

Anna Brown, PhD
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March 15th, 2021

To:

House Education Committee
900 Court St, NE
Salem, OR 97301

RE: Support to Renew the UVDF Program

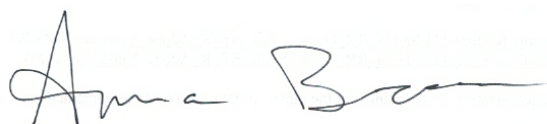
Chair Teresa Alonso Leon and Members of the House Education Committee,

I am writing this letter to voice my support for the University Venture Development Fund (UVDF). Stark Street Materials Corp. has grown and been built on an initial UVDF investment through PSU, and has since raised funding from NSF for participation in iCORPS, Business Oregon, Cascadia Clean Tech, and now an SBIR from the NSF. This has enabled myself and my CTO, Simon Fowler, PhD, to stay in the Portland area with high-tech start-up jobs. We will likely be adding an additional person in the next 6 months.

We have worked with students through a capstone business program, and through the Cascadia Clean Tech grant. Both Simon and myself remain well connected to the Chemistry and Physics departments at PSU, and increasingly the Engineering department. We try to utilize students and facilities as we can, both as a learning experience for them, and to scout potential future employees for SSMC. We find students are very interested in learning about start-ups, and are generally inspired by interacting with PSU alumni who are turning an academic project into a real technology and career.

The UVDF has been instrumental in helping SSMC to get started. I'm certain SSMC would not have moved forward (if at all) as we did without UVDF support PSU has provided. I hope you will renew the program to enable the development of future companies, jobs, and economic growth through PSU.

Sincerely,



Anna Brown, PhD