

August 20, 2012

Re: STARS Innovation Credit: Letter of Affirmation
SRU Sustainable Enterprise Accelerator

To Whom It May Concern:

I am an Associate Professor of Finance at Slippery Rock University and Founder/Managing Director of SRU's Sustainable Enterprise Accelerator. I hold a Ph.D. in Business Administration with a major in Finance and minor in International Business from Kent State University. I have more than seventeen years experience in instructional and research activities in higher education. I helped establish the entrepreneurship program at Grove City College and founded another at Slippery Rock University. I, along with my colleague, Dr. France Amatucci have produced pioneering work in the field of sustainability entrepreneurship having published the first paper on the sustainability integration in nascent firms in the 2011 Summer II edition of the *Journal of Strategic Innovation and Sustainability*. I have made three presentations on topics involving sustainability entrepreneurship and the introduction of sustainable practices to extant small business at USASBE and Small Business Institute conferences over the past two years.

I have been working with business sustainability-related themes since 2006 beginning with consulting work for Microfinance International. I have continued to serve as consultant on the development of social entrepreneurship enterprises. In 2009 I received \$225,000 in grant funds to establish the SEA at SRU. I also employ a faculty member, Dr. John Golden, as SEA's Director of Projects and Outreach/Entrepreneur-in-Residence in addition to a graduate assistant and two student assistants.

SEA is a innovation in itself. It is the first university-affiliated entrepreneurship center to introduce a program in sustainability entrepreneurship focused on integration into the business plans of nascent firms. SEA also facilitates faculty-mentored student consulting projects that help regional businesses develop sustainable business practices. SEA programs have been well received and attain strong utilization rates. We have also partnered with other sustainability-oriented organizations such as the Pennsylvania Association of Sustainable Agriculture. We estimate that SEA programs have involved almost 2000 individuals over the past two years. I would be pleased to answer any questions regarding SEA programs.

Sincerely,



Richard C. Grimm, Ph.D.