

Dr. Neal Fine, CEO  
Arctura, Inc.  
336 Columbia Street  
South Kingstown, RI 02879

March 26, 2026

To: The Honorable Marvin L. Abney, Chair, House Finance Committee  
RE: Support for Innovation Program Funding, FY27 Budget Economic Development Article

Dear Chairman Abney and Members of the House Committee on Finance, Committee

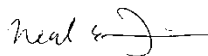
I am writing to urge you to maintain funding for Rhode Island's **Innovative Matching Grants/Internship** program in the FY27 Budget. In the current budget proposal, this program is being cut in order to fund the Innovation Initiatives program. Both programs are critical to driving high growth businesses, attracting federal and private investment and creating high paying jobs in the State.

Since 2013, the Innovative Matching Grants/Internship program has helped companies access and leverage **\$152 million** in federal funds through the SBIR/STTR program. This program keeps innovative companies in Rhode Island. It helps companies build breakthrough technologies that attract private investment and growth. Many spin out from our research institutions. These dollars align Rhode Island companies to federal and private innovation funds - further positioning Rhode Island as a place for innovation.

Arctura, Inc. has been a direct beneficiary of this program since our founding in 2015. Over the past decade, we have received multiple Phase I and Phase II SBIR/STTR matching grants that have been essential to our ability to compete for and execute federal research awards. These funds have allowed us to purchase equipment and supplies that either fell outside the allowable cost categories of our federal solicitations or exceeded what could fit within the project budgets themselves — flexibility that federal grants simply do not provide. Most concretely, the matching funds were instrumental in helping Arctura cross the "valley of death" for our first commercial product, ALP20 — a plasma-based coating that protects wind turbine blades from lightning strikes. Without that support, we would not have been able to bring that technology to market. Arctura was named to Time magazine's list of Top GreenTech Companies in both 2024 and 2025 — recognition that reflects the kind of breakthrough innovation that Rhode Island's matching grant program helps make possible. The Innovative Matching Grants program is not just a subsidy; it is a force multiplier that helps Rhode Island companies leverage federal SBIR/STTR dollars more effectively, retain technical talent, and build products that would otherwise stall. Cutting this program would directly harm the very companies this state has invested in growing.

In conclusion, I urge you to keep \$1 million funds in the Innovative Matching Grants/Internship (Innovate RI) program.

Respectfully,



Neal E. Fine

*cc: Senator V. Susan Sosnowski, Rhode Island Senate District 37 Representative Teresa Ann Tanzi, Rhode Island House District 34.*