

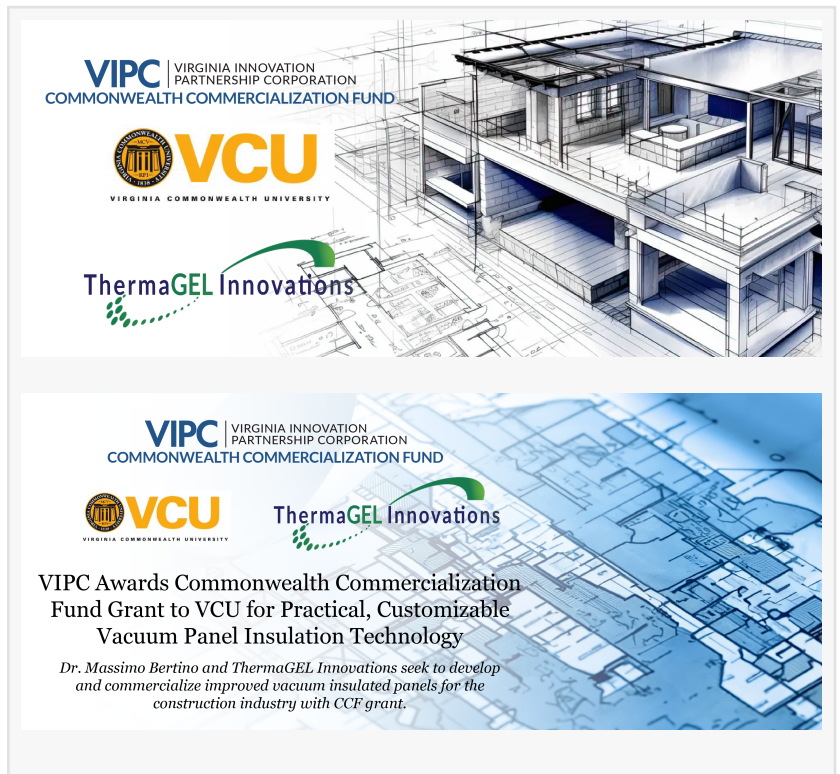
VIPC Awards CCF Grant to VCU for Practical, Customizable Vacuum Panel Insulation Technology

Dr. Massimo Bertino and ThermaGEL Innovations seek to develop and commercialize improved vacuum insulated panels for the construction industry with CCF grant.

RICHMOND, VIRGINIA, UNITED STATES , February 21, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The Virginia Innovation Partnership Corporation ([VIPC](#)) today announced that Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) has been awarded a Commonwealth Commercialization Fund ([CCF](#)) grant for \$75,000 in support of research conducted by Dr. Massimo Bertino. VIPC's CCF programs have distributed more than \$54 million to Virginia-based startups, entrepreneurs, and university-based inventors since 2012 in support of critical early technology testing and market validation efforts.

Vacuum insulation panels (VIPs) are excellent thermal insulators but are not practical due to their high cost and difficulty being shaped to size. VCU, in collaboration with Richmond-based [ThermaGEL](#) Innovations, has developed a patented, commercially-viable aerogel core that can be packaged into a VIP that is easy to handle and can be made in custom sizes without specialized equipment. With their unique combination of thermal insulation, mechanical strength, fireproofing, and lower cost, aerogel materials are ideal for a wide range of applications across multiple industries, improving the technology's market penetration potential.

"There are more than 130 million buildings and homes in the U.S. that have poor insulation, leading to more than 30% of energy used to heat and cool a structure wasted. Wasted energy results in higher energy costs and increased carbon emissions. Our aerogel insulation solutions for new and retrofitted structures offer significantly higher insulation values that reduce this burden while delivering superior thermal insulation performance, being easy to install, and with a payback of 2.5 years or less," said Dr. Bertino, VCU Professor of Experimental Nanoscience and





We are committed to redefining sustainable home and commercial insulation solutions in a global market eager for affordable, practical improvements.”

*Marc McConnaughey, CEO,
ThermaGEL*

CTO, ThermaGEL Innovations.

“ThermaGEL Innovations was conceived to commercialize Dr. Bertino’s breakthrough research at VCU,” said Marc McConnaughey, CEO of ThermaGEL Innovations. “We are committed to redefining sustainable home and commercial insulation solutions in a global market eager for affordable, practical improvements.”

CCF funding will allow the team to build on a U.S. Department of Energy grant through additional customer

discovery, validation, and de-risking the product by demonstrating scale-up and adaption capabilities to handle requirements that construction companies have for on-site installation.

“The milestones that Dr. Bertino and the ThermaGEL team seek to accomplish through this CCF project will help them further develop and refine their strategy for supply chain integration in the building materials sector, a key component of decarbonization of the U.S. economy,” said Hina Mehta, VIPC’s Director for University Programs. “There are no comparable technologies on the market, and we are excited to support VCU and a Virginia small business launch a ‘new normal’ for the rapidly transforming construction industry.”

Virginia Commonwealth University is a public research university based in Richmond, Va.

About ThermaGEL Innovations

ThermaGEL Innovations is the developer, patent holder, and manufacturer of a radically more effective thermal insulation. Our slimline aerogel panels are focused directly on disrupting the \$61 billion dollar global new and retrofit construction market. We utilize breakthrough patented science and technology to deliver ground-breaking mold, moisture, fire-resistant, and acoustically-dynamic insulation products. Our beachhead market is the ADU market and manufactured homes. ThermaGEL was recently selected as a finalist in the Department of Energy IMPEL Program, which emphasizes, supports, and accelerates bringing new infrastructure technologies to the market. For more information, visit www.thermagelinnovations.com.

About Virginia Innovation Partnership Corporation (VIPC)

Connecting innovators with opportunities. As the nonprofit operations arm of the Virginia Innovation Partnership Authority (VIPA), VIPC is the commercialization and seed stage economic development driver in the Commonwealth that leads funding, infrastructure, and policy initiatives to support Virginia's innovators, entrepreneurs, startups, and market development strategies. VIPC also collaborates with local, regional, state, and federal partners to support the expansion and diversification of Virginia’s economy.

Programs include: Virginia Venture Partners (VVP) | VVP Fund of Funds (SSBCI) | Virginia

Founders Fund (VFF) | Commonwealth Commercialization Fund (CCF) | Petersburg Founders Fund (PFF) | Smart Communities | The Virginia Smart Community Testbed | The Virginia Unmanned Systems Center | Virginia Advanced Air Mobility Alliance (VAAMA) | The Public Safety Innovation Center (PSIC) | Entrepreneurial Ecosystems | Regional Innovation Fund (RIF) | Federal Funding Assistance Program (FFAP) for SBIR & STTR | University Partnerships | Startup Company Mentoring & Engagement.

For more information, please visit www.VirginialPC.org. Follow VIPC on Facebook, X (formerly Twitter), and LinkedIn.

About the Commonwealth Commercialization Fund (CCF)

VIPC's Commonwealth Commercialization Fund (CCF) accepts applications and awards funding on a rolling basis to Virginia's small businesses and university-based innovators. For Virginia's academic and nonprofit research community, the competitive grant program seeks to fund high-potential Virginia-based academic research teams that are developing technologies with strong commercial potential. The grants support early technology and market validation efforts such as customer discovery, market research, business model validation, the development of prototypes or minimum viable products (MVPs), customer pilots, and intellectual property protection, team development, and more. For more information on funding opportunities and eligibility requirements, or to apply, visit the CCF pages from www.VirginialPC.org.

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