NOTICE OF FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- **Federal Agency Name:** Economic Development Administration (EDA), U.S. Department of Commerce (DOC)

- **Federal Funding Opportunity Title:** FY 2018 EDA University Center Economic Development Program Competition

- **Announcement Type and Date:** Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) dated May 31, 2018.

- **Funding Opportunity Numbers:**
  - Austin Regional Office: EDA-AUS-TA-AURO-2018-2005671

- **Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number:** 11.303, Economic Development – Technical Assistance

- **Dates:** The deadline for receipt of applications is July 15, 2018. Please see section D.4. of this NOFO for more information on deadlines.

- **Notice of Funding Opportunity Description:** This NOFO announces the availability of funding for EDA’s FY 2018 University Center Economic Development Program Competition. This program funds technical assistance provided by an accredited institution of higher education or a consortium of accredited institutions of higher education that is focused on advancing regional commercialization efforts, entrepreneurship, innovation, business expansion in a region’s innovation cluster(s), and a high-skilled regional workforce. EDA solicits competitive applications from accredited institutions of higher education and from consortia of accredited institutions of higher education that are located in and have programs targeting only geographic areas served by EDA’s Austin and Denver Regional Offices:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Austin Regional Office</th>
<th>Serves: Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas.</th>
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<tr>
<td>Denver Regional Office</td>
<td>Serves: Colorado, Iowa (excluding Muscatine and Scott counties), Kansas, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah, and Wyoming.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
• **Addresses and Designated Points of Contact:**

1. **Austin Regional Office**
   
   FY 2018 University Center Program Competition
   Economic Development Administration
   Austin Regional Office
   903 San Jacinto
   Suite 206
   Austin, TX 78701

   *Designated Contact:*
   *Sally Waley, 512-381-8141, swal@eda.gov*

2. **Denver Regional Office**

   FY 2018 University Center Program Competition
   Economic Development Administration
   Denver Regional Office
   1244 Speer Boulevard
   Suite 431
   Denver, CO 80204

   *Designated Contact:*
   *Jane Reimer, 303-844-4090, jreimer@eda.gov*

• **Award Notification:** Subject to the availability of funding, successful applicants should expect to receive awards within approximately 75 calendar days from the application closing date and times set out in this NOFO. Awards will have an initial funding period of twelve months (as part of a five-year period of performance) with an estimated start date on or about August 31, 2018. See section F.1. of this NOFO for award notification information.
FULL ANNOUNCEMENT TEXT

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A. Program Description

1. Overview

EDA’s mission is to lead the Federal economic development agenda by promoting innovation and competitiveness, preparing American regions for economic growth and success in the worldwide economy. EDA fulfills this mission through strategic investments and partnerships that create the conditions for economic growth and improved quality of life by expanding the capacity of individuals, firms, and communities to maximize the use of their talents and skills to support innovation, lower transaction costs, and responsibly produce and trade valuable goods and services. The achievement of economic development potential results in regional economic ecosystems that foster globally competitive regions throughout the United States. The economic ecosystem is a multifaceted concept that links together a highly networked regional talent pool, innovation infrastructure (including both tangible and non-tangible types), research and science support systems, and a culture of collaboration sustained by institutions focused on advancing mutual gain for the public and the private sector.

Innovation is the key to greater productivity and global competitiveness, resulting in the creation of new and better jobs, a more resilient economy, and the attainment of national economic goals. Regional collaboration is essential for economic recovery and advancement because regions encompass the centers of growth and competition in the new global economy. Regions achieve greater results because of the presence of diverse economic agents and, more often than not, clusters of services and industry.

Quite simply, regions that work together will fare better than those that do not. Infusing more innovation and collaboration into America’s regions has the potential to help communities create and retain higher-wage and sustainable jobs, leverage the flow of private capital, and strengthen America’s ability to compete in the global marketplace.
EDA recognizes that institutions of higher education are critical players in the development of vibrant economic ecosystems. Universities are sources of significant economic development assets—such as faculty, staff, students, research and proof of concept centers, laboratories, and high-speed broadband networks—that can support regional economic growth. In addition, universities create significant knowledge spillovers and possess broader and deeper networks of expertise that can assist innovators and entrepreneurs. Potential university-based support for economic growth includes the commercialization of research, the conversion of intellectual property and ideas into products and services, and the support of regionally-owned strategies that support business expansion and job creation. Additionally, universities facilitate environments conducive to trade and global exports by providing services for businesses to connect to international markets.

The purpose of EDA’s University Center Economic Development Program (also referred to in this announcement as the University Center program) is to enable institutions of higher education and consortia of institutions of higher education to establish and operate University Centers specifically focused on using university assets to build regional economic ecosystems that support innovation and high-growth entrepreneurship. University Centers collaborate with other EDA partners by providing expertise and technical assistance to develop, implement, and support regional strategies that result in job creation, high-skilled regional talent pools, and business expansion in a region’s innovation clusters. Expertise and technical assistance may address, for example, workforce training programs, applied research centers, technology commercialization, feasibility studies, market research, economic impact analyses training, and other technical assistance to help communities foster vibrant economic ecosystems.

Since FY 2004, EDA has administered the University Center program as a competitive multi-year program. As presented in the table below and contingent upon availability of appropriations, EDA will hold University Center program competitions in two of its six regional offices on a rotating basis.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FY 2018 (this competition)</th>
<th>Austin Regional Office</th>
<th>Serves: Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas.</th>
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</tr>
</tbody>
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1 For purposes of this NOFO, EDA defines clusters as geographic concentrations of firms, workers, and industries that do business with each other and have common needs for talent, technology, and infrastructure. Clusters are essentially networks of similar, synergistic, or complementary entities that are engaged in or with a particular industry sector; have active channels for business transactions and communication; share specialized infrastructure, labor markets, and services; and leverage the region’s unique competitive strengths to stimulate innovation and create jobs. Clusters may cross municipal, county, and other jurisdictional boundaries.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Office</th>
<th>Serves</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chicago Regional</td>
<td>Chicago Regional Office</td>
<td>Island, Vermont, Virginia, U.S. Virgin Islands, and West Virginia.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Serves: Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio, Wisconsin, and Muscatine and Scott counties in Iowa.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FY 2022</td>
<td>Atlanta Regional Office</td>
<td>Serves: Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

EDA does not anticipate creating or funding any additional University Centers outside of this competitive solicitation, unless a University Center grantee withdraws from the program or does not perform to EDA’s satisfaction. In such cases, the appropriate EDA regional office may choose to hold an intervening competition.

EDA encourages the submission of applications that will create and nurture regional economic ecosystems through science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) skill development, workforce training opportunities, applied research and development, technology commercialization, and targeted activities that cultivate entrepreneurship and improve regional economic development. A regional economic ecosystem supports innovation clusters through three main components:

- A highly networked regional talent pool, with specialized expertise relevant to the region’s innovation clusters (including connections along the supply chain and across disciplines so that researchers, academics, investors, suppliers, and entrepreneurs can efficiently share ideas and best practices);

- A support system for turning discoveries into marketable goods and services, including business counseling, incubation programs, and proof-of-concept centers; and

- Innovation infrastructure (which includes both tangible and non-tangible types) necessary to support innovation such as education, workforce development, and financial infrastructure.

In addition, EDA encourages University Center program applications that:

- Align with the DOC Strategic Plan 2018-2022, with a focus on advancing STEM skills and capabilities, supporting workforce training opportunities in accordance with the needs of local and regional employers, and/or enhancing manufacturing capacities within the region.
• Benefit distressed communities\(^2\) by linking these communities to larger, more vibrant regional economies, including rural-urban linkages;

• Present a clear plan for collaborating with and assisting other EDA investment partners, recipients, and stakeholders, including EDA-funded Economic Development Districts (EDDs) and Indian Tribes;

• Encompass regional, Statewide, and multi-State programs, and create synergies within EDA’s Public Works, Economic Adjustment Assistance, and Partnership Planning programs;

• Offer services within a well-defined geographic region in the States and territories covered by the Denver and Austin Regional Offices, and provide a full range of economic development research and technical assistance services to EDA regional partners; and

• Tailor services to the region’s needs and each sponsoring institution’s (or consortium’s) strengths.

EDA will strive to avoid funding duplicative services among selected University Centers.

University Center applicants should demonstrate how they will integrate their programs across their respective institutions and regional stakeholders in order to increase the impact of programs that support economic development. Applicants should also demonstrate a record of success in fostering higher-skill, higher-wage private sector job creation, as well as the ability to engage the private sector and leverage other sources of financial support.

2. **EDA Investment Priorities**

All projects considered for EDA funding under this NOFO must directly support one or more of EDA’s Investment Priorities. EDA’s Investment Priorities can be found at [https://www.eda.gov/about/investment-priorities.htm](https://www.eda.gov/about/investment-priorities.htm). The priorities may be updated from time to time, although they will not change during the application period for this NOFO. Any future revisions will be reflected on EDA’s website on January 15, April 15, June 15, or September 15 of each year.

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\(^2\) Distress, as delineated in the Public Works and Economic Development Act of 1965, as amended (42 U.S.C. § 3121 *et seq.*), may exist in a variety of forms, including high levels of unemployment, low income levels, large concentrations of low-income families, and significant declines in per capita income because of large numbers (or high rates) of business failures, sudden major layoffs or plant closures significantly adversely affecting a region’s economic base, military base closures, natural or other major disasters, depletion of natural resources or reduced tax bases, or substantial loss of population because of the lack of employment opportunities. *See* 13 C.F.R. § 301.3.
3. Statutory Authority for the University Center Program

EDA’s authorizing statute is the Public Works and Economic Development Act of 1965, as amended (42 U.S.C. § 3121 et seq.) (PWEDA). The specific authority for the University Center Economic Development Program is section 207 of PWEDA (42 U.S.C. § 3147), which authorizes EDA to make grants for the establishment of University Centers. EDA’s regulations at 13 C.F.R. parts 300–302 and subpart B of 13 C.F.R. part 306 set forth the general and specific regulatory requirements applicable to the University Center program. EDA’s regulations are codified at 13 C.F.R. chapter III and are accessible at https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/ECFR?page=browse. Scroll down to find Title 13, then click on Chapter III. Likewise, PWEDA is available on the U.S. Government Publishing Office’s (GPO’s) website at https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/USCODE-2016-title42/pdf/USCODE-2016-title42-chap38.pdf.

B. Federal Award Information

1. What funding is available under this announcement?

For FY 2018, EDA has allocated approximately $7.4 million to the University Center program ($2.5 million for the first year of awards under this competition) under funding appropriated through the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2018 (P.L. 115–141). Annual awards for the University Centers selected in past years generally have been in the range of $80,000 to $200,000 each, and each participating region has generally made 8 to 10 awards. The Austin Regional Office and the Denver Regional Office may choose to fund awards under this competition outside of these ranges. Subject to the availability of funding at the time of award, the funds allocated to the University Center program are anticipated to be available until expended.

2. What type of funding instrument will be used to make awards and how long will a project’s period of performance be?

Under this competitive solicitation, EDA may, subject to the availability of funds, award grants to selected University Centers. The awards will have a five-year period of performance, with an initial funding period of one year. The selected University Centers will not have to compete for the second, third, fourth, and fifth years of funding. Funding beyond the initial year will be dependent upon the availability of funds and upon the recipients’ satisfactory performance and progress in achieving milestones and program goals as determined by EDA and expressed in writing.

3. Post-Approval Requirements

In addition to an annual performance evaluation by EDA, recipients’ performance will be subject to a peer review at the end of years two and four of the period of performance. Two weeks before the recipient’s scheduled peer review, the University Center must provide EDA with an abstract of its original proposal, a copy of its presentation on the University Center’s performance, and any relevant papers or work product for dissemination to the peer review panelists. The recipient should be prepared to participate in a moderated discussion with these reviewers at the conclusion of its presentation.
Recipients may also be occasionally asked to participate in various events, including conferences, meetings, and webinars, during the period of performance to share best practices and discuss the program’s challenges and opportunities. The topics for these events may not be limited to accomplishments and program progress. Recipients shall provide EDA with an electronic copy of any presentations suitable for posting on EDA’s website.

As part of the required progress reports (see section F.3. of this NOFO), recipients will be required to provide an overview of how activities of the University Centers are fulfilling the needs of their target regions. For example, University Centers could identify how their activities result in a change in per capita income or help assist businesses, or they may submit a summary of their technology commercialization activities. Recipients are required to comply with all terms and conditions of the award, including specific award conditions agreed to by EDA and the University Center.

C. Eligibility Information

1. Eligible Applicants

An accredited institution of higher education, including a community college or junior college, or a consortium of accredited institutions of higher education is eligible to apply for and to receive funding under the University Center Economic Development Program. See section 3(12) of PWEDA (42 U.S.C. § 3122(12)) and 13 C.F.R. § 300.3. A university-affiliated research institution also is eligible to apply for and to receive funding under this NOFO, provided it demonstrates (e.g., through a letter or other documentation from the university president or chancellor) that it maintains the full and integral support of the university with respect to its economic development activities. For applicants applying as a consortium, one accredited institution of higher education must be identified as the lead applicant that would have primary responsibility to EDA and to the other members of the consortium for implementing an award. An organization that is affiliated with and directed by an accredited institution of higher education and that is in good standing may partner with an accredited institution of higher education or consortium to participate in a proposed project.

Pursuant to this NOFO, EDA is soliciting applications from accredited institutions of higher education and from consortia of accredited institutions of higher education to operate University Centers in (and have programs targeting) only the following geographic areas served by the Austin and Denver Regional Offices:

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– 9 –
2. Cost Sharing or Matching

Generally, the amount of an EDA award may not exceed 50 percent of the total cost of the project. Projects may receive an additional amount that may not exceed up to 30 percent of the total project cost, based on the relative needs of the Region in which the project will be located, as determined by EDA. In addition, the Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Economic Development has the discretion to establish a maximum EDA investment rate of up to 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. Additionally, EDA’s regulations provide discretion to establish a maximum EDA investment rate of up to 100 percent for projects of Indian Tribes.

In-kind contributions may provide the required non-Federal share of the total project cost and can consist of contributions directly related to the proposed project, such as space, equipment, services, or forgiveness or assumptions of debt. Funds from other Federal financial assistance awards are considered matching share funds only if authorized by statute, which may be determined by EDA’s reasonable interpretation of the statute.

EDA will fairly evaluate all in-kind contributions, which must be eligible in accordance with Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (Uniform Guidance). The applicant must show that the matching share will: (i) be committed to the project for the project period, (ii) be available as needed, and (iii) not be conditioned or encumbered in any way that may preclude its use consistent with the requirements of EDA investment assistance. To meet these requirements, applicants may submit for each source of matching share a commitment letter or equivalent document signed by an authorized representative of the organization providing the matching funds. Additional documentation may be requested by EDA to substantiate the availability of the matching funds.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to work with the appropriate EDA representative listed in section G. of this NOFO to determine how in-kind contributions can be utilized to satisfy the matching share requirement for their respective project concept and application.

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3 See section 204(a) of PWEDA (42 U.S.C. § 3144) and 13 C.F.R. § 301.4(b)(1).

4 See section 204(a) of PWEDA (42 U.S.C. § 3144) and 13 C.F.R. § 301.4(b)(1).

5 See section 204(c)(3) of PWEDA (42 U.S.C. § 3144) and 13 C.F.R. § 301.4(b)(4).

6 See 13 C.F.R. § 301.4(b)(5).

7 See section 204(b) of PWEDA (42 U.S.C. § 3144).

8 See the definition of “Local Share or Matching Share” at 13 C.F.R. § 300.3.

9 See 13 C.F.R. § 301.5.
D. Application and Submission Information

1. Address to Request Application Package

An applicant may obtain the appropriate application package electronically at https://www.grants.gov/. Applicants in areas served by the Austin Regional Office may search for this funding opportunity on Grants.gov using Opportunity Number “EDA-AUSTA-AURO-2018-2005671”, while applicants in areas served by the Denver Regional Office may search for this funding opportunity on Grants.gov using Opportunity Number “EDA-DENTA-DRO-2018-2005672”. All components of the appropriate application package may be accessed and downloaded (in a screen-fillable format) at https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/apply-for-grants.html. Applicants are advised that they must complete the registration process prior to submitting an application through Grants.gov. Registration is not required for an applicant to access, view, or download the application package. Even though an applicant may be able to view and download an application, if the applicant has not correctly completed the Grants.gov registration process, the applicant will not be able to submit the application electronically for EDA’s review.

To request a paper copy of the application materials, please contact either the Austin or Denver Regional Office:

**Austin**
FY 2018 University Center Program Competition
Economic Development Administration
Austin Regional Office
903 San Jacinto
Suite 206
Austin, TX 78701

*Designated Contact: Sally Waley, 512-381-8141, swaley@eda.gov*

**Denver**
FY 2018 University Center Program Competition
Economic Development Administration
Denver Regional Office
1244 Speer Boulevard
Suite 431
Denver, CO 80204

*Designated Contact: Jane Reimer, 303-844-4090, jreimer@eda.gov*

2. Content and Form of Application Submission

Applicants must complete and submit the following components of an application package. An application that does not have all of the required components may be considered incomplete and not receive further consideration. *See* section E. of this NOFO for information regarding application review.
a. Required Documents

- Form SF-424 – Application for Federal Assistance.
- Form SF-424A – Budget Information—Non-Construction Programs.
- Form SF-424B – Assurances—Non-Construction Programs.
- Form CD-511 – Certification Regarding Lobbying.
- Form SF-LLL – Disclosure of Lobbying Activities.
- Form ED-900 – General Application for EDA Programs.
- Form ED-900A – Additional EDA Assurances for Construction or Non-Construction Investments.
- Project Narrative (as described in section D.2.c. below).

b. Special Instructions for Completing Form ED-900

The following modifications to the general application instructions for Form ED-900 apply to this competition and should be observed. Applicants are advised to read carefully as the following elements have been waived.

In general, certain sections of Form ED-900 require project information that may be included in the applicant’s Project Narrative (described below). To avoid redundancy, the applicant may make the following notation “See Project Narrative” (a cross-reference to the corresponding Project Narrative section is strongly encouraged) in the response boxes corresponding to these sections.

Section B.3 of Form ED-900. Applicants under this NOFO are not required to submit a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) referenced in section B.3 of Form ED-900. Applicants should type “Not required for a UC” in the box following the “If Yes” statement.

Non-governmental applicants must complete section F of Form ED-900 and include all documentation required in that section except that applicants are not required to submit a resolution of (or letter signed by an authorized representative of) a general purpose political subdivision of a State acknowledging that it is acting in cooperation with officials of such political division (section F.3).

Notwithstanding the applicant’s self-designation, EDA may determine that public universities in certain States should be treated as “governmental” even if the universities utilize nonprofit organizations to structure their relationship with Federal grant agencies.

c. Project Narrative

Applicants should submit a Project Narrative in a separate attachment to ensure that their applications include a clear and compelling justification for the project. The Project Narrative must be no more than 10 pages of double-spaced text (approximately 200 to 300 words per page), including any attachments but not including the cover page. Where applicable, the preferred electronic file format for attachments is Adobe portable
document format (PDF); however, EDA will accept electronic files in Microsoft Word, WordPerfect, or Microsoft Excel.

The Project Narrative must provide for a five-year scope of work and for a timeline for implementation during the five-year period of performance. The timeline must include benchmarks to gauge program progress as described in section D.2.c.vii., below. The Project Narrative must include the following items, which should be presented in the following format:

i. Cover Page

ii. Section 1. Program Focus
Identify the program focus of the proposed EDA-supported University Center. Applicants should indicate whether the University Center will focus on supporting regional commercialization efforts, advancing high-growth entrepreneurship, cultivating innovation, encouraging business expansion in a region’s innovation cluster(s), developing a high-skilled regional workforce, or any combination of the above. If the University Center will have more than one program focus, applicants should clearly indicate the anticipated percentage of time devoted to each focus. Applicants that are current or former EDA-funded University Centers are encouraged to demonstrate how the proposed project is different from or builds upon the previously funded University Center project.

iii. Section 2. Service Region, Needs of Service Region, and Target Audience
Define the geographic service region of the University Center. For purposes of this competition, a region is defined as “an economic unit of human, natural, technological, capital or other resources, defined geographically.” Geographic areas comprising a region need not be contiguous or defined by political boundaries but should constitute a cohesive area capable of undertaking successful economic development. See the definition of “Region” in 13 C.F.R. § 300.3.

Describe the service region’s industries and existing regional economic development strategies. Applicants should identify linkages between the regional strategies and the proposed University Center’s activities. Applicants are strongly encouraged to support any claims with independent, third-party data, regional strategy plans, and existing impact studies.

Describe the current state of the geographic service region’s economic ecosystem, including the regional talent pool, innovation infrastructure, and support systems to facilitate commercialization of research and technology transfer, as well as the connections between economic ecosystem components and regional economic development strategies. Identify the proposed University Center’s measurable activities that will assist the proposed service area in filling economic ecosystem gaps and achieving regional economic development goals that are part of the regional strategy or strategies.

List existing and potential partnerships with regional economic development stakeholders (e.g., regional planning organizations) and trade/export related entities (e.g., U.S. export assistance centers), and describe ongoing activities. Provide specific examples of the
partnerships and the specific activities to be carried out by this partnership during the period of performance.

As noted above, EDA strongly encourages University Centers that benefit distressed communities to link these communities to larger, more vibrant regional economies. The applicant should identify the targeted beneficiaries of the proposed University Center and desired outcomes throughout the proposed geographic service region. Describe, using specific examples, how the proposed work program will positively impact the targeted beneficiaries in the proposed geographic service region.

iv. Section 3. Scope of Work and Anticipated Impacts and Results

Present an overview of the scope of work, explaining how the proposed scope of work will address the specific economic ecosystem gaps identified in paragraph D.2.c.iii. above.

Describe the specific activities to be undertaken by the University Center during the period of performance, including but not limited to providing technical assistance, conducting applied research, and disseminating information about and the results of the University Center’s economic development activities. For purposes of the University Center program, providing “technical assistance” includes all economic development activities whether undertaken at the request of an entity outside of the sponsoring institution (or consortium) or directly by the applicant or co-applicants. Conducting applied research means the direct use of research to address a specific challenge, meet a specific need, or solve a specific problem experienced by innovators, entrepreneurs, economic planners, and cluster-based industries. Disseminating information about the activities of the University Center includes: (1) informing the University Center’s target audience of available assistance; (2) publicizing research findings and best practices; and (3) demonstrating to EDA how measurable economic development outcomes will be realized during the period of performance.

EDA-sponsored University Centers engage in various activities to support the economic ecosystem of a region, including targeted commercialization of research, workforce development, and business counseling services. Examples of such activities include, but are not limited to:

- Assisting communities in identifying and defining their workforce talent pool and entrepreneurial capacity related to growing innovation clusters and growth strategies through strategic and sustainable economic development planning efforts;
- Supporting or accelerating technology commercialization and entrepreneurship by assisting in licensing and patenting activities;
- Supporting new product development by using student and faculty expertise and university laboratories and equipment to develop prototypes;
- Assisting entrepreneurs in the establishment of companies to commercialize technology or innovative products and services;
- Assisting existing businesses in increasing productivity and quality, streamlining operations, and cutting costs through the introduction or
extension of advanced manufacturing, quality management, and other processes and techniques;

- Supporting business development strategies and enhancing profitability through marketing and sales techniques, new product development analyses, and identifying new markets (including international markets);
- Supporting the regional talent pool through workforce development, professional and leadership development, and core business training; and
- Assisting communities in addressing financial challenges through innovative financing techniques.

These examples are informational and in no way limit the range of potential proposed activities.

The applicant should also identify the anticipated economic impacts and benefits to the University Center’s service region, in particular the previously identified economically distressed regions and the target audience. Anticipated benefits may include, but are not limited to:

- Economic impacts of projects assisted as measured by direct, indirect, and induced output, jobs, and income;
- Longitudinal economic impacts over a defined period at least three years after the University Center assistance is provided to the service region, including identified economically distressed regions;
- Investments of private sector capital;
- The percentage of University Center clients initiating action as a result of the technical assistance provided by the University Center;
- The percentage of University Center clients that achieve the anticipated results;
- Any activities that result in measurable outcomes leading to increased innovation, entrepreneurship, emerging and growing clusters, and sustainable economic development practices; and
- Activities that create or enhance networks supporting innovation, transfer of knowledge, and entrepreneurship.

v. Section 4. Supporting Information
Discuss the sponsoring institution’s (or consortium’s) capacity and experience in successfully operating economic development technical assistance programs, especially those focused on regional commercialization, entrepreneurship, and innovation cluster and infrastructure development. Applicants are encouraged to document specific results of past economic development activities and programs.

Identify other organizations in the proposed service area that provide potentially complementary or duplicative services.
Outline the processes or strategies the proposed University Center will follow to maximize coordination and interaction with relevant entities, such as District Organizations, Indian Tribes, Councils of Governments, Regional Planning Commissions, and other University Centers, to minimize duplication of services and provide services not currently available.

Outline the processes or strategies for coordinating economic development efforts among private and public institutions in the proposed service area.

Outline the processes or strategies for coordinating and accessing key resources of the sponsoring institution (or consortium) to support economic development efforts.

Discuss past performance in administering economic development technical assistance projects.

vi. Section 5. Project Fit with EDA’s Priorities
Applicants must address EDA Investment Priorities in accordance with section A.2. of this NOFO. It is not necessary to demonstrate that the project address all EDA Investment Priorities. Applicants should address the Investment Priorities for which there is a clear fit.

vii. Section 6. Project Timeline
Applicants must submit a detailed five-year timeline for project implementation that includes significant project benchmarks and accomplishments.

viii. Section 7. Project Sustainability
Applicants must describe the sustainability of the proposed project beyond the period of performance by identifying:

- Sources of funding or a revenue model that supports proposed activities beyond the period of performance, without future EDA funding; and

- Additional resources and partnerships that will continue to support the project beyond the period of performance.

d. Budget, Budget Narrative, and Staffing Plan

i. SF-424A. Applicants must submit Form SF-424A for the entire five-year period of performance. In addition, applicants must attach five separate itemized budgets—including columns reflecting the Federal, non-Federal cash, non-Federal in-kind, and total amounts allocated to each budget line item—for each of the five years in the period of performance. Each of the five budgets should have equal total amounts for the Federal portion. Applicants should use the budget categories identified in “Section B – Budget Categories” of Form SF-424A, with sub-categories and explanations as necessary. The allowability of costs under a Federal award is determined in accordance with the provisions of subpart E (“Cost Principles”) of the Uniform Guidance. Generally, allowable costs include salaries, supplies, and other expenses that are reasonable, allocable, and allowable for successful completion of the scope of work.
ii. **Budget Narrative.** The Budget Narrative should specifically address each budget line item (including both the Federal share and matching non-Federal share) and the Narrative total should match the total project costs listed in both the SF-424 question 18 line g and SF-424A (“Totals”) for the five-year period of performance. The Budget Narrative should include itemized descriptions and valuations of any in-kind matching funds. The activities within the scope of work that are being completed with in-kind matching funds should be clearly identified. The non-Federal share, whether in cash or in-kind, is expected to be paid out at the same general rate as the Federal share; however, if the Budget Narrative proposes otherwise, applicants must also include information that clearly indicates what project elements the matching share funds will support and explain why deviation from paying out at the same general rate is required for the project to be implemented. Subject to the availability of funding, successful applicants under this NOFO must follow the applicable Federal procurement rules prior to selecting or entering into any vendor contracts.

iii. **Staffing Plan.** In addition to the budget and budget narrative, applicants also must submit a staffing plan listing all positions that will be charged to the Federal and non-Federal portion of the budget for each year of the five-year period of performance. The staffing plan must include position titles, maximum annual salaries, percentage of time dedicated to the project, and the total amount of annual salaries that would be charged to the project. The total amount of annual salaries that would be charged to the project must be consistent with the amount reflected on the “Personnel” budget line item on the Form SF-424A for each project year.

iv. **Facilities and Administrative (F&A) Costs.** If F&A costs (sometimes referred to as indirect costs) are included in the budget, the applicant must include documentation to support the F&A rate it is using. For most applicants, this will entail the submission of a copy of its current, approved and negotiated F&A rate agreement (F&A Agreement). Subject to the limitation on F&A costs set out in section D.6. below (i.e., F&A costs may amount to no more than 20 percent of the total project cost), the maximum dollar amount of allocable F&A costs for which EDA will reimburse a recipient shall be the lesser of the (i) line-item amount for the Federal share of F&A costs contained in the EDA-approved budget for the award, or (ii) Federal share of the total allocable F&A costs of the award based on either (a) the cost rate approved by EDA (or applicable cognizant Federal agency), provided that the cost rate is current at the time the costs were incurred and provided that the rate is approved on or before the award end date, or (b) other acceptable documentation as indicated below.

If the applicant does not have a current or pending F&A Agreement, it may propose indirect costs in its budget; however, the applicant must prepare and submit an allocation plan and rate proposal for approval within ninety days from the award start date. See 2 C.F.R. part 200 Apps. III, IV, V, VI, and VII for guidance. The allocation plan and the rate
proposal shall be submitted to EDA’s Office of Regional Affairs (or applicable cognizant Federal agency). If the applicant chooses to pursue this option, it should include a statement in its Budget Narrative that it does not have a current or pending F&A Agreement and will submit an allocation plan and rate proposal to EDA or the applicant’s cognizant Federal agency for approval.

If the applicant (1) does not have a current F&A Agreement and (2) has never had a negotiated F&A rate, the applicant may elect to charge a de minimis rate of 10 percent of modified total direct costs subject to the exceptions of 2 C.F.R. § 200.414(f). The applicant should include a statement in its Budget Narrative that it does not have an F&A Agreement; has never had a negotiated F&A rate; and it is electing to charge the de minimis rate.

If the applicant is a State or local unit of government (or a Tribe) that receives less than $35 million in direct Federal funding per year, it may submit any of the following: (a) a Certificate of F&A Costs from EDA or the U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI), (b) acknowledgment received from EDA and Certificate of F&A Costs, (c) a cost allocation plan approved by a Federal agency, or (d) a negotiated F&A Agreement.

v. Program Income. If the operation of the University Center is expected to generate program income as defined at 2 C.F.R. § 200.80, such amounts must be accounted for in the project budget and must be added to those budget line items pertaining to direct program delivery. Unless otherwise specified in the terms and conditions applicable to a specific award, program income must be added to funds committed to the project, and must be used to further eligible program activities before expiration of the five-year period of performance. See also 2 C.F.R. § 200.307.

e. Organizational Summary and Résumés of Key Project Staff

Applicants must attach the résumés of key project staff, which generally should not exceed two pages in length (per résumé). Applicants also should provide a two-page summary description of all personnel performing for the applicant under the proposed project.

f. Requirements for a Consortium of Applicants

If the applicant is a consortium, each member institution of the consortium must submit the following: Forms SF-424, SF-424B, CD-511, and SF-LLL. For example, if a consortium of three institutions of higher education submitted an application package, a complete application package would consist of:

i. Three Forms SF-424 (one for each consortium member);

ii. One Form SF-424A;

iii. Three Forms SF-424B (one for each consortium member);

iv. Three Forms CD-511 (one for each consortium member);
v. Three Forms SF-LLL (one for each consortium member);
v. One Form ED-900;
vii. Three Forms ED-900A (one for each consortium member); and
viii. One Project Narrative and other required attachments.

3. Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM)

To enable the use of a universal identifier and to enhance the quality of information available to the public as required by the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006, applicants are required to: (i) be registered in SAM before submitting their application; (ii) provide a valid unique entity identifier in their application; and (iii) continue to maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which they have an active Federal award or an application or plan under consideration by a Federal awarding agency. EDA may not make a Federal award to an applicant until the applicant has complied with all applicable unique entity identifier and SAM requirements, and if an applicant has not fully complied with the requirements by the time EDA is ready to make an award, EDA may determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive an award and use that determination as a basis for making an award to another applicant. Recipients will be subject to reporting requirements, as identified in Office of Management and Budget (OMB) guidance published at 2 C.F.R. parts 25 and 170. The guidance set out at 2 C.F.R. part 25 may be located at https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=09e3da2e07628c469cd429b4e0d5b7a6&mpt=/ecfrbrowse/Title02/2cfr25_main_02.tpl and the guidance set out at 2 C.F.R. part 170 may be located at https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=09e3da2e07628c469cd429b4e0d5b7a6&mpt=/ecfrbrowse/Title02/2cfr170_main_02.tpl. SAM now encompasses the Central Contractor Registration (CCR), and the unique entity identifier is commonly referred to as the Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number.

4. Submission Dates and Times

The closing date for receipt of applications for funding under the FY 2018 University Center Economic Development Program competition is July 15, 2018. The closing time for all applications submitted electronically via www.grants.gov (Grants.gov) is 11:59 p.m. ET (10:59 p.m. CT or 9:59 p.m. MT) on July 15, 2018. The date and time that an application will be deemed to be electronically received will be determined in accordance with the electronic submission instructions provided at Grants.gov for this NOFO. See sections D.7.a. and 1. of this NOFO for information regarding electronic submissions. Applications received after the applicable closing date and time will not be considered for funding.

In addition, please note the following:

- EDA will not accept any unsolicited changes, additions, revisions, or deletions to applications after the submission deadline.
- Throughout the review and selection process, EDA reserves the right to seek clarification from applicants whose applications are being reviewed and considered.
5. **Intergovernmental Review**

Applications submitted under this NOFO are subject to the requirements of Executive Order (EO) 12372, “Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs,” if a State has adopted a process under EO 12372 to review and coordinate proposed Federal financial assistance and direct Federal development (commonly referred to as the “single point of contact review process”). All applicants must give State and local governments a reasonable opportunity to review and comment on the proposed project, including review and comment from area-wide planning organizations in metropolitan areas. To find out more about a State’s process under EO 12372, applicants may contact their State’s Single Point of Contact (SPOC). Names and addresses of some States’ SPOCs are listed on OMB’s website at [https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/Intergovernmental_Review_SPOC_01_2018_OFFM.pdf](https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/Intergovernmental_Review_SPOC_01_2018_OFFM.pdf). Question 19 of the Form SF-424 and Section E.3 of Form ED-900 provide more information and allow applicants to demonstrate compliance with EO 12372.

6. **Funding Restrictions**

As required under 13 C.F.R. § 306.6(d), at least 80 percent of funding under a University Center program award must be allocated to direct costs of program delivery. Accordingly, regardless of the rate identified in an applicant’s indirect cost rate agreement with its cognizant Federal agency, the F&A costs chargeable to the award (if any) for each project year shall not exceed 20 percent of total project costs. For example, if the total project costs are estimated to be $100,000, a maximum of $20,000 in F&A costs, allocated between the EDA share and the local share, may be included in the indirect cost line item of the proposed budget.

Construction activities are not allowable under this competition and may not be charged to the EDA funds of the project or provided as matching share.

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10 As provided for in 15 C.F.R. part 13.

11 Pursuant to 2 C.F.R. § 200.306(c), unrecovered indirect costs may be included as part of cost sharing or matching only with the prior approval of the Grants Officer, and should not be included in the initial proposed budget.
7. Other Submission Requirements

a. Means of Submission

EDA requires electronic submissions of applications through Grants.gov. **EDA will not accept facsimile or email transmissions of applications. An application that is not validated and time-stamped by Grants.gov by the application deadline listed in section D.4. of this NOFO will not be processed for consideration by EDA.**

Once an application is submitted, it undergoes a validation process through Grants.gov during which the application may be accepted or rejected by the system. The validation process may take 24 to 48 hours to complete. Applications that contain errors will be rejected by Grants.gov and will not be forwarded to EDA for review. The applicant must correct the error before Grants.gov will accept and validate the application.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to start early and not to wait until the approaching application deadline before logging on and reviewing the instructions for submitting an application through Grants.gov. Applicants should save and print evidence of an electronic submission made at Grants.gov. If problems occur while using Grants.gov, the applicant is advised to (i) print any error message received; and (ii) call Grants.gov at 1-800-518-4726 for immediate assistance. EDA may allow more time for application submission due to a “systems issue” at Grants.gov that is beyond the control of the applicant.

Please see section I. of this NOFO for more detailed instructions and information on the requirements for submitting an application electronically via Grants.gov.

b. Additional Information

After EDA reviews your application, EDA may contact you to request any necessary additional documentation to clarify or substantiate submitted application materials. This additional documentation will be required to ensure that the proposed project complies with all applicable rules and regulations prior to EDA’s issuance of an award. EDA will provide applicants a reasonable amount of time to provide any additional documentation. Failure to provide complete and accurate supporting documentation in a timely manner when requested by EDA may result in the denial of your application.

EDA may make changes or additions to this NOFO. All changes will be communicated on Grants.gov.

E. Application Review Information

1. Criteria

EDA will evaluate applications based on the following core evaluation criteria, with each criterion (a., b., and c., below) weighted as indicated:

   a. **25%** – The proposed project’s alignment with one or more of EDA’s current Investment Priorities in accordance with section A.2. of this NOFO.
b. **35%** – The capacity of the applicant to successfully execute the required tasks, as assessed by the extent to which the applicant addresses the following equally weighted factors:

i. Demonstrates the ability to foster job creation and promote private investment in the regional economy;

ii. Indicates the feasibility of the proposed project;

iii. Describes how the results of the proposed project will be sustainable and durable; and

iv. Demonstrates its organizational capacity, including its past experience in operating technical assistance programs.

c. **40%** – The application’s responsiveness to the objectives of this NOFO, specifically the extent to which the applicant addresses the following equally weighted factors:

i. Proposes to provide service to a well-defined geographic area and to benefit distressed communities in that area. Competitive applications will address the economic development needs, issues, and opportunities of a defined area within the Austin Regional Office’s or Denver Regional Office’s respective geographic service areas and demonstrate that the proposed project will offer coverage to that area, including to distressed communities.

ii. Describes the proposed technical assistance, applied research, and dissemination of information activities and explains how they will foster regional economic ecosystems. Competitive applications will articulate how the proposed activities will advance entrepreneurship, enhance the commercialization of research, foster a high-skilled workforce and contribute to an innovation environment and infrastructure, and develop a highly networked regional talent pool of researchers, academics, entrepreneurs, suppliers, and investors with expertise across disciplines and along the supply chains relevant to the region’s innovation clusters. Applicants are strongly encouraged to describe the proposed activities as specifically as possible, particularly with regard to how they will help to advance regional economic development goals.

iii. Describes how proposed activities will drive regional economic development strategies and priorities and provide unique services and value to the defined geographic area. Priority will be given to applicants that clearly explain how their proposed activities will advance existing regional economic development strategies and priorities by maximizing coordination with and leveraging the array of local, tribal, State, regional, Federal, and private sector economic development efforts occurring in the region.

iv. Extent to which the proposed University Center leverages other university assets that support regional economic ecosystems and demonstrates the commitment and support (financial and nonfinancial) of the university’s leadership. Priority will be given to applicants that clearly demonstrate how
the proposed project relates to the expertise of their staff and academic programs and explain how they will leverage other university assets (such as economic analysis divisions, GIS capabilities, planning specialists, research centers, and commercialization or technology transfer offices) to support high-growth entrepreneurship, job creation, and business expansion in the region’s innovation clusters.

v. Degree to which the proposed University Center will engage EDA stakeholders and partners. Priority will be given to applicants that identify activities that will benefit other EDA investment partners and stakeholders (e.g., EDDs, Indian Tribes, regional planning organizations). These projects may include technical assistance to EDA stakeholders; training; technology commercialization; feasibility studies; data collection and analysis; specialized business counseling, incubation programs, and proof-of-concept centers; market and economic impact analysis to strengthen the implementation and realization of regional strategic plans; and short- and long-term intergovernmental and public/private sector planning efforts that help communities foster vibrant economic ecosystems.

vi. Proposes to sustain success beyond the period of performance, including by:

   (1) Demonstrated sustainable funding sources or likelihood for the project to succeed and be sufficient for ongoing activities;

   (2) Adequacy of the plan to continuously identify needs and opportunities; and

   (3) Strength of partnerships, level of commitment, and potential to take advantage of new opportunities to maintain the region’s competitiveness.

2. Review and Selection Process

   a. Technical Review

EDA staff in the Austin and Denver Regional Offices will conduct an eligibility and technical completeness review (Technical Review) of all applications received by the above stated deadline (see section D.4. of this NOFO). EDA expects applicants to complete and include all required forms and documentation. Applications that do not contain all forms and required documentation listed in section D.2. of this NOFO may be deemed non-responsive and excluded from further consideration. However, EDA in its sole discretion reserves the right to consider timely and otherwise complete applications that may contain non-substantive technical deficiencies. Applicants that are ineligible for EDA funding will be informed that they are ineligible.

   b. Investment Review Committee

The Austin and Denver Regional Office each will convene an Investment Review Committee (IRC) that consists of at least three Federal employees to discuss and evaluate each application forwarded from the Technical Review to determine the extent to which it meets the evaluation criteria set out in section E.1. of this NOFO (Merit Review). The IRC will
forward to the Grants Officer, in order of priority, all applications that it reviewed and recommend those that it determined merit consideration for funding.

c. Grants Officer’s Decision

Applications recommended by the IRC and deemed fully compliant with applicable rules and regulations will be forwarded to the Regional Director, who is the Grants Officer under this announcement. Each Regional Director has been delegated the authority to make the final decision on whether to fund an application and may select a project for funding that differs from the IRC’s recommendations based on any of the following selection factors:

i. The application meets the overall objectives of section 2 of PWEDA (42 U.S.C. § 3121);
ii. Economic distress of the region;
iii. Financial and management capability of the applicant;
iv. Availability of program funding;
v. Geographic balance in distribution of program funds and EDA’s portfolio;
vi. Balance of diverse project types in the distribution of program funds;
vii. Balanced funding for a diverse group of organizations, to include smaller and rural organizations, which may form part of a broader consortium to serve diverse populations and areas within the regional office’s territory;
viii. The applicant’s performance under previous Federal financial assistance awards (if applicable), including whether it submitted required performance reports;
ix. The likelihood that the proposed project will achieve its stated results and catalyze additional resources;
x. The probability that a project will start promptly and create jobs quickly; and
xi. Whether the project will enable communities to become more diversified and more economically prosperous.

The Regional Director’s final decision must be consistent with EDA’s and the DOC’s published policies. If the Regional Director makes a selection that differs from the IRC’s recommendation, the Regional Director will document the rationale for the decision in writing.

3. Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIIS) Review

EDA, prior to making a Federal award with a total amount of Federal share greater than the simplified acquisition threshold, is required to review and consider any information about the applicant included in the 2 C.F.R. part 25 designated integrity and performance system accessible through SAM (currently FAPIIS). See 41 U.S.C. § 2313.

Each applicant, at its option, may review information in the designated integrity and performance systems accessible through SAM and comment on any information about itself that a Federal awarding agency previously entered and is currently in the designated integrity and performance system accessible through SAM. EDA will consider any comments by the applicant, in addition to the other information in the designated integrity and performance
system, in making a judgment about the applicant’s integrity, business ethics, and record of performance under Federal awards when completing the review of risk posed by applicants as described in 2 C.F.R. § 200.205.

F. Federal Award Administration Information

All awards will be made through Grants Online and recipients of the awards are expected to be prepared to manage the award electronically through this system throughout the life of the award. Information regarding accessing this system and setting up accounts will be provided to recipients receiving awards.

1. Federal Award Notices

a. Award Notification

If an application is selected for funding the EDA Grants Officer will issue the financial assistance award (Form CD-450). By electronically signing Form CD-450, the recipient agrees to comply with all award provisions. EDA will provide Form CD-450 via email through Grants Online, an electronic grants management system. The email will provide the Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR) listed on the applicant’s Form SF-424 with instructions on how to create an account with Grants Online in order to view and sign the award. The recipient must electronically sign the Form CD-450 without modification within 30 days of the date that EDA authorizes the award. Failure to accept the CD-450 during this timeframe may result in the Grants Officer unilaterally withdrawing the award and deobligating the funds.

If an applicant is awarded funding, neither DOC nor EDA is under any obligation to provide any additional future funding in connection with that award or to make any future awards. Amendment or renewal of an award to increase funding or to extend the period of performance is at the discretion of DOC and EDA.

EDA will notify unsuccessful applicants in writing. The regional office will retain unsuccessful applications in accordance with EDA’s record retention schedule.

b. Unsuccessful Competition

On occasion, competitive funding opportunities or competitive panels produce less than optimum results, such as a competition resulting in the receipt of no applications, a competition resulting in the receipt of only unresponsive or unqualified applications, or too few highly rated applications. In these circumstances, EDA shall take the most time- and cost-effective approach available that is in the best interest of the Federal Government. This includes (1) re-competition, (2) re-paneling, or (3) formal negotiation.

2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

Recipients of an EDA award will be bound by the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (Uniform Guidance) as set forth


3. Reporting

a. Financial, Performance, and Impact Reports

All recipients are required to submit financial, performance, and impact reports in accordance with the terms and conditions of the grant award, generally no less frequently than semi-annually. All project progress and financial reports must be submitted to the applicable EDA program officer in an electronic format to be determined at the time of award.

b. Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006

The Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006 includes a requirement for recipients of Federal awards to report information about first-tier subawards\(^\text{12}\) and executive compensation under Federal assistance awards issued in FY 2011 or later. All recipients are required to report to the Federal Subaward Reporting System (FSRS) available at www.FSRS.gov on all subawards over $25,000. Please see the OMB guidance published at 2 C.F.R. part 170, which can be accessed at https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=9f6a8905ab6ef8b0f0edd5129b3d460e&mc=true&node=pt2.1.170&rgn=div5#se2.1.170_1100.

c. Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA)

EDA may require additional data on activities, outputs, and actual impact of the funded investment, pursuant to the GPRA and as specified under the terms and conditions of the EDA award. For example, recipients may be expected to continuously track their engagement activities within the scope of work, other beneficiaries, and project-related stakeholders. They may also be expected to collect data on the outputs and impacts of their activities, such as the number of beneficiary strategic plans developed, the number of new business

\(^{12}\) A first-tier subaward means an award provided by the recipient to a subrecipient for the subrecipient to carry out as part of a Federal award.
partnerships formed, or new capabilities acquired using surveys of beneficiaries or clients. EDA will specify the data collection techniques and reporting mechanisms to be used.

G. Federal Awarding Agency Contacts

For questions concerning this solicitation, contact the appropriate EDA representative listed below. For more information about EDA programs, you may contact the appropriate EDA representative found on EDA’s website at https://www.eda.gov/contact/.

Austin Regional Office

FY 2018 University Center Program Competition
Economic Development Administration
Austin Regional Office
903 San Jacinto
Suite 206
Austin, TX 78701

Designated Contact: Sally Waley, 512-381-8141, swaley@eda.gov

Denver Regional Office

FY 2018 University Center Program Competition
Economic Development Administration
Denver Regional Office
1244 Speer Boulevard
Suite 431
Denver, CO 80204

Designated Contact: Jane Reimer, 303-844-4090, ireimer@eda.gov

H. Other Information

1. Right to Use Information

DOC reserves the right to use information contained in applications submitted under this opportunity, as well as all reports and performance data submitted by recipients to undertake an evaluation of its programs, either through its staff or by hiring a third party. The applicant acknowledges and understands that information and data contained in applications for financial assistance, as well as information and data contained in financial, performance, and other reports submitted by applicants, may be used by DOC in conducting reviews and evaluations of its financial assistance programs. For this purpose, applicant information and data may be accessed, reviewed, and evaluated by DOC employees, other Federal employees, Federal agents and contractors, and/or non-Federal personnel, all of whom enter into appropriate confidentiality and nondisclosure agreements covering the use of such
information. As may be provided in the terms and conditions of a specific financial assistance award, applicants are expected to support program reviews and evaluations by submitting required financial and performance information and data in an accurate and timely manner and by cooperating with DOC and external program evaluators. In accordance with 2 C.F.R. § 200.303(e), applicants must take reasonable measures to safeguard protected personally identifiable information and other confidential or sensitive personal or business information created or obtained in connection with a DOC financial assistance award.

2. **Freedom of Information Act Disclosure**

The Freedom of Information Act (5 U.S.C. § 552) (FOIA) and DOC’s implementing regulations at 15 C.F.R. part 4 set forth the rules and procedures to make requested material, information, and records publicly available. Unless prohibited by law and to the extent permitted under FOIA, contents of applications may be released in response to FOIA requests. If an application contains information or data that the applicant deems to be confidential commercial information, that information should be identified, bracketed, and marked as “Privileged, Confidential, Commercial or Financial Information.” Based on these markings, the confidentiality of the contents of those pages will be protected to the extent permitted by law.

3. **Notice of Government-Wide Procurement Restriction**

The general rule for Federal financial assistance is that contractors that develop draft specifications, requirements, statements of work, invitations for bids, or requests for proposals are prohibited from competing for the final procurement. Before the Uniform Guidance took effect, pursuant to the DOC grant regulations at 15 C.F.R. parts 14 and 24, the prohibition applied to institutions of higher education, hospitals, nonprofits, and commercial and international organizations but did not apply to States, local governments, or Indian Tribes. However, under 2 C.F.R. §§ 200.319 and 200.317 which are now controlling, only State recipients are expressly exempt from this prohibition. Despite this change, local governments and Indian Tribes may also take advantage of the exemption in two narrow circumstances: (i) if they are required (by statute, for example) to follow the State’s procurement rules in full and without exception; or (ii) if they are required to follow a specific State procurement rule that creates an explicit conflict with the prohibition in 2 C.F.R. § 200.319(a) (i.e., there is a statute that requires or permits the local government or Indian Tribe to award the final procurement to the same contractor that developed the draft specifications). Absent one of these two scenarios, the local government or Indian Tribe must comply with the prohibition. Applicants are encouraged to contact the EDA representative listed for their state in section G. of this NOFO with any questions regarding application of this regulation.

4. **Past Performance and Non-Compliance with Award Provisions**

Unsatisfactory performance under prior Federal awards may result in an application not being considered for funding. Failure to comply with any or all of the provisions of an award may have a negative impact on future funding by the DOC (or any of its operating units) and may be considered grounds for any or all of the following actions: (1) establishing an account receivable, (2) withholding payments to the recipient under any DOC awards, (3) changing
the method of payment from advance to reimbursement only, (4) imposing other specific award conditions, (5) suspending any active DOC awards, and (6) terminating any active DOC awards.

5. **Restrictions Governing Making Grants to Corporations Convicted of Felony Criminal Violations and/or Unpaid Federal Tax Liabilities**

In accordance with current Federal appropriations law, execution by an applicant of the Representation by Corporations Regarding an Unpaid Delinquent Tax Liability or a Felony Conviction Under Any Federal Law (see Appendix A of this NOFO) will be required in a format requested by EDA before any award will be made under this NOFO.

6. **EDA’s Non-Relocation Policy**

Applicants are advised that if an application is selected for award, the recipient will be required to adhere to an award condition relating to EDA’s non-relocation policy as follows:

In signing this award of financial assistance, Recipient attests that EDA funding is not intended by the Recipient to assist its efforts to induce the relocation of existing jobs within the U.S. that are located outside of its jurisdiction to within its jurisdiction in competition with other U.S. jurisdictions for those same jobs. If EDA determines that its assistance was used for those purposes, EDA retains the right to pursue appropriate enforcement action in accord with the Standard Terms and Conditions of the Award, including suspension of disbursements and termination of the award for convenience or noncompliance, which may include the establishment of a debt requiring the Recipient to reimburse EDA.

For purposes of ensuring that EDA assistance will not be used to merely transfer jobs from one location in the United States to another, each applicant must inform EDA of all employers that constitute primary beneficiaries of the project assisted by EDA. EDA will consider an employer to be a “primary beneficiary” if (i) the employer is specifically named in the application as benefitting from the project, and the applicant estimates that the employer will create or save 100 or more permanent jobs as a result of the investment assistance (if the jobs in question were originally located in a smaller community, EDA may extend this policy to the relocation of 50 or more jobs); or (ii) the employer is or will be located in an EDA-assisted building, port, facility, or industrial, commercial, or business park constructed or improved in whole or in part with investment assistance prior to EDA’s final disbursement of funds.

7. **Audit Requirements**

Single or program-specific audits shall be performed in accordance with the Uniform Guidance (see 2 C.F.R. part 200, Subpart F, “Audit Requirements”). The Uniform Guidance requires any non-Federal entity (i.e., nonprofit organizations, including nonprofit institutions of higher education and hospitals, States, local governments, and Indian Tribes) that expends Federal awards of $750,000 or more in the recipient’s fiscal year to conduct a single or program-specific audit in accordance with the requirements set out in the Uniform Guidance.
8. Implementing the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)


I. Instructions for Application Submission via Grants.gov

The most up-to-date instructions for application submission via Grants.gov can be found at https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/apply-for-grants.html. To begin, complete, and submit your application, follow these steps:

1. Navigate to https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/apply-for-grants.html;
2. Click “Get Application Package”;
3. In the “Opportunity Number” field, applicants in areas served by the Austin Regional Office should enter Opportunity Number “EDA-AUS-TA-AURO-2018-2005671” while applicants in areas served by the Denver Regional Office should enter Funding Opportunity Number “EDA-DEN-TA-DRO-2018-2005672”.
4. Click “Search”;
5. Under the “Actions” column, click the “Apply” link that corresponds to this opportunity;
6. Enter your email address (if you would like to receive updates from Grants.gov regarding this grant opportunity) or check the box that indicates you do not wish to provide it, then click “Submit”;
7. Choose to apply using Workspace by clicking “Login to Apply Now”; and
8. Follow the instructions provided on the Grants.gov website and on each webpage to complete and submit your application.


Register early and submit early. To submit an application through http://www.grants.gov/ (Grants.gov), an applicant must register for a Grants.gov user ID and password. This process can take three to five business days or as long as four weeks if all steps are not completed correctly. Information about the Grants.gov registration process for organizations can be found at http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration.html. Organizations already registered with Grants.gov do not need to re-register; however, all registered organizations must keep their SAM registration, which includes the Central Contractor Registration (CCR) database, up-to-date through sam.gov or their applications will not be accepted by Grants.gov.

AOR requirement. Applicants must register as organizations, not as individuals. As part of the registration process, you will register at least one AOR for your organization. AORs registered at Grants.gov are the only officials with the authority to submit applications at
Grants.gov so please ensure that your organization’s application is submitted by an AOR. If the application is submitted by anyone other than your organization’s AOR, it will be rejected by the Grants.gov system and cannot be considered by EDA. An organization may designate multiple individuals as AORs for Grants.gov purposes. EDA will not accept late submissions caused by Grants.gov registration issues, including CCR and AOR issues.

**Field limitations and special characters.** Grants.gov provides the following notice with respect to form field limitations and special characters:

**Are there restrictions on file names for any attachment I include with my application package?**

Please limit file names to 50 characters and do not use special characters (e.g., & - * % / #) in attachment names and application form fields (including periods (.), blank spaces and accent marks) or attach documents with the same name. An underscore (e.g., my_Attached_File.pdf) may be used to separate a file name. Please note that if these guidelines are not followed, your application may be rejected.

**What kind of information can be entered into form fields within my application?**

Grants.gov application packages offer fields to enter a set amount of data. When the limit is reached for a certain field, you will no longer be able to enter data into that field. For every form, there are different limitations to the data that you are allowed to enter (this varies between agency and form). Refer to the agency instructions available for download with the application package for more detail.

In EDA’s experience, use of apostrophes (‘) in file names and fillable fields of required forms has resulted in application submission issues. Accordingly, please periodically check the status of your application to make sure it has been validated and use file naming conventions consistent with the guidance in this NOFO.

If a response exceeds the field limit requirements of any form, including Form ED-900, the applicant is advised to include the response as an attachment to the application. The applicant should move “Attachments” to the “Optional Documents for Submission” box in the application package and clearly indicate in the form field that the information is included as an electronic file.

**Verify submission was successful.** Applicants should save and print evidence of an electronic submission made at Grants.gov. Applicants can expect to receive multiple emails regarding the status of their submission. Since email communication can be unreliable, applicants must proactively check on the status of their application if they do not receive email notifications within a day of submission.

An applicant should expect to receive two initial emails from Grants.gov: the first will confirm receipt of the application, and the second will indicate that the application has either been successfully validated by the system before transmission to EDA or has been rejected.
due to errors. Because it can take up to two business days after Grants.gov receives an application for applicants to receive email notification of an error, applicants should time their submissions to allow for application correction and resubmission by the applicable funding cycle deadline. Applicants will receive a third email once EDA has retrieved their applications.

Please do not submit multiple copies of the same application package. Applicants should save and print both the confirmation screen provided on the Grants.gov website after the applicant has submitted an application and the confirmation email sent by Grants.gov when the application has been successfully received and validated in the system. If an applicant receives an email from Grants.gov indicating that the application was received and subsequently validated, but does not receive an email from Grants.gov indicating that EDA has retrieved the application package within 72 hours of that email, the applicant may contact the applicable regional office representative listed in section G. of this NOFO to inquire if EDA has received the applicant’s submission.

It is the applicant’s responsibility to verify that its submission was timely received and validated successfully at Grants.gov. To see the date and time your application was received, navigate to https://www.grants.gov and click on the “Track My Application” link under the “Applicants” tab. For a successful submission, the application must be received and validated by Grants.gov, and an agency tracking number assigned. If your application has a status of “Received” it is awaiting validation by Grants.gov. Once validation is complete, the status will change to “Validated” or “Rejected with Errors.” If the status is “Rejected with Errors,” your application has not been received successfully. For more detailed information on why an application may be rejected, please see “Encountering Error Messages” at https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/encountering-error-messages.html and “Frequently Asked Questions by Applicants” at https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/applicant-faqs.html.

**Grants.gov systems issues.** If you experience a Grants.gov systems issue (i.e., a technical problem or glitch with the Grants.gov website) that you believe threatens your ability to complete a submission before the deadline, please (i) print any error message received; (ii) call the Grants.gov Contact Center at (800) 518-4726 for immediate assistance; and (iii) contact EDA using the contact information in section G. of this NOFA prior to the deadline for receipt of applications. Ensure that you obtain a case number regarding your communications with Grants.gov. Please note that problems with an applicant organization’s computer system or equipment are not considered systems issues. Similarly, an applicant’s failure to, for example, (i) complete the required registration, (ii) ensure that a registered AOR submits the application, or (iii) notice receipt of an email message from Grants.gov is not considered a systems issue. A Grants.gov systems issue is an issue occurring in connection with the operations of Grants.gov itself, such as the temporary loss of service by Grants.gov due to unexpected volume of traffic or failure of information technology systems, both of which are highly unlikely. If a systems issue is confirmed, EDA reserves the right to accept an application in an alternate format; however, all applications must be received by the deadline. Late applications will not be accepted.
Applicants should access the following link for assistance in navigating Grants.gov and for a list of useful resources: [http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/support.html](http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/support.html). The following link lists “Frequently Asked Questions by Applicants”: [https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/applicant-faqs.html](https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/applicant-faqs.html). If you do not find an answer to your question there, try consulting the “Applicant User Guide” at [https://www.grants.gov/help/html/help/Get_Started/Get_Started.htm](https://www.grants.gov/help/html/help/Get_Started/Get_Started.htm) or contacting Grants.gov by email at support@grants.gov or telephone at (800) 518-4726. The Grants.gov Contact Center is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week, except on Federal holidays.

**Appendix A. Representation by Corporations Regarding an Unpaid Delinquent Tax Liability or a Felony Conviction Under Any Federal Law**

Current Federal appropriations law contains certain funding prohibitions and certification requirements applicable to financial assistance awards issued with appropriated funds. Accordingly, the Department of Commerce will require the following certification from prospective financial assistance award recipients (also referred to below as applicants):

None of the appropriated funds made available by relevant appropriations Acts may be used to issue a financial assistance award to any corporation that:

(a) Was convicted of a felony criminal violation under any Federal law within the preceding 24 months, unless the agency has considered suspension or debarment of the corporation and made a determination that this further action is not necessary to protect the interests of the Government; and/or

(b) Has any unpaid Federal tax liability that has been assessed, for which all judicial and administrative remedies have been exhausted or have lapsed, and that is not being paid in a timely manner pursuant to an agreement with the authority responsible for collecting the tax liability, unless the agency has considered suspension or debarment of the corporation and made a determination that this further action is not necessary to protect the interests of the Government.

For purposes of the below certification, a corporation is defined as an entity that has filed articles of incorporation in one of the fifty states, the District of Columbia, or the various territories of the United States including American Samoa, Federated States of Micronesia, Guam, Midway Islands, Northern Mariana Islands, Puerto Rico, Republic of Palau, Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. (Note that this includes both for-profit and nonprofit organizations.)

The below certification is required for all new financial assistance awards and for all amendments to existing financial assistance awards that are made to corporations (as defined above) and that are funded with appropriated funds made available to the Department of Commerce pursuant to relevant appropriations legislation. This certification is further required to the extent that other appropriation legislation contains the same or substantively similar prohibitions against the issuance of financial assistance awards to certain corporations.
Instructions: All recipients that are corporations (as defined above) must complete paragraphs (1) and (2) below and have the certification executed by an authorized representative of the corporation. Recipients that are not corporations are not required to complete this certification.

(1) _______________________ [insert name of corporation] certifies that it is ☐ is not ☐ (check one) a corporation that was convicted of a felony criminal violation under a Federal law within the 24 months preceding the signature date of this representation.

(2) _______________________ [insert name of corporation] certifies that it is ☐ is not ☐ (check one) a corporation that has any unpaid Federal tax liability that has been assessed, for which all judicial and administrative remedies have been exhausted or have lapsed, and that is not being paid in a timely manner pursuant to an agreement with the authority responsible for collecting the tax liability.

By: ____________________________
[Typed name and title of the signing individual]
[Typed phone number of the signing individual]
[Typed email address of the signing individual]

Date: __________________________