

## ANNOUNCEMENT OF FEDERAL FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- **Federal Agency Name:** Economic Development Administration (EDA), Department of Commerce
- **Federal Funding Opportunity Title:** National Technical Assistance, Training, Research and Evaluation: Regional Training Curriculum Implementation
- **Announcement Type:** Federal Funding Opportunity (FFO)
- **Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Numbers:** 11.303, Economic Development—Technical Assistance; 11.312, Economic Development—Research and Evaluation
- **Dates:** To be considered timely, a completed application, regardless of the format in which it is submitted, must be either: (a) received by the EDA representative listed in section VII. of this competitive solicitation no later than August 13, 2007 at 5:00 p.m. EDT; or (b) transmitted and time-stamped at [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) no later than August 13, 2007 at 5:00 p.m. EDT. Any application received or transmitted, as the case may be, after 5:00 p.m. EDT on August 13, 2007 will not be considered for funding. *See* section IV.B. for information regarding format options for submitting completed applications. By September 10, 2007, EDA expects to notify the applicant selected for investment assistance under this announcement. The selected applicant should expect to receive funding for its project within thirty (30) days of EDA's notification of selection.
- **Application Submission:** Applications may be submitted to EDA Headquarters in Washington, D.C. by e-mail, hand-delivery or postal mail, as provided in section VII.B. of this announcement. Applications also may be submitted electronically via [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov). *See* section IV. of this announcement.
- **Funding Opportunity Description:** Recent studies on economic development, including several EDA-funded reports, stress the importance of a regional approach to successful economic development. However, the actual implementation of economic development from the regional perspective is not robust. Therefore, in FY 2006, EDA funded the development of a practitioner-oriented curriculum to acquaint local economic development practitioners with the benefits, process, and practice of economic regionalism. Pursuant to its National Technical Assistance, Training, Research and Evaluation program, EDA now solicits applications to deliver this curriculum to practitioners across the Nation.

## **FULL ANNOUNCEMENT TEXT**

### **I. Funding Opportunity Description**

#### **A. Program Objective**

The Economic Development Administration's (EDA) mission is to lead the federal economic development agenda by promoting innovation and competitiveness, preparing American regions for growth and success in the worldwide economy. Through its National Technical Assistance, Training, Research and Evaluation program (NTA Program), EDA works towards fulfilling its mission by funding research and technical assistance projects to promote competitiveness and innovation in distressed rural and urban regions throughout the United States and its territories. By working in conjunction with its research partners, EDA will help States, local governments and community-based organizations to achieve their highest economic potential.

#### **B. Project Description**

In today's worldwide marketplace, competition no longer comes from just the company or county next door. Increasing competition comes from any person on the globe with a good idea and a good Internet connection. In order to succeed, U.S. industries will require a comprehensive, holistic approach to economic development and economic leadership.

Recent studies on economic development, including several EDA-funded reports, stress the importance of a regional approach to successful economic development. However, the actual implementation of economic development from the regional perspective is not robust. Therefore, in FY 2006, EDA funded the development of a practitioner-oriented curriculum to acquaint local economic development practitioners with the benefits, process, and practice of economic regionalism. Through this competitive solicitation, EDA now solicits applications for the nationwide delivery of this curriculum.

Applicants should describe the number of training sessions (workshops) contemplated, the methods by which appropriate participants will be identified, and what, if any, certification or other credential will be awarded to participants who successfully complete the training. The curriculum currently being developed is based, in part, on a needs assessment conducted as part of the development process. The assessment report is available online at <http://knowyourregion.wcu.edu/pdf/EDANeedsAssessment.pdf>.

The workshop format and materials are in the final stages of development. EDA anticipates the final format will be two-day workshops designed to develop forward-thinking regional economic development plans that generate momentum for regional economic development and help practitioners identify and access appropriate federal resources. Based on real world planning experiences in many different regions, as well as the latest thinking of federal policy makers, the workshops are intended to help economic development practitioners

understand their regions in a knowledge-based economy and develop a global competitive advantage.

The applicant awarded under this announcement will be responsible for conducting the workshops. EDA anticipates the following materials to be made available by EDA for presentation at the workshops:

1. A single coherent framework for identifying regional development opportunities and capitalizing on them;
2. A guide to understanding and detecting regional competitive advantage;
3. Hands-on guidance about how to mobilize leaders across organizations and jurisdictions; and
4. A framework for monitoring and evaluating economic development plans and actions.

Additional workshop information can be accessed at <http://knowyourregion.wcu.edu/>. Applicants are encouraged to send one representative to attend the pilot workshop on July 24-25, 2007. Potential applicants are required to notify EDA of the name of their designated attendee so appropriate arrangements can be made and fee waivers extended in a timely manner.

**Deliverables:** Under this competitive solicitation, a nationwide implementation of the workshops is required, although the specific number of workshops is at the applicant's discretion. Workshop applications that leverage EDA investment assistance are preferred. One example of leveraging is a workshop coincident with practitioner association meetings at the national, regional, and State levels. EDA will require the recipient to evaluate the workshops' impact via an exit survey, the results of which are reported to EDA following each workshop.

**Completion Deadline:** EDA contemplates a three-year cycle of funding under this competitive solicitation. The selected applicant will not have to compete for the second and third year of funding. Funding beyond the initial year would be dependent upon the availability of funds and satisfactory performance, as determined by EDA and expressed in written notice. EDA expects that the selected applicant will conduct training for its presenters within the first month following award and will provide EDA with a list of workshops within two months of award. The selected applicant can expect EDA representatives to attend the workshops.

### C. Program Authority

The authority for the NTA Program is section 207 of the Public Works and Economic Development Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. § 3147), as amended (PWEDA), and 13 C.F.R. part 306, subpart A.

EDA published final regulations (codified at 13 C.F.R. chapter III) in the *Federal Register* on September 27, 2006 (71 FR 56658). The final regulations became effective upon publication and reflect changes made to PWEDA by the Economic Development Administration Reauthorization Act of 2004 (Pub. L. No. 108-373, 118 Stat. 1756 (2004)). These regulations

will govern an award made under this announcement. The final regulations and PWEDA are accessible on EDA's Internet website at [www.eda.gov/InvestmentsGrants/Lawsreg.xml](http://www.eda.gov/InvestmentsGrants/Lawsreg.xml).

## **II. Award Information**

### **A. Funding Availability**

EDA may use funds appropriated under the Revised Continuing Appropriations Resolution, 2007, Pub. L. No. 110-5 (February 15, 2007) to make awards under the NTA Program authorized by PWEDA. Approximately \$2,700,000 is available, and shall remain available until expended, for funding awards pursuant to the NTA Program. Based on past experience with its NTA Program, EDA anticipates the award made under this announcement to be between \$275,000 and \$375,000 for the first year of the project period. EDA published the first two of three *Federal Register* notices under the NTA Program on June 21, 2007 (72 FR 34225) and July 6, 2007 (72 FR 36952), respectively.

### **B. Type of Funding Instrument**

The award made under this competitive solicitation will be in the form of a grant.

## **III. Eligibility Information**

### **A. Eligible Applicants and Eligible Recipients**

Pursuant to PWEDA, eligible applicants for and eligible recipients of EDA investment assistance include a District Organization; an Indian Tribe or a consortium of Indian Tribes; a State; a city or other political subdivision of a State, including a special purpose unit of a State or local government engaged in economic or infrastructure development activities, or a consortium of political subdivisions; an institution of higher education or a consortium of institutions of higher education; a public or private non-profit organization or association; and, as provided in section 207 of PWEDA (42 U.S.C. § 3147) for the NTA Program, a private individual or a for-profit organization. See section 3 of PWEDA (42 U.S.C. § 3122) and 13 C.F.R. § 300.3.

### **B. Cost Sharing or Matching Share Requirement**

Generally, the amount of the EDA grant may not exceed fifty (50) percent of the total cost of the project. However, a project may receive an additional amount that shall not exceed thirty (30) percent, based on the relative needs of the region in which the project will be located, as determined by EDA. See section 204(a) of PWEDA (42 U.S.C. § 3144) and 13 C.F.R. § 301.4(b)(1). Under this competitive solicitation, the Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Economic Development (Assistant Secretary) also has the discretion to establish a maximum EDA investment rate of up to one hundred (100) percent where the project (i) merits and is not otherwise feasible without an increase to the EDA investment rate; or (ii) will be of no or only incidental benefit to the recipient. See section 204(c)(3) of PWEDA (42 U.S.C. § 3144) and 13 C.F.R. § 301.4(b)(4).

While cash contributions are preferred, in-kind contributions, consisting of assumptions of debt or contributions of space, equipment and services, may provide the non-federal share requirement of the total project cost. *See* section 204(b) of PWEDA (42 U.S.C. § 3144). EDA will fairly evaluate all in-kind contributions, which must be eligible project costs and meet applicable federal cost principles and uniform administrative requirements. Funds from other federal financial assistance awards are considered matching share funds only if authorized by statute that allows such use, which may be determined by EDA's reasonable interpretation of the statute. *See* 13 C.F.R. § 300.3. The applicant must show that the matching share is committed to the project, available as needed and not conditioned or encumbered in any way that precludes its use consistent with the requirements of EDA investment assistance. *See* 13 C.F.R. § 301.5.

#### **IV. Application and Submission Information**

##### **A. Application Packages**

The application package consists of the following three forms:

- (1) Form ED-900A, *Application for Investment Assistance* (OMB Control No. 0610-0094);
- (2) Form ED-900A's program-specific component, *National Technical Assistance, Training, and Research and Evaluation Program Requirements* (OMB Control No. 0610-0094); and
- (3) Form SF-424, *Application for Federal Assistance* (OMB Control No. 4040-0004).

Applicants should note that, despite references to Form ED-900P (*Pre-Application for Investment Assistance*) in the instructions for completing Form ED-900A, a pre-application is not required under this competitive solicitation.

##### **B. Submitting Application Packages**

Applicants have the following three options for submitting a completed application package:

- (1) *Full electronic submissions*. This option is feasible only for applicants with access to a scanner. Applicants choosing this option first should complete and electronically submit Forms SF-424, SF-424A (*Budget Information—Non-Construction Programs*), and SF-424B (*Assurances—Non-Construction Programs*) in the [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) application package. You may access this grant opportunity synopsis (and the applicable forms) by following the instructions provided at <http://www.grants.gov/search/basic.do>, whereby you can perform a basic search for this grant opportunity by completing the “*Keyword Search*,” the “*Search by Funding Opportunity Number*,” or the “*Search by CFDA Number*” field, and clicking the “*Search*” button.

Since applicants are unable to electronically save completed versions of Form ED-900A and Form ED-900A's program-specific component (*National Technical*

*Assistance, Training, and Research and Evaluation Program Requirements*), applicants must print copies of the these two (2) forms from EDA's website at <http://www.eda.gov/InvestmentsGrants/Application.xml>, complete all pertinent sections (excluding pages 1-8 of Form ED-900A's program-specific component, since pages 1-8 consist of Forms SF-424A and SF-424B), and scan and attach these two forms and all required additional narratives (per the information set out in section IV.C. of this FFO) to the [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) application package. Applicants may then submit the entire application package through [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov). Contrary to the instructions provided in the Form ED-900A, it is not necessary to submit hardcopies of the completed application to EDA.

- (2) *Electronic submission of Forms SF-424, SF-424A and SF-424B, followed by paper (hardcopy) submission of Form ED-900A and Form ED-900A's program-specific component via mail.* Applicants choosing this option first should complete and electronically submit Forms SF-424, SF-424A and SF-424B in the [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) application package. You may access this grant opportunity synopsis (and the applicable forms) by following the instructions provided on <http://www.grants.gov/search/basic.do>, whereby you can perform a basic search for this grant opportunity by completing the "Keyword Search," the "Search by Funding Opportunity Number," or the "Search by CFDA Number" field, and clicking the "Search" button. Applicants should then print copies of Form ED-900A and Form ED-900A's program-specific component (*National Technical Assistance, Training, and Research and Evaluation Program Requirements*), both of which can be found on EDA's website at <http://www.eda.gov/InvestmentsGrants/Application.xml>, complete all pertinent sections (excluding pages 1-8 of Form ED-900A's program-specific component, since pages 1-8 consist of Forms SF-424A and SF-424B), attach all required additional narratives (per the information set out in section IV.C. of this FFO), and print or type their DUNS number at the top of Form ED-900A to allow EDA to match each paper (hardcopy) application received with the corresponding electronically-submitted forms. Applicants should then e-mail or otherwise deliver the completed Form ED-900A and ED-900A's program-specific component to EDA Headquarters as provided in section VII.B. of this announcement.
- (3) *Full paper (hardcopy) submissions.* Applicants choosing this option should first download and print Form SF-424. Applicants should then save blank copies of Form ED-900A and Form ED-900A's program-specific component (*National Technical Assistance, Training, and Research and Evaluation Program Requirements*), complete these forms and attach all required additional narratives (per the information set out in section IV.C. of this FFO); and e-mail or otherwise deliver the completed Form SF-424, Form ED-900A and Form ED-900A's program-specific component to EDA Headquarters as provided in section VII.B. of this announcement. All forms may be downloaded and printed from EDA's website at <http://www.eda.gov/InvestmentsGrants/Application.xml>. Paper applications also may be obtained by contacting the EDA representative identified in section VII.A. of this announcement.

### C. Content and Form of Application Submissions

To apply for an award under this competitive solicitation, an eligible applicant must submit a completed application package in accordance with the information set forth below.

#### 1. Application Format

Applications may be submitted in one of three formats: (i) full paper (hardcopy) format; (ii) partially in paper (hardcopy) format and partially in electronic format; or (iii) full electronic format, each in accordance with the procedures provided in section IV.B. of this FFO. EDA will not accept facsimile transmissions of applications.

For applicants submitting full electronic applications through [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov), the preferred file format for electronic attachments (e.g., the project narrative and additional exhibits to Form ED-900A and its program-specific component) is portable document format (PDF); however, EDA will accept electronic files in Microsoft Word, WordPerfect, Lotus or Excel formats.

#### 2. Application Checklist

The content of a completed application package is the same for full or partial electronic submissions and full or partial paper (hardcopy) submissions. Each application package must include the:

- a. Form ED-900A, *Application for Investment Assistance*;
- b. Form ED-900A's program-specific component, *National Technical Assistance, Training, and Research and Evaluation Program Requirements*;
- c. Form SF-424, *Application for Federal Assistance*;
- d. Form SF-424A, *Budget Information—Non-Construction Programs*;
- e. Form SF-424B, *Assurances—Non-Construction Programs*;
- f. Description of how the applicant intends to carry out the scope of work (included in the project narrative requested in Part I of Form ED-900A's program-specific component, which should not exceed ten (10) pages);
- g. Proposed budget and accompanying explanation, including a detailed explanation of the matching share (i.e., non-federal share) to be contributed by the applicant or the applicant's regional/local partners (as requested as Exhibit II.A. in Part II of Form ED-900A's program-specific component);
- h. Resumes/qualifications of key staff (which should not exceed two (2) pages per individual, with an additional two (2) pages allowed for a single summary description of all organizations or consultants named in the application); and
- i. Proposed schedule for completion of the project.

As stated in section I.B. of this announcement, EDA contemplates a three-year cycle of funding under this competitive solicitation. Therefore, applicants must submit a separate budget for each year of the three-year project period. The budget must include columns reflecting the federal, non-federal cash, non-federal in-kind and total amounts allocated to each budget line-

item for each project year. Applicants should use the budget categories identified in “Section B– Budget Categories” of Form SF-424A, with sub-categories and explanations as necessary.

Applicants applying electronically should access the following link for assistance in navigating [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) and for a list of useful resources: [http://www.grants.gov/applicants/applicant\\_help.jsp](http://www.grants.gov/applicants/applicant_help.jsp). If you do not find an answer to your question under [Frequently Asked Questions](#), try consulting the [Applicant’s User Guide](#). If you still cannot find an answer to your question, contact [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) via email at [support@grants.gov](mailto:support@grants.gov) or telephone at 1-800-518-4726. The hours of operation for [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) are Monday-Friday, 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. (EST) (except for federal holidays).

### 3. Submission Deadline

To be considered timely, a completed application, regardless of the format in which it is submitted, must be either: (a) received by the EDA representative listed in section VII. of this announcement no later than August 13, 2007 at 5:00 p.m. EDT; or (b) transmitted and time-stamped at [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) no later than August 13, 2007 at 5:00 p.m. EDT. Any application received or transmitted, as the case may be, after 5:00 p.m. EDT on August 13, 2007 will be considered non-responsive and will not be considered for funding. The closing date and time are the same for paper (hardcopy) submissions as for electronic submissions.

EDA will not accept any changes, additions, revisions or deletions to applications after the closing date and time have passed. EDA may contact an applicant for additional clarifications regarding its application after final evaluations by the review panel.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to start early and not to wait until the approaching deadline to access and review the instructions for submitting an application through [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov). Applicants should save and print written proof of an electronic submission made at [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov). If problems occur while using [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov), the applicant is advised to (i) print any error message received, and (ii) call [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) at 1-800-518-4726 for immediate assistance. EDA may allow more time for application submission due to system problems at [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) that are beyond the control of the applicant.

#### D. Intergovernmental Review

Applications for funding under this competitive solicitation are not subject to the requirements of Executive Order 12372, “*Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs.*”

### V. Application Review Information

#### A. Evaluation Criteria and Selection Procedures

To apply for an award under this competitive solicitation, an eligible applicant must submit a completed application package to EDA by the deadline specified and in the manner provided in sections IV.C. and VII.B. of this FFO. Applications that do not meet all items required or that exceed the page limitations set forth in section IV.C. of this announcement will



be considered non-responsive and will not be considered by the review panel. Applications that meet all the requirements will be evaluated by a review panel comprised of at least three (3) EDA staff members, all of whom will be full-time federal employees. The review panel will evaluate the applications and rate and rank them using the following criteria of approximate equal weight:

1. Conformance with EDA's statutory and regulatory requirements, including the extent to which the proposed project satisfies the award requirements set out below and as provided in 13 C.F.R. § 306.2:
  - a. Strengthens the capacity of local, State or national organizations and institutions to undertake and promote effective economic development programs targeted to regions of distress;
  - b. Benefits distressed regions; and
  - c. Demonstrates innovative approaches to stimulate economic development in distressed regions;
2. The degree to which an EDA investment will have strong organizational leadership, relevant project management experience and a significant commitment of human resources talent to ensure the project's successful execution (*see* 13 C.F.R. § 301.8(b));
3. The ability of the applicant to implement the proposed project successfully (*see* 13 C.F.R. § 301.8);
4. The feasibility of the budget presented;
5. The cost to the Federal government; and
6. The extent to which the application:
  - a. Includes workshops that leverage EDA investment assistance; and
  - b. Exhibits regional dispersal and an estimated size of the audience and its composition (e.g., urban and rural practitioners).

#### B. Selection Factors

The Assistant Secretary, as the Selecting Official, expects to fund the highest ranking application, as recommended by the review panel, submitted under this competitive solicitation. However, the Assistant Secretary may not make any selection, or he may select an application out of rank order for the following reasons:

1. A determination that the application better meets the overall objectives of sections 2 and 207 of PWEDA (42 U.S.C. §§ 3121 and 3147);
2. The applicant's performance under previous awards; or
3. The availability of funding.

## VI. Award Administration Information

### A. Award Notices

By September 10, 2007, EDA expects to notify the applicant selected for investment assistance under this announcement. The selected applicant should expect to receive funding for its project within thirty (30) days of EDA's notification of selection.

The Selecting Official will issue the grant award (Form CD-450), which is the authorizing financial assistance award document. By signing the Form CD-450, the recipient agrees to comply with all award provisions. EDA will send the grant award by postal mail to the appropriate business office of the recipient's organization and it must be signed and returned without modification by the recipient within thirty (30) days of receipt.

Unsuccessful applicants will be notified by postal mail that their applications were not selected for funding.

#### B. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

Administrative and national policy requirements for all Department of Commerce awards are contained in the *Department of Commerce Pre-Award Notification Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements*, published in the *Federal Register* on December 30, 2004 (69 FR 78389). This notice may be accessed by entering the *Federal Register* volume and page number provided in the previous sentence at the following Internet website:  
[www.gpoaccess.gov/fr/retrieve.html](http://www.gpoaccess.gov/fr/retrieve.html).

#### C. Reporting Requirements

All recipients of EDA investment assistance are required to submit financial and performance (technical) reports in accordance with the terms and conditions of the grant award. All financial reports must be submitted in triplicate (one original and two copies) to the EDA Program Officer. *See* 13 C.F.R. § 302.16.

### VII. Agency Contacts

#### A. Additional Information

EDA's Internet website at [www.eda.gov](http://www.eda.gov) contains additional information on EDA and its programs. For additional information on the NTA Program or to obtain paper application packages for this competitive solicitation, please contact William P. Kittredge via email at [wkittredge@eda.doc.gov](mailto:wkittredge@eda.doc.gov) (preferred) or by telephone at (202) 482-5442.

#### B. Addresses for Application Submissions

Complete paper (hardcopy) applications submitted pursuant to this competitive solicitation may be:

1. E-mailed to William P. Kittredge, Senior Program Analyst, at [wkittredge@eda.doc.gov](mailto:wkittredge@eda.doc.gov); or

2. Hand-delivered or mailed to William P. Kittredge, Senior Program Analyst, Economic Development Administration, Room 7009, U.S. Department of Commerce, 1401 Constitution Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20230.

Applicants submitting full or partial paper submissions are encouraged to do so by e-mail. Applicants are advised that, due to mail security measures, EDA's receipt of mail sent via the United States Postal Service may be substantially delayed or suspended in delivery. Applicants may wish to use a guaranteed overnight delivery service.

Applicants choosing to submit applications in whole or in part electronically through [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) should follow the instructions set out in section IV.B. of this announcement.

### **VIII. Other Information and Requirements**

EDA's currently effective regulations and PWEDA are available on its Internet website at <http://www.eda.gov/InvestmentsGrants/Lawsreg.xml>. Certain EDA, Department of Commerce, and other application requirements are noted below.

- A. Projects are expected to be completed in a timely manner consistent with the nature of the project. The completion deadline for the project is specified under section I. of this announcement.
- B. If an application is selected for funding, EDA has no obligation to provide any additional future funding in connection with an award. Renewal of an award to increase funding or extend the period of performance is at EDA's sole discretion.
- C. EDA is committed to a policy of non-discrimination in the administration of all its programs.