

# VIPC Grant to Innovate Hampton Roads Accelerates Regional Innovation Ecosystem Growth

*Innovate Hampton Roads helps amplify opportunities, empower entrepreneurs, and attract investment to region.*

RICHMOND, VA, UNITED STATES, June 10, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The [Virginia Innovation Partnership Corporation \(VIPC\)](#) announced it has awarded a Regional Innovation Fund (RIF) grant to

“

IHR is committed to creating a robust and supportive environment that drives regional development and empowers entrepreneurs to succeed and contribute to the prosperity of our community.”

*Tim Ryan, Executive Director of Innovate Hampton Roads*

to [Innovate Hampton Roads \(IHR\)](#) to amplify and expand Hampton Roads’ innovation and entrepreneurial ecosystem. IHR serves as a one-stop conduit across the Hampton Roads ecosystem that connects entrepreneurs to the community of resources, institutions, news, education, and events across the region. VIPC is pleased to support IHR, which will again host the Startup World Cup Virginia Regional Finals with Pegasus Tech Ventures – where Virginia’s top startups compete for a shot at \$1,000,000 in investment capital – in Virginia Beach on August 21.

Hampton Roads is home to a vibrant entrepreneurial ecosystem that includes founders, early-stage investors,

startup accelerators and incubators, industry mentors, colleges and universities, corporate partners, community organizations, and media and marketing partners. IHR serves as an active voice for the community that amplifies the region’s success stories on both a local and national level.

Innovate Hampton Roads plays a central role in strengthening the ecosystem and fostering opportunity pathways by connecting entrepreneurs with access to resources and information, coordinating and promoting community events, facilitating educational programming and job postings, and developing connections within the business community to create synergistic partnerships. Through initiatives like the Fervent Four Show podcast, Start Peninsula pitch competitions, and Reaktor Technology Innovation Center, IHR is focused on guiding, growing, and connecting entrepreneurs to build a stronger, more innovative regional economy.

Innovate Hampton Roads is led by Executive Director Tim Ryan and Associate Director James

Doe. Its Board leadership is comprised of diverse community leaders including Chair Paul Hirshbiel, Vice Chair Tom Marsden (Marathon Consulting), Blair Durham (Black BRAND), John Finguerra (TCI), Nancy Grden (Hampton Roads Executive Roundtable), Alan Hagerman, Conaway Haskins (VIPC), Toi Hunter (Hampton Roads Alliance), Mark Johnson (Truist), Kevin Leslie (ODU), Paul Nolde (757 Collab), John Paris (Williams Mullen), A.K. Schultz (SVT Robotics), Jolie Spiers (SBDC), and Derrick Williams (Cox).

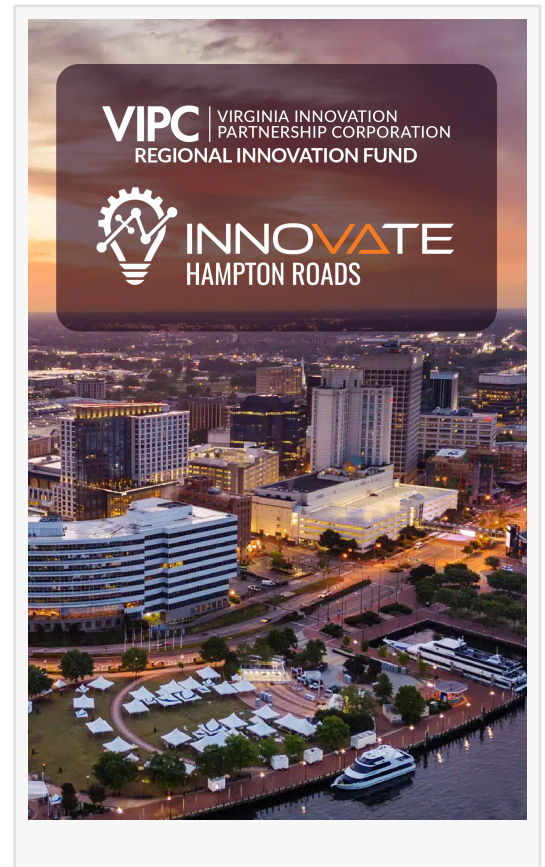
“IHR is committed to creating a robust and supportive environment that drives regional development and empowers entrepreneurs to succeed and contribute to the prosperity of our community. But the demand for our support currently outweighs our ability to execute and satisfy the region’s needs, said Tim Ryan, Executive Director of Innovate Hampton Roads. “VIPC’s grant is instrumental in executing on this commitment. It will help us enhance our slate of programs that provide support and encouragement beginning at the earliest ideation stages and that tell the story of innovation and entrepreneurship in Hampton Roads and across Virginia.”

VIPC President and CEO, Joe Benevento, said, “As one of Virginia’s largest and most diverse business regions, Hampton Roads offers a dynamic ecosystem hub for startups to launch, grow, and thrive. Innovate Hampton Roads is a valued ecosystem partner committed to championing entrepreneurs and community collaboration. VIPC is delighted to support the continued growth of Hampton Roads’ innovation economy.”

“As a founder-led entrepreneurial support organization, guided by a board with strong entrepreneur and investor representation, Innovate Hampton Roads is positioned for significant impact on the regional ecosystem. This grant will solidify IHR’s position as a central information source and community connector and will create additional local benefit by attracting capital, supporting minority and female entrepreneurs, and generating increased innovation and economic growth,” said Conaway Haskins, VIPC’s Vice President of Entrepreneurial Ecosystems.

#### About Innovate Hampton Roads

Innovate Hampton Roads was established to foster the growth and development of the innovation and technology ecosystem in Hampton Roads by educating entrepreneurs and business leaders, ensuring their access to essential resources, and developing connections within the business community to create synergistic partnerships and strengthen the local economy. The ecosystem is comprised of investors, entrepreneurs, industry leaders, mentors, colleges and universities, corporate partners, talent resources, media and marketing partners,



culture and community partners, and others. To learn more, visit [www.innovate757.org](http://www.innovate757.org).

#### About Virginia Innovation Partnership Corporation (VIPC)

Connecting innovators with opportunities. VIPC operates as the nonprofit corporation on behalf of the Virginia Innovation Partnership Authority (VIPA). VIPA / VIPC is Virginia's designated authority for leading innovation and economic development in the Commonwealth of Virginia through research, commercialization, and technology advancement; entrepreneurship, startup, and venture capital growth; and regional ecosystem, innovation network, and industry sector expansion. As part of its operations, VIPC helps attract and catalyze private investment into early-stage startup companies, provides research and technology commercialization grants to universities and entrepreneurs, and offers resource and funding support for entrepreneurial ecosystems, innovation networks, and public-private partnerships at local, state, and federal levels.

VIPC's programs include: Virginia Invests | Virginia Venture Partners (VVP) | Commonwealth Commercialization Fund (CCF) | Virginia Accelerator Network | Regional Innovation Fund (RIF) | Smart Communities | The Virginia Smart Community Testbed | The Virginia Unmanned Systems Center | Virginia Advanced Air Mobility Alliance (VAAMA) | The Public Safety Innovation Center (PSIC) | Federal Funding Assistance Program (FFAP) for SBIR & STTR.

For more information, please visit [www.VIPC.org](http://www.VIPC.org).

#### About Entrepreneurial Ecosystems Division (EED) and the Regional Innovation Fund (RIF)

VIPC's Entrepreneurial Ecosystems Division (EED) acts as a supporter, connector, and convener for entrepreneurial ecosystems and startup communities throughout Virginia. These stakeholders include accelerators, incubators, innovation hubs, economic developers, technology councils, chambers of commerce, industry associations, and others who assist founders during the early stages of business formation and growth. EED manages the Regional Innovation Fund (RIF), a state-funded program that awards competitive grants to Virginia-based entrepreneurial support organizations (ESOs) that have a strong track record of assisting early-stage Virginia science and technology entrepreneurs and companies. RIF grants provide operational and program funding for successful ESOs and ecosystem-building initiatives. For more information, visit [www.VIPC.org](http://www.VIPC.org).

Jennifer Hiltwine

VIPC

[email us here](#)

Visit us on social media:

[LinkedIn](#)

[X](#)

[Facebook](#)

EIN Presswire's priority is source transparency. We do not allow opaque clients, and our editors try to be careful about weeding out false and misleading content. As a user, if you see something we have missed, please do bring it to our attention. Your help is welcome. EIN Presswire, Everyone's Internet News Presswire™, tries to define some of the boundaries that are reasonable in today's world. Please see our Editorial Guidelines for more information.

© 1995-2025 Newsmatics Inc. All Right Reserved.