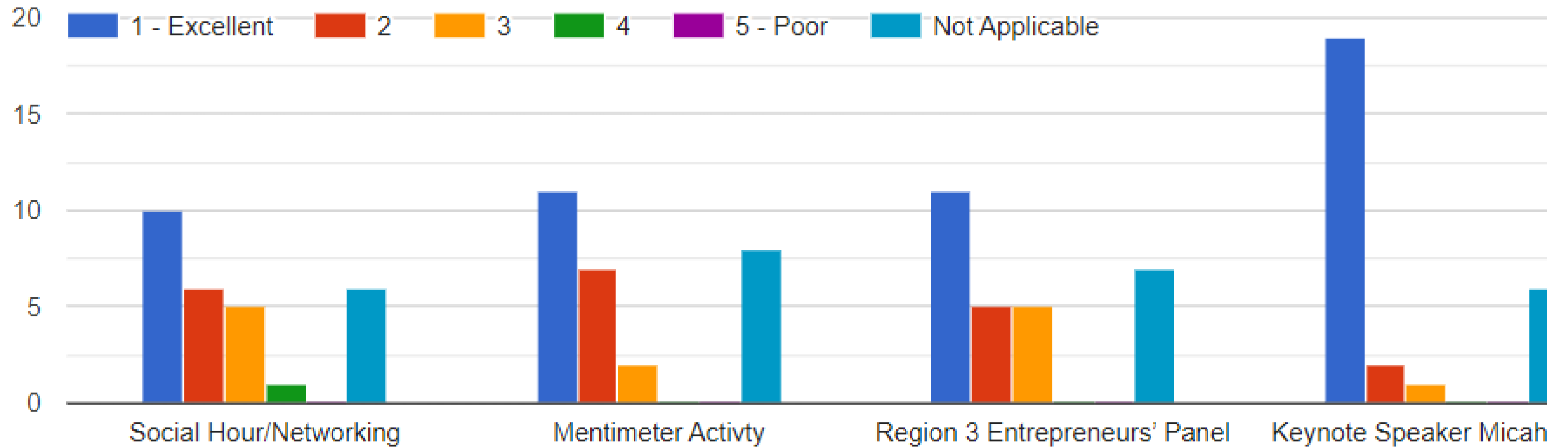


You were assigned a table for the first part of the meeting (during the MentiMeter activity). Did the assigned seating help you meet people that you previously did not know?

28 responses



Please rate the follow aspects of the event on a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 as excellent and 5 as poor.



The evening was fantastic. I can't think of an area of improvement except having more folks attend, which is not something organizers can control.

No. The meeting was great as far as I was concerned - as always. It was great to see everyone again.

I missed the panel and mentimeter activity, but the rest of the evening was wonderful.

Really liked how you changed it up this year! Different crowd and the speakers were great. Also, liked opportunity to network as well.

Networking time seemed a bit excessive.

While I enjoyed the entire event, the purpose was not clear, and how it relates to the work of GOVA was unclear. Networking with peers is something we are able to do often. While fun, it is not the best use of my time.

I don't really have anything bad to say about the event. It was well executed and a great use of my time. The only thing I would say is I wish there was a designated person asking the panelist questions instead of one of the panelists asking questions. Also, it may be beneficial to allow the audience time to ask a few questions.

I would have preferred to have more time listening to the presenters than the lengthy networking time.

Would you like to expand on your rating for any of the items above? (Ranking Question)

Note: Survey comments are as provided from participant. They have been edited for punctuation and spelling only.

How can we improve this gathering for 2024? (Please consider format, topics, cost, speakers, food, location, date/time, etc.)

Time/Format Suggestions

- Please return to a daytime lunch meeting. Evening is difficult because of family obligations; also, for those traveling great distances, at night after drinking is not ideal.
- I prefer more content and a daytime event. If the intent is to get businesses to participate, they will likely need to know why, and what the opportunity is with GOVA. People that don't work in community development roles don't know what GOVA does or why they should attend. Springtime is a very busy time of year, and Thursday nights are very popular for events.
- I know everyone will have different thoughts on the time of the event, but I'd love to see something from 2-5 p.m. or even 3-6 p.m. I liked the assigned tables as a first-time attendee because it felt less awkward walking to a table. Loved the speakers, the cost, and the format.
- Prefer a daytime event.
- Would request during day if possible.
- As mentioned before, this event was well executed, and I love the time slot of 5-8 p.m. I think that this time slot will attract more millennials to attend and learn more about the region. I think to also attract more of the younger generation, you all can have vendors set up around the room to sell items during the event. This will also give entrepreneurs a chance to earn money.

How can we improve this gathering for 2024? (Please consider format, topics, cost, speakers, food, location, date/time, etc.)

Speaker/Activity Recommendations

- Include a "who's in the room" activity so we know who's in higher education, who's from an economic development office, who's an entrepreneur, etc.
- I loved the guest speakers, location, food, cost. I would prefer less time networking.
- The meeting was excellent. Consider a panel of resource professionals like USDA Rural Development, etc., to provide information on resources available to the localities of Region 3 and its residents.
- How to effectively network.
- I would prefer the networking at the beginning of the program.
- Address some of the needs and opportunities for the more rural areas.
- Continue to change up speakers.

How can we improve this gathering for 2024? (Please consider format, topics, cost, speakers, food, location, date/time, etc.)

Marketing Idea

- Pick a date now; develop stronger pre-event promotion; ask Council members to have a specific role (like host a table or do an intro)...maybe do a couple of virtual hook-ups to selected venues with relevance to GOVA R3. (I.e. Could we figure out a program that allows specific and limited virtual participation from something in Patrick County and something in the Farmville area? With a local host at those sites? Not sure exactly what I'm thinking here, but trying to find a way to use an entrepreneurial approach to the event.)

Location Comment

- The northernmost localities were not represented while the majority of attendees were from Halifax Co. where the Prizery is located. Another location might increase involvement from other parts of the region.

"Loved" 2023 Comments

- No improvement needed.
- It was fantastic.
- Everything was great!





DATE: July 13, 2023

TO: Region 3 Council

FROM: R. Bryan David, Program Director

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'RBD', is placed over the 'FROM' line.

RE: GO Virginia State Board (6.13.23 meeting)

The GO Virginia State Board met on June 13th and considered the following projects which the Region Council had previously approved:

- i. Southern Virginia Partnership for Health Science Careers
- ii. Virginia's Growth Alliance Site Development Project

Attached is a synopsis of the State Board's action for each project.

RECOMMENDATION:

For the Region 3 Council's information. No action is needed.





DATE: July 13, 2023

TO: Region 3 Council

FROM: R. Bryan David, Program Director



RE: GO Virginia Region 3 Talent Pathway Plan for Health Science Careers

At its meeting on April 19th, the Region 3 Council approved the Southern Virginia Partnership for Health Science Careers (SOVA Partnership) grant for \$135,000 under the GO Virginia Talent Path Initiative.

This project would begin implementing the Region 3 Growth & Diversification Plan's long-standing healthcare priority because of its inextricable relationship with supporting and growing traded sector businesses and their accompanying high-paying jobs. A critical contributing strategy to achieve this priority is to "[C]onvene and connect health care stakeholders to identify barriers and opportunities."

The GO Virginia State Board has only approved several healthcare workforce development projects in recent years. These approvals have been rare because healthcare is not considered a true "traded-sector" business. The growth and advancement of traded-sector businesses have been the singular focus of the GO Virginia grant program since 2017 for some good and valid reasons. However, GO Virginia Region 3 Council has prioritized healthcare workforce development since its first Growth & Diversification Plan in 2017 and continued maintaining this priority in subsequent updates for many good and valid reasons. Based on the guidance the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) GO Virginia staff provides, the current GO Virginia's Talent Pathway Initiative provides a logical and readily available vehicle to address healthcare workforce development in Region 3.

The GO Virginia State Board considered the Region 3 planning grant application for the SOVA Partnership at its meeting on June 13th. Following the DHCD GO Virginia staff review and a separate review of two (2) GO Virginia State Board members, the application was declared ineligible because it was not in the "spirit" of GO Virginia's focus on job creation for traded sector businesses.

The Executive Committee, through Region 3 Chair Tim Clark, submitted a letter to the GO Virginia State Board rebutting the staff and workgroup conclusion about the SOVA Partnership application. A copy of the letter is attached for your reference.

At the Go Virginia State Board meeting on June 13th, the Region 3 letter was read into the record of the meeting. GO Virginia Region 2 had submitted a similar healthcare workforce planning project for consideration by the State Board at the June 13th meeting. Like the Region 3 Council, the Region 2 Council submitted a letter rebutting the staff and workgroup conclusion.



Region 3 Council
July 13, 2023
Page 2

When the Region 3 and 2 applications were reached on the State Board's meeting agenda, Mr. Ben Davenport (Region 3 Board member) moved with a second by Mr. Jim Dyke that consideration of both applications be deferred until the September 12th meeting.

I have been in contact with Mr. Davenport since the State Board meeting to coordinate how best to assist him in preparing for the September 12th meeting. Also, Dr. William Hazel with Claude Moore Foundation, who is providing the financial support and GO Virginia grant match for the SOVA Partnership, and I have ongoing discussions about how best to prepare for this upcoming meeting. Dr. Hazel served as the Commonwealth's Secretary of Health and Human Services for Governors McDonnell and McCollough.

I will be prepared to represent this matter further at the Region 3 Council's meeting on July 19th.

RECOMMENDATION:

For the Region 3 Council's information. No action is needed.



June 9, 2023

SENT VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

Nancy Howell Agee, Chair
Virginia Growth and Opportunity Board
600 East Main Street, Suite 300
Richmond, Virginia 23219

RE: Talent Pathway Initiative Planning Grant_Southern Virginia Partnership for Health Science Careers

Dear Chair Agee:

On behalf of the GO Virginia Region 3 Council and members of the Southern Virginia Partnership for Health Science Careers, we respectfully request the GO Virginia State Board approve the above-referenced application. We bring our request to your attention as we believe that critical elements of this planning project, which comply with Policy #4, have been omitted from the staff recommendation.

Policy #4 of the GO Virginia State Board stipulates that projects from non-traded sectors may be considered for funding if they fulfill the following three (3) conditions:

- i. GO Virginia funds are not "...to be used for projects in non-traded sectors where median wages fall below regional averages.";
- ii. The project will "... create higher paying jobs across the industry sector..."; and,
- iii. The project will "... generate out-of-state revenue despite being a non-traded sector."

We assure you that the proposed Talent Pathway Initiative planning project by GO Virginia Region 3 will address each of the conditions set forth in Policy #4 through data and analysis.

The following points are offered in support of approving the application:

- According to the 2023 County Health Rankings from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the University of Wisconsin, eight (8) out of fifteen (15) localities in Region 3 rank in Virginia's lowest tier of health outcomes. Additionally, the remaining seven (7) localities rank in the second-to-lowest tier.
- The demand for healthcare workers from employers in Region 3 surpasses the production of new credentialed and degreed healthcare workers from the local educational pipeline. This shortage impedes the ability to support the health systems serving Region 3's residents and those in adjacent North Carolina counties.



Nancy Howell Agee, Chair
Virginia Growth and Opportunity Board
Page 2

- Due to the shortage of healthcare workers, many of Region 3's insured residents must travel outside the region to access healthcare services. North Carolina's nearby metro areas, along with Richmond, Charlottesville, and Roanoke, are the primary destinations for those seeking these services. This project will evaluate the extent of this market leakage, particularly the substantial outflow to North Carolina.
- The state of Southern Virginia's healthcare presents a significant competitive disadvantage for the recruitment and retention of traded sector businesses and the creation of high-paying jobs.
- This disadvantage arises from Region 3's low healthcare outcomes, limited access to healthcare providers, and insufficient availability of credentialed and degreed healthcare workers.
- Healthcare wages in Region 3 are projected to have the fourth-highest average from 2023 to 2033, surpassing several targeted traded sectors, including advanced manufacturing, professional services, and agriculture.
- As of the second quarter of 2022, healthcare was the largest employment sector in Region 3, employing over three (3x) times as many individuals as the chemicals sector and over eight (8x) times as many as textiles or food manufacturing.

The current state of healthcare in Region 3 imposes higher costs on traded sector businesses, primarily in relation to employer-provided health insurance expenses and the capabilities of the Region 3 workforce. This increased cost of doing business may offset the GO Virginia State Board's previous investments to support traded sector workforce development and business recruitment and retention.

The Region 3 Council recognizes the importance of employing established and proven workforce development strategies, methods, and measures to develop a talent pathway for health science occupations. This Talent Pathway Initiative planning project represents a reasonable effort to address the region's low health outcomes.

In conclusion, the Region 3 Council and members of the Southern Virginia Partnership for Health Science Careers respectfully request the approval of the application by the GO Virginia State Board, as the conditions set forth in Policy #4 are met.

To ensure all GO Virginia State Board members are well-informed about the application, we ask that a copy of our letter be provided to each board member before the start of the June 13th meeting.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Timothy J. Clark', is written over a white rectangular background.

Timothy J. Clark, Chair
GO Virginia Region 3 Council





DATE: July 13, 2023

TO: Region 3 Council

FROM: R. Bryan David, Program Director

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'RBD', is placed over the 'FROM' line.

RE: Virginia's Growth Alliance Site Development Project (Per Capita)

The Region 3 Council approved this project at its meeting on January 18th. The GO Virginia State Board was to consider the application at its meeting on March 14th.

The Department of Housing and Community Development GO Virginia staff review of the application noted some areas that need further information and other issues. It was agreed by the VGA's Executive Director and Region 3 staff to have the application withdrawn and resubmitted for consideration by the GO Virginia State Board at its meeting on June 13th.

The State Board approved the application on June 13th; however, following the DHCD GO Virginia staff's recommendation, three (3) of the seven (7) were removed, and the project award was reduced from \$488,435 to \$326,225. The reduction was because these three (3) sites would benefit from the VGA's updated target market strategy, which was underway and not completed when the staff review was conducted in May. The strategy has now been completed and approved by the VGA Board of Directors in early July.

Of three (3) sites removed, one (1) was in Brunswick County, and two (2) were in Lunenburg County. VGA's Executive Director is working with Region 3 staff to resubmit these three (3) sites to DHCD GO Virginia staff for consideration by the State Board at its meeting on September 12th.

It should be noted that a companion grant was awarded by the Tobacco Region Revitalization Commission for use as GO Virginia match by VGA. Because of the structure of the required local match, the sites removed created an issue with the viability of the match structure. Once the final three (3) sites are approved, the match structure as initially proposed will be viable.

RECOMMENDATION:

For the Region 3 Council's information. No action is necessary.





DATE: July 13, 2023

TO: Region 3 Council

FROM: R. Bryan David, Program Director

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'RBD', is positioned to the right of the 'FROM:' line.

RE: Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) – 2023 Growth & Diversification Plan Review

Each GO Virginia region develops and follows its own Growth & Diversification Plan as a strategy for the types of projects it will consider funding. According to DHCD GO Virginia staff guidance, each region must update its plan every two (2) years. Region 3's plan was updated in 2023 and can be found on the Region 3 website at [Region 3 Growth & Diversification Plan \(2021\)](#).

This next update will be undertaken by the 2023 Growth & Diversification Plan Review Committee (ad hoc), empaneled to develop a draft of the 2023 Growth & Diversification. The committee will be comprised of several Region 3 Council members to be appointed by Chair Tim Clark. Staff support will be from Liz Povar and me.

The updated plan will be developed over the next several months and is due to the DHCD GO Virginia staff by October 31, 2023. A final draft will be presented to the Region 3 Council for approval at its meeting on October 18th.

RECOMMENDATION:

For the Region 3 Council's information. No action is needed.







DATE: July 13, 2023

TO: Region 3 Council

FROM: R. Bryan David, Program Director

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'RBD', is placed over the name 'R. Bryan David' in the 'FROM' line.

RE: UVA Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service and the Karsh Institute for Democracy

The GO Virginia Region 3 Council and the Cooper Center have maintained a partnership since 2020, working together to provide a Program Director who supports the Council's activities. In addition to the Region 3 responsibilities, this position represents the Cooper Center and the University of Virginia, serving as a community and economic development facilitator in Southern Virginia.

Earlier this year, Dr. Larry Terry stepped down as the Cooper Center's Executive Director to assume a leadership position within the Penn State University system. Following his departure, Michael Phillips, the Assistant Executive Director, was promoted to Assistant Vice Provost for one of UVA's finance units. These personnel changes coincided with President Ryan's announcement of the Cooper Center's merger with the Karsh Institute for Democracy ([Karsh Institute for Democracy](#)), effective July 1st.

In my discussions with other Cooper Center Program Directors and in light of these events, the merger with the Karsh Institute is widely regarded as a positive move for the Cooper Center. It will significantly enhance the Cooper Center's visibility within UVA and at the state level and position its functions for a greater national reach. The recruitment and selection process for the next Executive Director was delayed due to the merger, but it is currently underway and expected to conclude by the Fall.

The Region 3 Personnel Committee (T. Clark, R. Lail, C. Majors) has been informed about these developments since earlier this year. Recently, an informal meeting took place between the Personnel Committee and Charles Hartgrove, Program Director for the Virginia Institute for Government at the Cooper Center. This meeting reaffirmed the advantages of the ongoing partnership between the Region 3 Council and the Cooper Center, emphasizing the need for its continuation in the future.

For further information, please refer to the following links:

[UVA Today Cooper Center Integrating with Karsh Institute for Democracy](#)

[UVA Today Board of Visitors Endorse Karsh Institute for Democracy Building Plans](#)

The Personnel Committee members and I will be prepared to further represent this matter at the Region 3 Council meeting on July 19th.

RECOMMENDATION:

For the Region 3 Council's information. No action is needed.