



Executive Summary: The narrative of Memphis reflects broader national narratives, including the pursuit of economic growth, the civil rights movement, and the continuous challenge of bridging racial and social divides. Our city's history, marked by resilience against adversities such as slavery, yellow fever, the Great Depression, the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., and the tragic death of Tyre Nichols, has not only tested but also fortified our collective determination to rise the tide for all Memphians. Positioned as the informal capital of the Mid-South, we aspire to transform Memphis into a hub for BIPOC STEM and, particularly, technology talent. Memphis is on the verge of disrupting generational poverty by collectively dreaming and strategizing to take charge of our economic outcomes by attracting advanced industries and developing advanced technologies through innovation and entrepreneurship. Central to the ethos of our proposal is the power of place and the power of people. In the 91 census tracts identified with a Prime Age Employment Gap (PAEG) of 5% or higher, individuals are, on average, 35 years of age with a median household income of \$29.8k. Five percent of the adult-age residents living in the eligible census tracts are Veterans. The BIPOC population is 90%, with African Americans comprising 77% of this group. Of the 98,881 individuals of prime working age, 38% are unemployed, and nearly 62% are considered underemployed. Furthermore, 76% of these households are led by single parents, and the average poverty rate across these tracts stands at 38%, which is 25% higher than the national average. These statistics underscore the urgent need for targeted efforts to elevate the economic and social well-being of Memphians living in these communities.

The communities within the qualifying census tracts were once thriving African American neighborhoods, impacted first by the loss of 10,000 direct and indirect jobs from the closing of the Firestone plant in 1983 and the International Harvester plant in 1985. Over the years, disinvestment has left the eligible census tracts with nine brownfields, 32 opportunity zones, and housing vacancy rates of nearly twenty percent. The late 1980s and early 1990s saw the peak of the crack cocaine epidemic, further devastating many of these areas and diminishing the prospects of countless African Americans.

Our Recompete proposal is a bold strategy for change, a plan that is driven by place, focused on people, coordinated through collaboration, executed with accountability, and powered not just by the grit and grind that is uniquely Memphis but by the strategic and concurrent implementation of initiatives across the critical trinity of economic development, workforce development, and entrepreneurship. The Economic Development Administration's (EDA) funding for the Prosper Memphis Recompete Proposal aims to fulfill the ambitions of an assertive economic development strategy penned in 2022 by the business community named Prosper Memphis 2030. This strategy's objectives include attracting 700 advanced industry companies to create 50,000 high-quality jobs. Our regional economic competitiveness will be boosted by leveraging 20,000 STEM credentials each year, with half being awarded to BIPOC residents of Memphis. This effort will enhance our region's tech talent pool to support the advanced industries of an Industry 4.0 economy, aiming to increase our location quotient for tech-based talent from .73 to 1.0 or higher by 2030.

These ambitious long-term goals are inherently supported by our strategically located geographic assets of our four R's - rail, road, river, and as home to the second largest cargo airport in the world, runways. These assets attracted Ford's Blue Oval City and numerous other advanced manufacturers that continue to choose the Memphis region. Our greatest asset, however, has been and will always be our people. Yet, years of disinvestment and systemic inequities have left too many Memphians behind, as demonstrated in PAEG rates up to 20% in qualifying census tracts.



The proposal's eight strategies seek to reduce the PAEG below 5% in one-third of the eligible census tracts. With our seven strategies, we will engage at least 10% (3,764) of the prime-aged unemployed within the eligible census tracts, provide 760 valuable tech credentials, and move at least 3% (1,130) of prime-age unemployed or underemployed on a path to a quality job, either through direct hire, or enrollment in an in-demand credential or associates' program that will provide a quality job upon completion. Using the GDP multiplier developed by Mark Zandy at Moody's Analytics, every additional dollar earned by an individual returns \$1.20 to the local economy. Moving one individual from minimum wage to \$15 per hour contributes \$19,344 back to the local economy. Moving them to \$18 per hour, the average starting wage for entry-level positions within our advanced industries, contributes \$26,832 per year and saves the state roughly \$11,962 per year in social program benefits. If 1,000 people progress from minimum wage (\$7.25 per hour) to \$21 per hour, there is a \$34.32 million impact on the economy and \$11.9 million of social program benefits saved in just one year. Scaling those impacts to 10,000 individuals over ten years adds \$1.85 billion to the local economy and saves more than \$657.9 million in social program funds. Additionally, as our STEM talent increases by 10%, our GDP is estimated to increase by \$248.7 million; a 20% increase impacts our GDP by \$495.7 million. More importantly, Memphis becomes the epicenter of Black tech and, more widely, BIPOC STEM talent, subsequently increasing our location quotients for tech talent from .73 to one or greater, signaling to advanced industries considering investing in Memphis that we can meet their Industry 4.0 talent needs.

Eight Complimentary and Mutually Reinforced Strategies: The EDA Recompete investment will provide the resources to execute strategies that create equity in economic development by placing the power back into the hands of neighborhoods to determine the future of their business climate while also revising policies that govern how economic incentives are allocated across zip codes to be equitable, not just equal. The EDA investment will bring us closer to economic parity through STEM by providing in-demand and growing tech credentials to 760 with full wraparound supports to completion and into job placement while removing the barriers to upskilling opportunities and job placement for parents by providing short- and long-term quality daycare support. The Memphis region's STEM talent is growing, but it's not growing equitably. The largest number of BIPOC employees in STEM roles also coincides with some of the lowest average salaries. This is why our project supports African American and other BIPOC students enrolled in STEM programs in leveraging social capital and completing their programs on time and with success by connecting them with successful Black professionals in the [Boule](#) and the [Links](#) while also tactically increasing the completion of FAFSA applications in under-championed neighborhoods to increase the attainment of credentials and degrees.

Importantly, employers play a critical role in our Recompete Strategies. EDA's investment supports the development and pilot of an income-sensitive daycare benefit for three partner employers, [Draslovka](#) (international), [Sunoco](#) (publicly traded), and [Jordan Aluminum](#) (privately owned, established in Memphis in 1892). Their journey to create an income-based daycare benefit will serve as a valuable case study for other employers. As we develop under-championed neighborhoods and historically marginalized individuals, employers must also develop their acumen for engaging in place-based talent development strategies while mobilizing their peers around common DEIB goals and calls to action by forming and participating in Memphis' first DEIB employer roundtable. Over 30 employers have submitted meaningful letters of commitment, including our largest employer, FedEx, the newest OEM to the region, the Ford Blue Oval Plant, and the largest convening organization for human resource professionals, SHRM Memphis. To create more representation of BIPOC leaders in the C-Suite, this project will partner with the National Civil Rights Museum to provide executive teams with corporate equity training and support entrepreneurship and innovation through the Ford Urbanite Mobility Innovation Challenge to identify solutions for moving 10,000 individuals out of transport poverty. An EDA investment in our proposal is an investment in creating Black wealth.



Component Project 1: Creating Economic Parity through STEM in a Growing Industry 4.0 Economy

Project Lead: Greater Memphis Chamber | Project Partners: The Divine Nine, Boule, Links, National Civil Rights Museum, Regional Employers | Total Budget: \$3,591,166: This project encourages the pursuit of STEM credentials by hosting six exposure events over four years within eligible census tracts and increasing the completion of the FAFSA and TN Lottery Scholarship utilization by 5% by providing neighborhood-based technical assistance. It creates an infrastructure to support African American and other BIPOC young adults in their pursuit of STEM pathways as well as their efficacy in leveraging necessary professional social capital to maneuver spaces where African American and BIPOC professionals are currently underrepresented by connecting them with successful African Americans through the Boule Base 11 Fellows program. It also focuses on parity from the C-suite, engaging ten employers in the National Civil Rights Museum Corporate Equity program and subsequently creating Memphis' first DEIB employer roundtable.

Component Project 2: Scale Tech Training and Wraparound Supports to Increase Economic Competitiveness for Advanced Industry Growth | Project Lead: The Collective Blueprint | Project Partners: CodeCrew Tech901, Southwest Community College, Lab4, the Memphis SIM Council | Total Budget: \$9,231,440:

The Collective Blueprint (TCB) will lead collaboration with partners CodeCrew and Tech901 to expand the pipeline of trained young adults for the growing technology sector. Program components include full wraparound support, soft skills training, technical training and certification, job placement, and long-term career pathway support.

Component Project 3: Enhance Quality Childcare Access and Adoption of Employer-Provided Childcare Benefits | Project Lead: First 8 Memphis | Project Partners: Sunoco, Draslovka, Jordan Aluminum, Next Memphis, Seeding Success | Total Budget: \$3,600,000:

This project offers a suite of services including business coaching for childcare centers on financial management and operational efficiency, professional development for educators, and family liaison services to assist families in navigating childcare options and securing financial assistance. It seeks to expand childcare access by supporting centers in achieving full enrollment and optimizing fee collection through targeted business coaching and marketing strategies. As importantly, it will provide technical assistance to employers to create and execute an income-sensitive daycare benefit.

Component Project 4: Build Employer Capacity to Engage Talent in Under-Championed Communities | Project Lead: Greater Memphis Chamber | Project Partners: SHRM Memphis, Multiple Community Stakeholders | Total Budget: \$1,159,242:

This project seeks to grow the capacity of employers to embrace equitable talent development practices by 1) building bridges with neighborhood leaders for hiring residents within persistent poverty tracts, 2) providing ACES trauma-informed care training to employers to support their understanding of toxic stress and trauma and how it affects workers and job seekers and to also to destigmatize mental health realities that have escalated as a result of the pandemic, and 3) providing the U.S. Chamber talent pipeline management (TPM) best practices training for the engagement of opportunity populations and the development of a future-forward talent pipeline.

Component Project 5: Support Entrepreneurship for Economic and Physical Mobility | Project Lead: StartCo | Project Partners: Ford Motor Company and Memphis Area Transportation Authority | Total Budget: \$1,098,350:

Understanding that the city can no longer afford to wait for major funding to support its transit networks, it must look to small businesses, entrepreneurs, and academia in conjunction with public and private sector partners to push its resources into solving gaps in the transit system. This component project will seek to pilot solutions from entrepreneurs for moving 10,000 individuals out of transport poverty through the expansion of the Ford Urbanite Mobility Innovation Challenge.



Component Project 6: Promote Equitable Economic Development | Project Lead: Greater Memphis Chamber: Project Partners: Community CDCs, IEDC | Total Budget: \$1,798,988: Through study missions, guest faculty, and IEDC training, the Greater Memphis Chamber will partner with stakeholders already active in the identified census tracts to foster equitable opportunities for economic growth. As the region’s leading economic development organization, the Greater Memphis Chamber will provide technical assistance, economic forecasting, and site development support to enable eligible census tract clusters to develop dashboards to guide their work and celebrate progress in achieving the ED goals they identify for their communities. This project also seeks to align economic incentive policies to create more equity for communities that have been historically disinvested.

Component Project 7: Establish Public-Private Civic Infrastructure for Systematic Policy Change and Sustainability | Project Lead: Seeding Success | Total Budget: \$999,922: This project develops a collaborative framework for systemic economic growth and sustainability, emphasizing BIPOC community empowerment, integrating efforts across labor, community leaders, and the private sector to drive policy change that expands and improves workforce opportunities.

Component Project 8: Project Management | Project Lead: Greater Memphis Chamber | Total Budget: \$2,537,936: This component project establishes a framework to guide the initiation, planning, execution, monitoring, closure, and sustainability across all other projects.

Deliverables and Key Milestones:

The Prosper Memphis initiative unfolds in two critical phases over four years, integrating eight strategic efforts to transition Memphis into an advanced industry hub. This roadmap outlines the phased approach, weaving together our strategies to ensure cohesive and impactful progression.

Key Milestones & Deliverables

Phase 1: Laying the Foundation (Years 1 - 2)

Project Management: Build the project management dashboard for all component projects and articulate first-quarter budgets.

Deliverable: Codified practices and procedures for multi-stakeholder engagement.

Career Pathways and Tech Trainings Initiated: Determine Y1 calendar dates for exposure events, FAFSA awareness, career fairs, training enrollment, Boule Base 11 Fellows cohort dates, and stakeholder meetings.

Deliverables: Boule STEM Summit Complete, Boule Fellows Cohorts started, TPM Cohorts started.

Y1 - 2 Childcare and Entrepreneurial Support Frameworks: Initiate expansion and technical assistance plans. Launch back-end support programs for Black entrepreneurs, focusing on economic and physical mobility.

Deliverables: Employers prepared to pilot daycare benefits plan, operational support programs for entrepreneurs.

Employer Capacity and Economic Incentive Strategies: Begin employer workshops on inclusive hiring and support practices (TPM and ACES). Engage neighborhood leaders and CDCs in economic development planning and training.

Deliverables: A series of employer workshops, a framework for incentive redirection, a site selection dashboard completed, and ECD 101 neighborhood training started.



Equity: NCRM corporate equity cohorts have been completed. The employer DEIB roundtable has begun. Employers regularly engage with neighborhood leaders. Economic development incentives have been identified to be directed toward equitable community development. Policy work engages involved stakeholders.

Deliverable: First phase of end-user key information evaluations completed and all projects calibrated based on results. New policies and advocacy plan drafted.

Phase 2: Expansion and Scaling (Years 3 - 4)

Career Pathway and Training Program Scaling: Refine and expand career pathways and training programs based on initial outcomes, aiming for wider reach and impact. Continue to seek employer feedback on knowledge and skills in demand for their workforce.

Deliverable: Expanded enrollment in career pathways and training, Boule STEM Summit, Boule Fellows cohort completion.

Comprehensive Childcare Solutions and Entrepreneurial Ecosystem Enhancement: Operationalize new or expanded childcare facilities and benefits to support participant needs. Share case studies with other employers for adoption. Adjust entrepreneurial support efforts for sustainability.

**Y3
- 4**

Deliverable: Operational childcare facilities or benefits executed, enhanced support ecosystem for entrepreneurs.

Employer Capacity and Economic Incentive Strategies: TPM and ACES cohorts completed

Deliverable: Hiring and placement from neighborhoods to quality jobs.

Equity: Neighborhood leaders and employers actively engage with one another, talent/development and hiring efforts within census tracts sustained, calls to action and recommendations from the employer DEIB roundtable recognized with a plan for execution.

Long-Term Outcomes:

Project Goals	Impacts	Measurement
Produce 25k STEM credentials or degrees by 2030, with 50% held by BIPOC individuals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 300 Boule Base 11 Fellows - Six tech exposure events - 5% increase in FAFSA completion - Four STEM summits hosted by the Boule - Quality daycare supports and placements 	CIP/IPEDS completions data
Increase BIPOC wages in STEM roles to the top quartile of earnings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 760 trained in a tech credential or starting a 2-year program toward a quality job - 3% increase in BIPOC Engineer and computer science graduates - NCRM Corporate Equity cohort completion by ten employers 	Lightcast Data for STEM occupational codes



<p>Increase the location quotient of tech roles from .73 to 1 or greater</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 760 trained in a tech credential or starting a 2-year program toward a quality job - Increased FAFSA completion and community college/tech school enrollment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - LQ data from Lightcast - CIP data for program enrollments and completions
<p>Reduce # of census tracts w/ PAEG of 5%+ by 1/3 = 32 census tracts no longer qualified as persistent poverty</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Engage at least 10% (3,764) of the prime-aged unemployed within the eligible census tracts and move 3% (1,130) of prime-age unemployed or underemployed on a path to a quality job, either through direct hire or enrollment in an in-demand credential or associates program that will provide a quality job upon completion. - Six neighborhood career fairs and hiring events - 24 employers complete the US Chamber Talent Pipeline Management Program - 12 employer and neighborhood leader meetings - Formation of an employer DEIB roundtable - Six ACES trainings for up to 300 employers - New mobility solutions designed by entrepreneurs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increased labor force participation - Increased job creation - PAEG unemployment data
<p>Attract \$1B in new capital investment to eligible census tracts by 2030.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - One resident-driven study mission - Four neighborhood-based leaders training in IEDC ECD 101 - Neighborhood-based economic development plans - Creation of an economic development and land use dashboard for persistent poverty tracts - Revised incentive programs to attract business to eligible census tracts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - New business permits and new construction permits as indicators of capital investment - Increased property tax revenue from eligible census tracts

Overview of Work between Phase 1 and Phase 2:

1) At the time of this writing, the Chamber team and key economic development partners within the city are supporting a highly confidential and well-established incoming tech company specializing in artificial intelligence that stands to impact Memphis in the way tech startups impacted California and Texas. This project is entering the market without economic incentives and multiple billions of dollars in capital investment and is certain to spur an innovation revolution within the region. We feel the urgency to scale our tech talent through training, innovation, and entrepreneurship more now than when we first submitted our Recompete plan.

2) The project team scaled back census tracts from (96 to 91) to align the eligible tracts to the City of Memphis boundaries, subsequently leveraging the momentum of numerous existing investments and projects underway in the eligible census tracts.

3) The project team has spent more time with the Chief Technology Officers of major employers, better understanding their needs. We identified a disconnect in their historical desire for software engineers



and other credentialed tech roles with three to five years' experience when the labor force needs to support their combined need for experienced professionals, especially in a growing region like West Tennessee. We have identified opportunities to support CIOs in building apprenticeship and work-based learning models and to work more closely with the SIM council on talent development pipelines. **4)** Since Phase 1, the City of Memphis is now one of 25 cities in the Bloomberg American Sustainable Cities cohort. Participation in this cohort will increase our competitiveness in federal competitions for climate-resilient strategies and the creation of green jobs, another sector that is growing heavily dependent on tech roles. **5)** Weekly project meetings have produced a governance structure and more clearly defined alignment between and among work streams. **6)** Between proposals, Paul Young was elected the Mayor of Memphis, replacing Jim Strickland, who ended two terms in the seat. Mayor Young continues Mayor Strickland's aggressive stance on crime, and importantly, overall crime is trending down for the first quarter of 2024.

Complimentary Investment, Policy, or Other Relevant Commitments: A wide variety of resources and initiatives are present within the census tracts eligible for the EDA Recompete, aimed at fostering the growth of individuals, communities, and business engagement. This progress, combined with potential EDA funding for the Recompete initiative, promises to deliver significant and lasting change in these areas. **More for Memphis:** In a groundbreaking \$8.5 million planning effort, the [Blue Meridian and Kresge foundations](#) have initiated a \$1.4 billion plan to eradicate intergenerational poverty in Memphis, kickstarted by \$100 million in philanthropic investments. This historic venture, aimed at blending public and private funding for long-term sustainability, is at a crucial moment in time. With over 300 stakeholders, including neighborhood leaders, actively engaging through coalition convenings and workgroups, the initiative is a beacon of transformative social and economic revitalization, marking a pivotal moment in the city's history. The momentum of this project will serve as the capstone for stakeholder engagement across all projects. **Future Workforce Initiative CTE Expansion** – In 2023, Tennessee awarded Memphis Shelby County Schools \$1 million per high school and \$500k per middle school to align career and technical education programs to the needs of regional industries, creating a historic \$43.2 million investment in CTE programs that will be focused on STEM and Industry 4.0 technologies that lend themselves to the economic competitiveness of the region. **High-Quality Childcare and Pre-K:** In a significant development for early education in Memphis, the city has committed to an investment of approximately \$16 million annually towards pre-kindergarten education, administered by [First 8](#). This substantial funding supports around 1,600 pre-K seats, fostering early learning opportunities for the community's youngest members. Complementing this effort is a high-quality childcare investment stemming from this EDA grant, together signaling a comprehensive approach to bolstering early childhood education in Memphis, reflecting a strategic and impactful investment in the city's future leaders and workers. **Community Schools Model Implementation:** Memphis is pioneering the expansion of the Community Schools Model, with 12 full-service community schools already in operation in the Recompete census tracts. This expansion includes six schools funded by the Federal Full-Service Community Schools Grant, emphasizing the model's holistic approach to education that extends beyond traditional learning. Each full-service community school represents an average investment of approximately \$750,000 in additional support for children and their families, encompassing a wide range of services from health to academic assistance. **Soulsville Health Clinic:** The original home of Stax Records, the Soulsville community is located within eligible census tracts and will be the home of a multi-million-dollar partnership with the University of Tennessee Health Science Center to open an [Innovative Health Hub](#) to offer primary care to adults and children, health coaching, school nurses in three community schools and mental health services. The Soulsville hub is the third to be opened by UTHSC and community partners in an effort to provide place-based healthcare services. It stands to be instrumental as a location that intersects with neighborhood residents. **The Women's Foundation for a Greater Memphis** invests roughly \$1.6 million in 5 zip codes within the eligible census tracts to support women on paths to economic mobility with wraparound supports. The Women's Foundation will be a critical partner in place-based efforts to engage employers, host hiring and exposure events, and complete FAFSA applications.



Neighborhoods: Accelerate Memphis is a [\\$200 million catalyst](#) to activate land-use and economic development strategies identified in the [Memphis 3.0 comprehensive plan](#). Adopted in 2019, the Memphis 3.0 plan is a partner-driven community development plan to revitalize community assets in historically disinvested neighborhoods. Memphis 3.0 specifically focuses on nine geographical “anchor areas” for targeted investments, including EDA recompute eligible census tracts. Accelerate Memphis capital has been deployed to launch many investment priorities identified in Memphis 3.0, including \$40 million in parks and community center renovations for children and youth recreational programming. | **Broadband Access:** \$7.5 million of Accelerate Memphis funds are allocated for broadband infrastructure to close the digital divide that impacts nearly 35% of Memphis families. | **Community Development:** Through Memphis 3.0 and Accelerate Memphis capital, over \$13 million is allocated toward infrastructure development and revitalization in the targeted anchor areas. | **Ford Urbanite Memphis Mobility Challenge:** [Six hundred thousand in mobility pilot grants](#), startup investment, and comprehensive support has been allocated to kick off the challenge. | **Orange Mound Tower** – Founded in 1890 as America’s first neighborhood built for and by Black residents, Orange Mound quickly grew into the largest Black neighborhood outside Harlem. Decimated by the industrial exodus of the 1970s and crack cocaine epidemic of the 1980s, Orange Mound is undergoing a modern renaissance, driven by artists and community leaders who grew up in the area. Led by Memphis-based record label/fashion house Unapologetic and local art gallery Tone, [Orange Mound Tower](#) is an adaptive reuse of the former United Equipment building (originally built as an animal feed factory) that will contain residential, retail, office space, a performance venue, and incubator space for artists and entrepreneurs.

Business Climate: Brownfield Remediation: [Shelby County’s Economic Development Growth Engine \(EDGE\)](#) has been awarded \$1 million from the EPA to establish a brownfield remediation loan program that will target contaminated commercial sites inside of the Frayser Community, once the hub for the Firestone Plant. | **Memphis Light Gas and Water** will invest a historic \$300 million over five years to upgrade our electric grid, promising a reliability in power supply that advanced manufacturers require to locate operations to Memphis. | **Bloomberg American Sustainable Cities:** In March 2024, Memphis joined one of 25 cities to join this Bloomberg 3-year initiative designed to leverage historic levels of federal funding to incubate and implement transformative local solutions to build low-carbon, resilient, and economically thriving communities. | **Two phase two finalists** have chosen Memphis as their location for the Department of Energy [NOFA De-FOA-0003099](#) for battery materials processing and battery manufacturing. The Greater Memphis Chamber led the development of the community benefit plan that was submitted by the applicants to DOE. These community benefit plans include additional supports for the work outlined in our Recompete proposal. | **Ford’s Blue Oval City:** Just 25 miles east of Memphis, the \$5.6 Billion investment will create roughly 10k direct and indirect jobs and includes the construction of seven of the smartest manufacturing plants ever built on the globe. We anticipate that the technology in the Ford plant will significantly accelerate the Industry 4.0 environment across most manufacturing operations and many other workplaces. The Ford announcement has drastically increased the economic development project pipeline for the Greater Memphis Region, with the potential to create significantly more advanced industry jobs in coming years. In 2023, the Memphis region located twelve projects (six recruitment/six expansion) that will create 1,892 net new jobs with an average wage of \$40 per hour and capital investment total of \$1,056,557,300. Two projects have already been confirmed for the first quarter this year, with 2,025 net new jobs.

Equity: Employment and Wage Gains: The project focuses on training opportunities, employment opportunities, and wage improvements specifically for underserved and underrepresented communities within the service area. This includes bringing employers and trusted community members together to create local hiring practices that prioritize residents from these communities for new jobs, ensuring they are first in line for both entry-level and advanced



positions created by the project. As important, this project focuses on calling attention to systemic inequities by partnering with the National Civil Rights Museum Corporate Equity Program for ten C-suite teams that will subsequently create the first employer DEIB roundtable. **Economic Development:** By training citizens in economic development best practices, this project puts the power of community development into the hands of residents. It also prioritizes the development of disinvested neighborhoods by site development and business attraction to these sites. The EDA Investments aim to spur local economic growth, which disproportionately benefits underserved areas by increasing access to services and improving infrastructure. **Wraparound Services:** Recognizing barriers that prevent full participation in new job opportunities, the project includes wraparound services such as childcare, transportation, and job training. These services are designed to support individuals in securing and maintaining employment, particularly those from vulnerable populations who may face additional challenges. **Safe, Healthy, and Accessible Workplaces:** The trauma-informed care professional development commitments are made to create and maintain workplaces that are not only safe from hazards but also healthy and accessible to all individuals. This ensures that all new jobs are quality jobs and accessible to everyone, particularly those who have historically been excluded from such opportunities. **Engagement with Trusted Intermediaries:** The project will build relationships with local organizations and community leaders who have established trust within underserved populations. These intermediaries will help in outreach, recruitment, and ongoing support, ensuring that the benefits of the project are well communicated and that community feedback is incorporated into project execution. **Transparent Monitoring and Reporting:** There will be transparent and regular reporting on how the benefits of the project are distributed, ensuring accountability and that the intended equity outcomes are being met. Monitoring will include community feedback mechanisms to adjust strategies in response to the needs and suggestions of residents. **Ensuring Benefits Accrue to Local Populations:** The project will develop practices and redirect economic development incentives for local hiring to ensure that the economic benefits, such as jobs created by the project, directly benefit the local community. Additionally, collaborations with local businesses for supply chain needs and other partnerships will ensure that the economic impact of the project circulates within the community, enhancing overall economic resilience.

Climate/Environmental Responsibility: Our proposal is focused on building a tech talent ecosystem that attracts advanced industries that bring and create quality jobs that are less sensitive and more resilient to disruptions caused by weather-related events. Nearly 200k people in the Memphis region are employed in roles sensitive to weather-related events. This disproportionately impacts lower-income individuals. For example, the 2021 winter freeze had a disparate impact on Shelby County and the City of Memphis. Individuals in the region's two largest types of low-wage jobs, warehousing and hospitality sectors, lost an average of a full week of pay (more if their employer did not have backup generators and were impacted by power outages that persisted for over two weeks). According to FEMA, the Per Capita Impact indicator on Shelby County for the severe winter storm is an estimated per capita impact of \$6.11. With a County Population of 924,454, the total impact on Shelby County was \$5,648,413. The Memphis population carried the largest burden of \$3,831,745, or 67%. With 156,563 individuals living below poverty, these individuals carried \$956,599, or 16% of the burden of impact from the winter storm. Additionally, 312,427 people make \$18 or less per hour, equating to a shared cost of \$1,908,928, or 33.7% of the burden of impact from the winter storm. Finally, there are 180,185 individuals who make \$15 or less per hour, resulting in a shared cost of \$1,100,930 or 19% of the burden. Our component projects seek to not only raise our location quotients for talent pools that support advanced industry but also to remove the barriers for individuals to claim the quality jobs they provide through increased training, daycare access, support to take advantage of free college tuition, and transportation solutions designed in a mobility challenge that stresses climate-friendly solutions, like electrification.

Overall Impact and Risk Mitigation: As with any innovative attempt to build stronger, more effective systems, there are always risks. As a collective impact coalition that has learned to govern ourselves to engage in equitable and meaningful work, we have developed systems and processes to identify and mitigate risk. As part of our agreements with our partners, risk mitigation will be addressed regularly, and we will engage the boards of directors of any project lead with an identified



risk. One of the most basic risks of any workforce development or training program is a failure to recruit sufficient participants from target communities. We have already undertaken significant work to mitigate this risk, as evidenced by the support and partnership of the faith-based community and neighborhood leaders. By meeting residents where they are and engaging through channels they are familiar with, we have reduced the likelihood of low participation in our programs. Additionally, with our proven track record of working collaboratively, we can come together quickly and effectively to mitigate any impacts from changes in organizational leadership, both at the partner and neighborhood levels.

Leadership and Collaborative Structure: We have created a specific component project for governance, performance/project management, and evaluation. The governance structure for the EDA Recompete grant integrates a strategic approach to economic growth and workforce development, organized into three focused pillars: business support, talent development, and entrepreneurship. Each is girded by a support framework of stakeholder management, community engagement, continuous improvement, fund development, and communication. The pillars are led by the Greater Memphis Chamber, the Collective Blueprint, and StartCo, respectively, while the supportive framework is overseen by Seeding Success and the collective impact coalition, More for Memphis. Our agreement goes beyond standard memorandums of understanding and addresses decision-making processes, performance accountability, and conflict resolution. Members will use a shared project management system for performance management and agree to financial transparency for all grant funds. Our budget reflects a shared project manager (Carissa Holsted) who has worked alongside the project team to prepare for Phase 2 work, as well as a grant manager (to be identified) to support all project leads with contracting, billing, and compliance for the expenditure of federal funds. Additionally, we have budgeted for comprehensive training on the rules and regulations of managing and expending federal grant funds. While every project component has budgeted staff to support the work, the Recompete Coordinator will convene, coach, and identify technical support needs of the staff assigned to the component projects.

Importantly, our agreement includes a requirement to engage the board of directors of a project lead when a project lead organization has deliverables two quarters behind or more. Decision-making will be handled by vote, and we have defined decisions that require agreement between the majority and the supermajority. Every meeting agenda will have a standing item to address tension points or emerging conflicts. If we cannot come to resolutions within the meeting structure, we will utilize one of three volunteer facilitators identified at the beginning of the grant project.

Most Recompete Project leadership team members serve as the ‘tip of the spear’ in their respective roles in Memphis for workforce development, economic development, entrepreneurship, policy advocacy, and stakeholder engagement. Together, we bring the collective knowledge, experience, and influence to lead the necessary systemic change defined in our plan. Systemic change, however, occurs incrementally and only with true alignment of priorities and work streams. To ensure we do not lose sight of alignment, but also the end users of our work, the project will be qualitatively and quantitatively evaluated by Slingshot Memphis. Their [MemWorks initiative](#) has identified the root causes of employment roadblocks for Memphians experiencing poverty by analyzing existing data and by capturing the experiences of Memphians through key-informant interviews so that evidence-based solutions can be implemented to enable pathways to economic mobility. The Slingshot work has been critical to informing the development of the component projects.