VISION — Create New Mexico is a coalition of economic development agencies, government departments, non-profit accelerators, workforce development organizations, and higher education institutions collaborating toward a shared vision of New Mexico as a global leader in the creative technology industries.

We are seeking Phase I ARPA BBBRC funding for the development of A) steady-state programs to bolster the emerging creative technology cluster and B) responsive information networks to unify regional creative technology stakeholders, bridge urban-rural divides, and foster equitable opportunities for historically underserved populations in North Central and Mid-Region New Mexico, especially Native American communities.

Through 8 coordinated projects, these programs and information networks will A) discover and plan for the construction of resilient infrastructure and facilities; B) strengthen business expansion programs and entrepreneurial opportunities; C) foster cross-sector collaboration between technology R&D institutions and creative tech companies to increase technology transfer and development of viable products; D) attract greater investment and more high-wage jobs; and E) equip Native American and rural communities to unlock access to growing global consumer markets and economic opportunities.

The CEDs for both the North Central New Mexico Development District (NCNMEDD) and the Mid-Region New Mexico Council of Governments (MRCOG) both strongly agree on the regional potential of the creative technology cluster. According to the NCNMEDD, the region’s labor in the creative economy sector is almost twice that of national averages, while MRCOG points out that the creative industries are responsible for 1 in 10 jobs in New Mexico and concludes that the sector “has proven to be flexible, responsive, and resilient for employers and employees alike.”

New Mexico is susceptible to both global disruption in the resource extraction industries and the volatility of climate change. North Central and Mid-Region New Mexico also specifically face challenges around underdeveloped infrastructure and capital flow between urban and rural areas. New Mexico’s economy shrank during the pandemic more than the national average, with the number of small businesses decreasing by 39.9%, and disproportionate effects on Native American communities, which suffered outsized infection and mortality rates.

Create New Mexico seeks to help the region prevent, withstand, and quickly recover from shocks related to these challenges by leveraging the region’s burgeoning creative economy innovation ecosystem, connecting major creative tech and entertainment industry employers with targeted education efforts, and capitalizing a heritage of innovation that uniquely combines both technological and cultural intellectual property. Together these efforts will help North Central and Mid-Region New Mexico pivot from precarity to a global leadership role in a creative technology sector of sustainable growth and proven resilience.

ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY — The creative technology sector is the “full stack” of the creative economy and the technology that powers it. As entrepreneurs and researchers develop new ways to tell immersive, multi-sensory stories, these innovations result in technologies with cross-sector potential and career opportunities with transferable skills. Examples of creative technology industries include film and animation, artificial intelligence, visual effects, gaming,
digital 3D modeling and printing, virtual and augmented reality, the Internet of Things, and wearable technology.

According to The Policy Circle, the creative economy “contributes just over 6.1% to global gross domestic product (GDP) … with economic impacts stronger than those of the construction and real estate industries.” Globally, creative technology is responsible for $2.25 trillion annual revenue and 30 million jobs—with almost half of those jobs held by women and an employment rate for ages 15-29 stronger than any other sector.

This sector has also been called “remarkably resilient” in the face of COVID-19. For example, an ICTC-CTIC study of the creative technology sector in Canada concluded that: “despite projections of double-digit negative growth in the Canadian economy for 2020, industries like animation and video gaming have seen a surge in business.”

Locally, both North Central and Mid-Region New Mexico are uniquely positioned to benefit from this major economic force. First, large existing creative economy employers are growing with expanding creative technology needs. According to the Albuquerque Economic Development office, Netflix has spent more than $200 million in New Mexico, utilized more than 2,000 production vendors, and hired over 1,600 cast and crew members. Furthermore, according to the NCNEDD CEDS, Netflix has committed to expanding its existing footprint with a new content production studio that will create an additional 1,000 production jobs per year, while NBCUniversal will bring another 330 creative economy jobs. Create New Mexico’s initiatives will boost these numbers even more by fostering direct communication between major employers and bootcamps designed to quickly teach relevant, transferable, and sustainable skills.

Second, thanks to the longstanding presence of research centers like the Los Alamos National Labs and Sandia Labs in Albuquerque, as well as the success of more recent startups like Meow Wolf and Descartes Labs, the North Central and Mid-Region New Mexico has a rich tradition of creative technology entrepreneurship. Create New Mexico’s information networks will foster more collaboration between the science/technology and creative economy sectors, increasing the potential for technology commercialization and promoting historically marginalized entrepreneurs. Create New Mexico’s programs aim to leverage the $5 billion spent on R&D in New Mexico and translate it back into regional economic opportunity.

COALITION MEMBERS AND PROJECTS — Create New Mexico is comprised of 8 experienced coalition members who will undertake 8 coordinated projects to scale the burgeoning regional creative technology sector:

- **Hispano Chamber Foundation:** The Albuquerque Hispano Chamber Foundation is a nonprofit, member-focused business organization recognized in 2014 as the U.S. Hispanic Chamber of Commerce “Large Chamber of the Year.” As the lead institution, the Chamber will leverage its strong relationships with public and private sector entities to ensure the quantifiable success of the coalition’s diverse initiatives. Specifically, the Chamber will hire and train a Regional Economic Competitiveness Officer to coordinate the coalition’s projects.

- **PROJECT 1:** The Chamber will establish the Create New Mexico Council, a diverse council representing the coalition members and partners to convene regularly and sustain collaboration, host online community-building and recurring forums among
education and industry to ensure consistent industry relevance, build on existing outreach to Native American, Latinx, and Hispanic communities, and conduct an assessment of creative technology infrastructure needs, including a comprehensive study of broadband expansion needs in rural and Native American communities.

- **Institute of American Indian Arts**: IAIA is the only multi-tribal center of higher education in the United States solely dedicated to Native American arts and cultures—serving 90 percent of all 574 federally recognized tribes—with a mission to “empower creativity and leadership in Native Arts and cultures through higher education, life-long learning, and outreach.”
  - **PROJECT 2**: IAIA will develop and deliver new courses and curricula devoted to creative technology, empowering Native American students with the skills to become entrepreneurial leaders in the creative economy.

- **New Mexico Tech**: The New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology is a regional leader in tech transfer and STEM outreach, collaborating with state/local governments, federal agencies/laboratories, private firms, and other higher education institutions. Since 1995, NMT has successfully led large and diverse projects from a diverse range of federal sponsors. As a Create New Mexico coalition member,
  - **PROJECT 3**: NMT will focus on tech commercialization campaigns and marketing to enhance tech transfer between regional research facilities (higher education institutions and federal labs), investors, and entrepreneurs.

- **University of New Mexico School of Architecture and Planning**: With prior experience in bringing mobile STEM labs to rural and Native American communities in New Mexico, the UNM School of Architecture and Planning is dedicated to practical outreach efforts that enable career opportunities for underserved populations.
  - **PROJECT 4**: UNM will lead a feasibility study for a new UNM Creative Tech Hub and develop new mobile workshop and bootcamp programs to create career pathways in the creative technology sector for rural and Native American participants.

- **City of Santa Fe**: The City of Santa Fe has been supporting entrepreneurship and increased support for creative and innovation companies for over a decade, recognizing the powerful engine of economic activity the creative economy represents in Santa Fe, where there are 302% more creative industry jobs than the national average and the creative industries generate almost $114 million in earnings a year.
  - **PROJECT 5**: The City of Santa Fe will lead a feasibility study for a mixed-use manufacturing and entrepreneurial hub in Santa Fe. This hub would include STEM labs for creative technology research and development, digital media and film upskilling bootcamps, and coordination with regional accelerators for entrepreneurship programming.

- **Stagecoach Foundation**: The Stagecoach Foundation is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization based in Santa Fe dedicated to creating career pathways for New Mexicans in the film industry through workforce development facilitated by industry professionals and connecting students to active union members.
  - **PROJECT 6**: Stagecoach will host creative tech career pathway bootcamps focused on the creative technology of the film industry, recruiting instructors from several local
unions—including the ICG 600, SAG-AFTRA, and the local IATSE 480—to conduct immersive hands-on training.

- **Creative Startups**: Santa Fe-based Creative Startups delivers acceleration programs around the world, with over 400+ alumni companies raising $320 million in venture financing and generating 1,200 new high wage jobs. 70% of Creative Startups alumni companies are led by women and/or BIPOC. Creative Startups also launched the first Native American-focused accelerator in the country in 2019 and have graduated 35 Native-led companies.

  - **PROJECT 7**: Creative Startups will host two 5-week startup accelerators for 30 creative tech companies—focusing on entrepreneurs from historically underrepresented demographics—and host a first-ever first-ever Creative Economy Investor Summit to attract creative technology angel and venture-stage investors to the region.

- **DreamSpring**: DreamSpring is a resilient and award-winning non-profit Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI) with 27+ years of experience providing small business capital, increased access to business credit, loans, and training/support to marginalized entrepreneurs in New Mexico, including both urban and rural residents, racial/ethnic minorities, and women.

  - **PROJECT 8**: DreamSpring will manage a creative technology seed fund, providing a minimum of 25 loans to entrepreneurs (at least 80% will be to women, and/or minorities) and personalized business counseling to at least 50 target entrepreneurs.

**METRICS OF SUCCESS**

- Completed regional economic development plan for the creative technology cluster and application for Phase II ARPA BBBRC Full Application
- Completed feasibility studies for 2 workforce training centers/hubs and 1 completed infrastructure needs assessment focused on rural and historically underserved populations
- 240 bootcamp grads, 60% BIPOC, 50% based in rural communities, with 80% achieving jobs within 6 months (median wage $42,000/year) and 50% joining a union.
- 30 new creative tech companies funded by $9 million in venture capital, with 70% of these entrepreneurs women/BIPOC/Native Americans, contributing 90 new high-wage jobs, $1.75 million in new revenues, and 3 new patents
- 25 loans to entrepreneurs (at least 80% will be to women, BIPOC, and/or Native Americans) and personalized business counseling to at least 50 target entrepreneurs
- 6 tech commercialization campaigns generating 10 new patents and 4 new intellectual property licenses
- 10 Create New Mexico Council meetings with 50% attendees private sector employers and 60% attendees BIPOC, Native American, and/or women
- 4 new industry-relevant creative technology university courses (100% developed and taught by Native American industry leaders) for 32-42 new students
MATCHING FUNDS AND COMPLEMENTARY INVESTMENTS

We have identified access to $4.75 million in matching funds and other complementary investments for expansion of Phase 1 projects and potential Phase 2 projects:

- $2.5 million from the State of New Mexico for a mixed use creative tech hub in Santa Fe
- $1.25 million from the University of New Mexico for renovation and development of existing facilities that align with UNM Creative Tech Hub feasibility study
- $100,000 from private sector employers (see letters of support) to develop internships for bootcamp grads
- $100,000 from the Carl & Marilynn Thoma Foundation for Native American-focused entrepreneurial outreach programs and accelerators
- $800,000 from the State of New Mexico for additional creative technology and film bootcamps and training programs
- In-kind contributions of existing creative technology infrastructure, facilities, and programs from Albuquerque Hispano Chamber of Commerce, UNM School of Architecture and Planning, Panavision, and others (see letters of support).

BARRIERS TO IMPLEMENTATION AND MITIGATION STRATEGIES

- **Infrastructure**: Our region has faced historic challenges in the implementation and maintenance of infrastructure in rural/underserved communities, which we will mitigate through targeted needs assessments and technical assistance partnerships, including our partnerships with major regional broadband providers.
- **Historic funding barriers**: Native American communities especially have faced persistent barriers around loan approval and collateral, but coalition member DreamSpring has 27+ years of experience focusing on strategies to help marginalized entrepreneurs.
- **Dissymmetry of information in tech transfer**: Communication disconnects between market stakeholders and research institutions are common with tech transfer, but we will mitigate through recurring forums and sustainable online community building.
- **Speed of curricula development**: Curricula development can move slowly through bureaucratic academic institutions, but IAIA’s new courses have already been approved and fast-tracked by administrators for a streamlined development process.

GENERAL TIMELINE

- **Q1 2022**: Bootcamps and mobile STEM labs launched; Create New Mexico Council established; and Phase II ARPA BBBRC Full Application completed.
- **Q2 2022**: First creative tech accelerator launched;
- **Q3 2022**: Investor summit and new university courses launched.
- **Q4 2022**: Second creative tech accelerator launched; all entrepreneur loans and business counseling distributed; all tech commercialization campaigns launched; and feasibility studies, infrastructure assessments, and economic development plan completed.