



July 27, 2011

ASSHE STARS Program Staff
 213 ½ N. Limestone
 Lexington, KY 40507

Dear Program Staff:

I am writing to you in my capacity of Executive Director of the Greater Philadelphia Innovation Cluster for Energy Efficient Buildings (GPIC), a U.S. DOE Energy Innovation Hub.

The Energy Innovation Hubs initiative was established within the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) in 2010, modeled on the DOE's successful Bioenergy Research Centers. The first three Hubs are focused on fuels from sunlight, nuclear modeling, and energy-efficient buildings (EEB), all with the goal of advancing highly promising areas of energy science and engineering from the early stage of research to the point where the technology can be handed off to the private sector. Additional Energy Innovation Hubs addressing other technical topics are envisioned for the years ahead.

The GPIC Hub was officially launched under Penn State leadership following an exhaustive nation competition in February 2011 as an Energy Regional Innovation Cluster (E-RIC) with support from six federal agencies in addition to the DOE. The six agencies are the Small Business Administration (SBA), the Economic Development Administration (EDA), the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), the Department of Labor, the Department of Education and the National Science Foundation.

The E-RIC approach is intended spur regional economic growth while developing innovative energy efficient building technologies, designs, and systems. The E-RIC concept demonstrates a departure from the silo approach of federal agencies in favor of a coordinated simultaneous interagency attack on the nation's energy and economic problems.

The Greater Philadelphia Innovation Cluster (GPIC) for Energy-Efficient Buildings is breaking new ground on how public-private research partnerships promote innovation. A consortium of public, private and academic institutions is working to transform the serially fragmented building retrofit environment into a systems solution industry, while boosting energy efficiency, creating jobs and stimulating private investment.

Unlike any other project in the country, GPIC is not only researching cutting-edge technology and tools but is simultaneously addressing policies, financial models, workforce training programs, and creative new approaches to intellectual property management to ensure that research and technology development efforts lead to innovation and new jobs.

Sincerely,

Henry C. Foley