



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 2020

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FuzeHub Awards \$10,000 Grant to Innosek to Ramp Up Manufacturing of Face Shields to Fight COVID-19

Grant will fund new equipment to meet current needs, foster sustained growth

BUFFALO, N.Y. – FuzeHub, the statewide center for the New York Manufacturing Extension Partnership ([NY MEP](#)), has awarded about \$10,000 in grant funding to Innosek, a Western New York-based advanced manufacturing company, to help it expand and accelerate its production of face shields, which are urgently needed to combat the spread of COVID-19.

“New York’s manufacturers have taken action to support the fight against the coronavirus, pivoting production or scaling up operations to produce supplies that keep our communities safe and healthy. Among them, Innosek has stepped up to help in a big way,” said FuzeHub Executive Director Elena Garuc.

“This grant award will help Innosek contribute to the fight against COVID-19 now — and as we look to the future, it will support the state’s economic resiliency by strengthening an emerging manufacturing company and equipping it for sustained growth,” said Everton H. Henriques, NY MEP Solutions Director for FuzeHub.

Innosek specializes in additive manufacturing. It uses 3D printing technology to produce components and supplies for several industry sectors, including defense, automotive, electronics, telecommunications and healthcare.

It pivoted the focus of its team to produce face shields for hospitals and other health care facilities. Innosek uses its 3D printers to produce the frames for face shields and then assembles the full unit with transparent sheets and elastic bands. It has earned contracts from significant national and regional healthcare institutions to fulfill their increased need for face shields.

Meanwhile, the company has also had to ramp up production for several of its existing clients that have experienced supply chain disruptions as a result of the global outbreak.

“With our systems at full capacity and our team stretched, we turned to FuzeHub for help,” said Innosek’s Co-founder & Production Manager, John Kappel. “This grant funding will help us

rapidly increase production to meet the demand for essential supplies at the frontlines of the coronavirus pandemic. It will also contribute to our long-term success. After seeing how quickly additive manufacturers like Innosek have pivoted or increased production, more manufacturers will likely choose to incorporate 3D printing and other additive technologies into their supply chains. We'll be ready to help."

FuzeHub's \$10,000 grant will help fund the purchase and modification of nine additional 3D printing units as well as materials needed to produce face shields. The expansion will allow Innosek to increase its weekly production of face shields by about 40 percent – from about 1,100 to 1,500 units.

Innosek recently moved to a larger facility in Tonawanda, providing the necessary space to expand. Previously a six-employee enterprise, the company has had to essentially double its workforce, bringing in six more temporary workers to fill current needs. It hopes to retain these workers if orders remain at current levels.

FuzeHub helps New York manufacturers navigate the state's extensive network of resources, programs and partners. As the statewide NY MEP center, it collaborates with the state's 10 regional NY MEP centers – in Western New York, Insyte Consulting is the regional center.

In addition to its [COVID-19 Manufacturing Grants](#) program designed to accelerate production of ventilators and N-95 respirators, FuzeHub has set aside a small pot of funds to support a limited number of manufacturers already engaged with FuzeHub through existing requests for assistance.

About FuzeHub

FuzeHub is a nonprofit organization that connects New York's small and mid-sized manufacturing companies to the resources, programs and expertise they need for technology commercialization, innovation, and business growth. Through its custom assessment, matching, and referral platform, FuzeHub helps companies navigate New York's robust network of industry experts at Manufacturing Extension Partnership centers, universities, economic development organizations, and other providers. FuzeHub is the statewide New York Manufacturing Extension Partnership Program center, supported by Empire State Development's Division of Science, Technology & Innovation (NYSTAR). For more information, visit www.fuzehub.com.

About Innosek

Innosek is a state-of-the-art manufacturing operation in Buffalo, N.Y., which specializes in rapid prototyping, low volume manufacturing, project management and product development. From home-based inventors to multinational businesses looking to improve their supply chains, Innosek's manufacturing techniques enable its customers to solve local and global issues to improve health, safety and security. It creates a custom manufacturing plans tailored to its customers' unique project needs. For more information, visit www.innosek.com.

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