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Arradiance shines \$1.75M funds on night vision optics

Advanced materials developer [Arradiance Inc.](#) in Sudbury has raised \$1.75 million of a \$3.5 million round of funding, and officials hope the infusion of cash will help the company further penetrate a handful of new vertical markets, including night-vision optics and photovoltaics.

The funding is the company's third round since its inception, hauling in \$8 million in a first round in 2004 and an undisclosed amount in its second round last year. The bulk of the new round came from previous investor East Hill Management Co. LLC of Boston. Other investors in the company include Lexington-based Highland Capital Partners and California-based U.S. Venture Partners and Miramar Venture Partners.

While the development of the company's electron emission technology dates back to before CEO [Kenneth Stenton](#) and COO [David Beaulieu](#) founded Arradiance in 2003, the company's target market has shifted over the years. Originally aimed at the lithography process in the production of semiconductors, Arradiance's technology has proven effective in making active thin films used in the manufacture of high-gain microchannel plates — essentially, said Stenton, anywhere weak signals need amplification.

"Any place where you want to amplify a photonic or electronic signal, there are microchannel plates," he said. "What we've done is come up with a process and a material to manufacture them in a different, more efficient way."

The company's most immediate application is in night-vision devices, where 80 percent of the 10-person company's resources are aimed. The hope, said Stenton, is that the night-vision application will help it generate revenue that will aid the company's expansion into other applications, including the detection of nuclear material as part of a sensor system and in thin-film photovoltaics.

The company is in the process of closing several deals with the makers of night-vision technologies selling to the federal government, but Stenton declined to name the companies.

Arradiance will still pursue the semiconductor application as well, though Stenton called that "more of a long-term play."

Arradiance's technology is based on the manipulation of charged particles, or electron beams. Using its hardware and process, the company can create substrate-independent films that are either highly resistive (in the case of microchannel plates) or highly conductive (in the case of photovoltaics). Traditional substrates include a lead-glass combination, which requires high amounts of heat to create. Arradiance, said Stenton, can make microchannel plates using glass, ceramic, silicon and even plastic as a substrate.

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