ANNOUNCEMENT OF FEDERAL FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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

- **Federal Funding Opportunity Title:** Integrating Economic Development Across the Federal Government

- **Announcement Type and Date:** Initial announcement of Federal Funding Opportunity (FFO) publishing EDA's application submission requirements and review procedures for applications received under EDA's Research and Evaluation Program (R&E), as authorized by section 207 of the Public Works and Economic Development Act of 1965, as amended (PWEDA) (42 U.S.C. § 3147). Effective date: Friday, November 13, 2015.

- **Funding Opportunity Number: EDA-HDQ-RNTA-2016-2004525**

- **Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number:** 11.312, Economic Development – Research and Evaluation.

- **Dates:** To be considered timely a completed application must be transmitted and time-stamped at www.grants.gov (Grants.gov) no later than Wednesday, January 13, 2016 at 11:59 pm Eastern Time (ET). Any application received after Wednesday, January 13, 2016 at 11:59 pm Eastern Time will be considered non-responsive and will not be considered for funding. This announcement solicits applications for a research project and it is anticipated that one or multiple awards may be made. EDA expects to notify the applicant selected under this FFO by March 14, 2016.

- **Applicant Submissions:** Applicants are advised to carefully read the application and submission information provided in section IV of this announcement. Applicants must submit applications electronically at Grants.gov.

- **Eligible Applicants:** Pursuant to section 3(4) of PWEDA (42 U.S.C. § 3122(4)) and 13 CFR § 300.3 (Eligible Recipient), eligible applicants for and recipients of EDA investment assistance include a District Organization; an Indian Tribe or a consortium of Indian Tribes; a State; a city or other political subdivision of a State, including a special purpose unit of a State or local government engaged in economic or infrastructure development activities, or a consortium of political subdivisions; an institution of higher education or a consortium of institutions of higher education; or a public or private non-profit organization or association acting in cooperation with officials of a political subdivision of a State.

  Federal Funding Opportunity Description: EDA is seeking applications for a one (1) year cooperative agreement to conduct research and analysis that results in tools for better aligning and integrating federal economic development programs. A core piece of this work will involve the creation and delivery of comprehensive, useable economic development program content that will facilitate access to and maximize the efficiency of such programs.

Ultimately, such tools will permit communities seeking federal and other assistance to achieve their economic development objectives. Applicants should describe how they would develop and deliver comprehensive information, including an inventory of federal economic development programs and related content that identifies and clearly delineates the parameters for all economic development programs administered by all federal agencies. At a minimum, parameters for each program must include eligibility, typical uses, complementary uses, target applicant type, the types of activities supported by the program, other funding requirements or constraints and the outputs and outcomes expected by the programs. The ideal inventory would use the lens of EDA's logic model to identify how four key areas of economic development capacity are advanced through the identified federal economic development programs. Additionally, research and analysis will be conducted to explore the extent to which EDA's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategies (CEDS) process could fulfill or better align with the economic/community/workforce development planning requirements of other Federal economic development programs. *See* section I.C of this FFO. Recommendations are sought for improved alignment of planning requirements across such programs.

FULL ANNOUNCEMENT TEXT

Integrating Economic Development Across the Federal Government

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I. Funding Opportunity Description

A. Overview

EDA leads several Federal multi-agency initiatives that support transformative economic development and growth in economically challenged regions, and has been given the broad mandate to lead the federal economic development agenda.[1] However, despite that leadership role, many federal programs exist outside of EDA that have been issued their own mandates and appropriations to support regional or community-level economic development. This presents a significant challenge for communities as they seek to understand and access the full suite of federal economic development resources. To help facilitate access to these programs, and to maximize their efficiency, EDA is developing tools and dedicating resources to enhance coordination across agencies. These tools will seek to accelerate the effective integration of federal economic development resources and institutionalize the recent successes in placed-based initiatives to achieve better economic development outcomes. EDA expects that research under this project will coordinate with existing efforts funded by EDA, such as the StatsAmerica website at http://www.statsamerica.org/, to ensure optimal results for each project.

Desired outcomes of this research project are tools to assist economic development practitioners in integrating multiple economic development resources for supporting data-driven policies and economic development objectives. Currently, there is no readily usable inventory of economic development programs that can be used by communities, federal staff and economic development practitioners. Through this project, such a tool will be developed to identify optimal opportunities, positive confluences of programming or ideal sequencing for application to common economic development challenges.

[1] EDA's mission is to lead the federal economic development agenda by promoting innovation and competitiveness, preparing American regions for growth and success in the worldwide economy. For more information about EDA's mission, see http://www.eda.gov/about/.

B. Operational Capabilities

Leveraging the agency's experience in leading the Economic Recovery Support Functions to enable post-disaster recovery coordination, EDA will be looking to build further operational capabilities to integrate economic development resources nation-wide. EDA intends to expand its staff to include a central integrated programming function that will be based at EDA's Headquarters. Such integrators will be expected to coordinate seamlessly with EDA's field-based Economic Development Representatives and Regional staff, including Economic Development Specialists. EDA's experience in economic recovery has demonstrated a distinct need to conduct effective issue assessments, strategize about potential solutions, and then implement those solutions through technical assistance delivery mechanisms. This research project should extend that model to explore the ways in which issue identification can be conducted at the regional (multi-county), state, and multi-state regional levels. Further, the project should outline noteworthy practices for addressing common economic development coordination challenges through highlighting key technical assistance methods and practices.

C. Comprehensive Development Strategies

EDA's Partnership Planning program helps communities develop and update CEDS, which articulate and prioritize the strategic economic goals of a recipient's region. Coordinating regional economic development efforts across the federal government, based on EDA-supported CEDS could have an enormous impact on fostering economic prosperity and resiliency. *See* section 203 (42 U.S.C. § 3143) of PWEDA and 13 CFR part 303.

Underlying the concept of the CEDS and at the foundation of EDA's approach to economic development is its definition of economic development that emphasizes the importance of local capacity-building to long-term economic growth and prosperity. This definition has broad applicability to the field of economic development and is not restricted in its context to EDA, but rather to all economic development programs at all levels of government. Recent EDA-supported research has identified new types of capacity-building measures that appear to correlate with increased innovation, product sales, employee training and knowledge and other benefits. EDA's logic model (depicted under *Logic Model* described below) which facilitated the identification of these new capacity building measures, can be applied to many types of economic development programs which are funded by various federal agencies. As specific federal economic development programs are identified, it will be important to determine which type of capacity each program advances, consistent with EDA's definition of economic development and logic model.[2]

D. Definition of Economic Development

Economic Development is the expansion of capacities that contribute to the advancement of society through the realization of individual, firm and community potential. Economic development is measured by sustained increase in prosperity and quality of life through innovation, lowered transaction costs, and the utilization of capabilities towards the responsible production and diffusion of goods and services. This requires effective institutions grounded in norms of openness, tolerance for risk, appreciation for diversity, and confidence in the realization

[2] Feldman, et al, "The Logic of Economic Development: A Definition and Model for Investment." 2014; available at http://www.eda.gov/tools.

of mutual gain for the public and the private sector. Economic development is essential to creating the conditions for economic growth and ensuring our economic future.

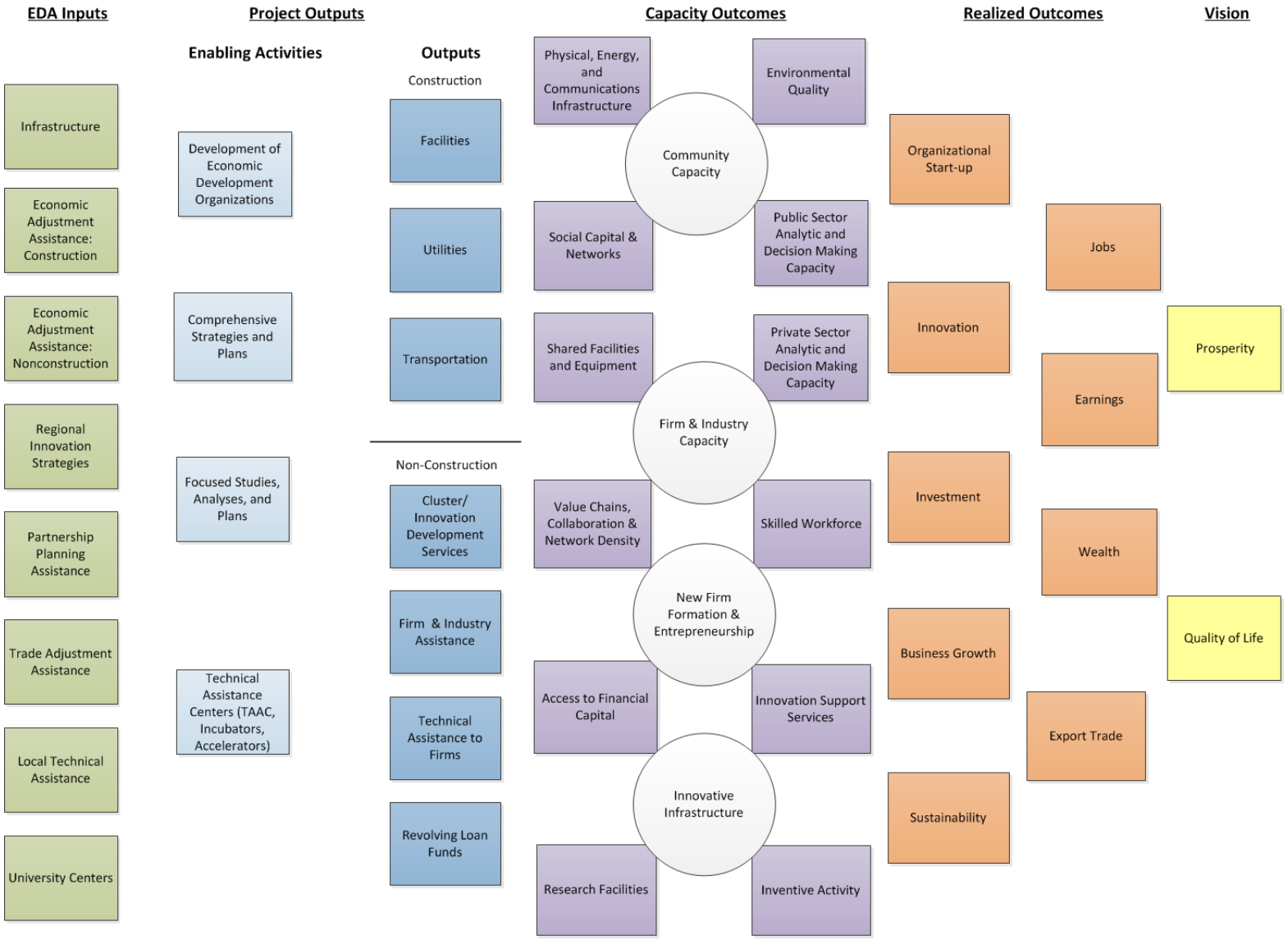
EDA distinguishes economic development from economic growth, which is a simple increase in aggregate output. American cities and regional economies are restructuring in light of dramatic global economic integration and increased competition. There is a need to not only lift less prosperous places but to also ensure that the full range of communities can actively achieve their potential. A modern view of economic development requires creating the preconditions or capacities that support creativity, collaborative problem solving and information sharing, and lowering the costs of engaging in innovation.

E. Logic Model

EDA's general logic model is useful to visually depict (reading right to left) how outcomes may be traced to types of capacity increases stemming from activities and programs. Government investments take a long time to translate into the outcome measures that they attempt to influence. Government investment, however, can build capacity that will translate into a set of realized outcomes fostering economic development. The logic is that government investment builds the resources and infrastructure that enable private sector activity to succeed. In EDA's Logic Model, there are two phases of Realized Outcomes, which are the results of private sector utilization of the capacity that is the result of government investment. EDA investment builds capacity in places and communities. The uptake by the private sector utilizing that capacity produces tangible outcomes, such as jobs, exports and additional investment. The ultimate policy objectives on the right-hand side are articulated as long-term Prosperity and Quality of Life. The left-hand side of the Logic Model provides the current set of EDA programmatic inputs: Public Works, Economic Adjustment, Regional Innovation Strategies, Partnership Planning, Trade Adjustment Assistance for Firms (TAAF), Technical Assistance. The underlying logic and definition of economic development that EDA uses is discussed in more detail in a seminal work, produced as part of a grant supported by EDA.[3]

[3] *Ibid.*

EDA General Logic Model



F. Desired Activities and Outcomes

EDA seeks to accomplish the following activities and outcomes with this award:

a) Develop key content for a toolkit for integrating economic development across all federal economic development programs by:
    - Building a comprehensive inventory from existing models and researching additional content, as necessary, for economic development resources especially federal economic development programs;
        - Such an inventory must include key parameters for each economic development program, (at a minimum: eligibility, target applicant type, geographic level of engagement, the types of activities supported by the program, and the outputs and outcomes generated by the programs)
    - Categorizing content (including but not limited to federal economic development programs) consistent with EDA's logic model and definition of economic development, demonstrating which envisioned program activities are linked to which types of outputs and outputs to outcomes at the regional level; and
b) Provide noteworthy practices in collaboration and coordination across programs, identifying where positive confluences have led to accelerated recovery or expanded economic development.
c) Analyze and document the extent to which EDA's CEDS meet the requirements established by other federal agencies for plans related to economic development activities and highlight any gap areas. Produce recommendations for bridging those gaps (i.e. aligning the planning requirements of other federal economic development programs to those of EDA's CEDS).
d) Provide recommendations for media and technology delivery channels to maximize usability by EDA staff, practitioners and communities.

G. What is the purpose of the Research and Evaluation Program?

Through the Research and Evaluation (R&E) program, EDA supports the development of tools, recommendations, and resources that shape Federal economic development policies and inform economic development decision-making at the local level. R&E program investments provide critical, cutting-edge research and best practices to regional, state, and local practitioners in the economic development field, thereby enhancing understanding and implementation of economic development concepts throughout the country. EDA also regularly evaluates the impacts and outcomes of its various programs as a means of identifying policy and program modifications that will increase the agency's efficiency and effectiveness.

H. Statutory Authority for the Research and Evaluation Program

The authority for the R&E program is listed in section 207 (42 U.S.C. § 3147) of PWEDA, and 13 CFR part 306, subpart A. EDA's regulations, which will govern an award made under this announcement, are codified at 13 CFR chapter III.

II. Award Information

A. What funding is available under this announcement?

EDA anticipates that the award made under this announcement will involve a twelve (12) month period of performance and plans to allocate up to $300,000 in no-year funds appropriated for this purpose through the R&E program. However, as of November 13, 2015, the full amount of FY 2016 appropriations is not available and EDA is operating under the authority of the Continuing Appropriations Act, 2016 Pub. L. No. 114-53 (October 30, 2015). This Continuing Resolution allocates to EDA a level of funding based on FY 2015 funding levels, but on a pro-rated basis, until the enactment of additional or full-year FY 2016 appropriations or December 11, 2015, whichever occurs first. EDA expects funding levels for FY 2016 to be similar to that in FY 2015, but the final amounts will not be known until Congress passes a FY 2016 appropriations act.

The funding period and funding amount is subject to the availability of funds at the time of award, as well as to DOC and EDA priorities at the time of award. Neither DOC nor EDA will be held responsible for application preparation costs. Publication of this FFO does not obligate DOC or EDA to award any specific cooperative agreement or to obligate all or any part of available funds.

B. What type of funding instrument will be used to make awards?

Subject to the availability of funds, EDA anticipates that an award made under this competitive solicitation will be in the form of a cooperative agreement. For a cooperative agreement, the nature of EDA's "substantial involvement" (to be included in the terms and conditions of the award) will generally be collaboration between EDA and the recipient on the scope of work. However, other possible examples of EDA's "substantial involvement" may include, but are not limited to: (i) authority to halt immediately an activity if detailed performance specifications are not met; (ii) stipulation that the recipient must meet or adhere to specific procedural requirements before subsequent stages of a project may continue; (iii) involvement in the selection of key recipient personnel; and (iv) operational involvement and monitoring during the project to ensure compliance with statutory requirements.

C. What is the anticipated period of performance and completion timeframe?

EDA anticipates a twelve (12) month period of performance, subject to the availability of funds, EDA policy, and satisfactory performance under the award. Applicants should ensure that their proposal and budget clearly specify how they will complete the Scope of Work within this timeframe. A typical period of performance begins with an initial kickoff meeting between the recipient and EDA staff to discuss project scope and to ensure that all parties are in agreement as to project terms. After the initial meeting, the recipient generally submits a final work plan to EDA staff for review and approval. Progress and financial reports and project work will be submitted to EDA based on the dates agreed to during the initial meeting and as outlined in the award special terms and conditions.

The recipient will be expected to submit a draft report and toolkit, at least 60 days before the end of the period of performance for EDA's review. Based on the agency's review, EDA may request technical and substantive revisions to the draft report and toolkit. If these revisions

are incorporated and the draft is ultimately approved, EDA will then approve publication of a final research report which the recipient may not sell and the recipient will brief EDA senior management on research methods and report results.

III. Eligibility Information

A. Eligible Applicants

Pursuant to section 3(4) of PWEDA (42 U.S.C. § 3122(4)) and 13 CFR § 300.3 (Eligible Recipients), eligible applicants for and recipients of EDA investment assistance include a District Organization; an Indian Tribe or a consortium of Indian Tribes; a State; a city or other political subdivision of a State, including a special purpose unit of a State or local government engaged in economic or infrastructure development activities, or a consortium of political subdivisions; an institution of higher education or a consortium of institutions of higher education; or a public or private non-profit organization or association acting in cooperation with officials of a political subdivision of a State.

B. Cost Sharing or Matching

Generally, the amount of the EDA cooperative agreement may not exceed 50 percent of the total cost of the project. However, under this announcement, the Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Economic Development ("Assistant Secretary") has established a maximum EDA investment rate of up to 80 percent where the project (a) merits, and is not otherwise feasible without, such an increase to the EDA investment rate; or (b) will be of no or only incidental financial benefit to the recipient. *See* section 204(c)(3) of PWEDA (42 U.S.C. § 3144); 13 CFR § 301.4(b)(4).

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. EDA will consider the nature of the contribution (cash or in-kind), the amount of any matching share funds, and fairly assess any in-kind contributions in evaluating the cost to the Federal government and the feasibility of the project budget (*see* section V. below). While cash contributions are preferred, in-kind contributions, fairly evaluated by EDA may provide the non-Federal share of the total project costs. *See* section 204(b) of PWEDA (42 U.S.C. § 3144). In-kind contributions, which may include assumptions of debt and contributions of space, equipment, and services, are eligible to be included as part of the non-Federal share of eligible project costs if they meet applicable Federal cost principles and uniform administrative requirements.[4] Funds from other Federal assistance awards are considered matching share funds only if authorized by the statute, which may be determined by EDA's reasonable interpretation of the statute. *See* the definition of "Local Share or Matching Share" at 13 CFR § 300.3. The applicant must show that the matching share is committed to the project for the entire period of performance, will be available as needed, and is not conditioned or encumbered in any way that precludes its use consistent with the requirements of EDA investment assistance. *See* 13 CFR § 301.5.

[4] *See* 2 CFR § 200.306.

IV. Application and Submission Information

A. How to Obtain an Application Package

Applicants may access the application package for this FFO electronically at www.grants.gov (Grants.gov). Applicants may search for this funding opportunity on Grants.gov using Funding Opportunity Number "EDA-HDQ-RNTA-2016-2004525". All components of the appropriate application package may be accessed and downloaded (in a screen-fillable format) at http://www.grants.gov/applicants/apply_for_grants.jsp. 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. Applicants are advised that they must complete the registration process prior to submitting an application through Grants.gov; however, please note that 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 for EDA's review. Alternatively, an applicant eligible for assistance under this announcement may request a paper application package by contacting RNTA@eda.gov.

B. Content and Form of Application Submission

To be considered complete, an application package must consist of:

- All required forms;
- The Proposal, which includes the Executive Summary, Project Narrative, Organizational Capacity/Project Management Experience and Budget Description; Major Milestones/Deliverables and
- Addenda to the Proposal.

Applications that do not contain all required forms listed in each part, or that fail to adhere to the instructions in this FFO, may be considered incomplete and may not be considered for funding. Additional application materials not requested under this FFO will not be reviewed or evaluated.

Applicants are advised to carefully read the instructions contained in this FFO and in all forms contained in the application package. It is the sole responsibility of each applicant to ensure that a complete application package is received.

1. Required Forms

All applicants must include the following forms at the time of application submission. The forms should be uploaded as separate Adobe PDF files. All forms listed in this section will be available in the Grants.gov application package.

1. One **Form ED-900A** (Additional EDA Assurances for Construction Or Non-Construction Investments) from each co-applicant.
2. One **Form SF-424** (Application for Federal Assistance) from each co-applicant.
3. One **Form SF-424A** (Budget Information – Non-Construction Programs) per project.
4. One **Form SF-424B** (Assurances-Non-Construction Programs) from each co-applicant.
5. One **Form CD-511** (Certification Regarding Lobbying) from each co-applicant.
6. One **Form SF-LLL** (Disclosure of Lobbying Activities) from each co-applicant.

2. Proposal Content

The Proposal must clearly articulate the overall goals of the project, the specific and distinct Scopes of Work and concrete activities that will be accomplished under it. The Proposal must also demonstrate each applicant's capability to implement the proposed activities in accordance with the requirements of this FFO. Applications will be evaluated based on the Evaluation Criteria outlined in section V. **Applicants should carefully adhere to the page limits specified for each section of the proposal.** Pages beyond the specified page limit for each section will not be read or considered.

a) Project Narrative

The Project Narrative should address all activities that will be undertaken using the funds requested under this FFO, a summary of how these activities support the overall project's goals, and a clear vision for the final report. The Project Narrative may not exceed **15-single sided, 8.5x11-inch pages, with a minimum 12-point font and 1-inch margins**. Within the Project Narrative, applicants should address the following elements:

Applicants should discuss how they would identify and define what constitutes key content for a toolkit to improve coordination across programs supportive of economic development. Applicants should also describe how they would develop an inventory of federal economic development programs by updating, consolidating and adding to existing inventories. Applicants should discuss what requirements and parameters for economic development programs they would include as part of their inventory. (To give just a few examples, these should include at a minimum: eligibility, target applicant type, geographic level of engagement, the types of activities supported by the program, and the outputs and outcomes generated by the programs.) Additionally, applicants should explain how they would categorize content via the lens of EDA's logic model.

At a minimum, the following deliverables are required, and the applicant should identify how they plan to meet each of the requirements including quantity, level, and depth, and also identify any additional intermediate products and services:

1) Develop key content for a toolkit for integrating economic development across the federal government economic development programs by:

- Building a comprehensive inventory from existing models and researching additional content as necessary;
- Identifying what constitutes key parameters for economic development programs, (for example: eligibility, target applicant type, geographic level of engagement, the types of activities supported by the program, and the outputs and outcomes generated by the programs)
- Categorizing content consistent with EDA's logic model and definition of economic development, demonstrating how activities are linked to outputs and outputs to outcomes for the targeted set of activities and metrics; and
- Identifying and providing additional content to help program integrators understand how to identify issues and best support community economic development.

- Successful applicants will demonstrate their knowledge of existing economic development programs and inventories and detail how they will coordinate with federal agencies and EDA grantees;
- Successful applicants will also discuss a proposed methodology for categorizing content and how they will identify optimal opportunities, positive confluences of programming or ideal sequencing.;
- Applicants should also identify potential, additional content that the applicant foresees gathering to develop the content of toolkit to help program integrators with identification of issues and optimal support of programs.

2) Provide noteworthy practices in collaboration and coordination across programs, identifying where positive confluences have led to accelerated economic recovery or expanded economic development by identifying noteworthy practices in collaboration and coordination.

- Successful applicants will demonstrate their knowledge of what types of factors lead to positive confluences and what constitutes noteworthy practices in accelerated economic development;
- Successful applicants should reflect knowledge of what types of sequencing and partner building leads to noteworthy practices; and
- Successful applicants will suggest some examples that lend themselves to case studies and replicable practices to accelerate economic development by implementation of an integrated approach.

3) Analyze and document the extent to which EDA's CEDS meet the requirements established by other federal agencies for plans related to economic development activities and highlight any gap areas. Produce recommendations for bridging those gaps (i.e. aligning the planning requirements of other federal economic development programs to those of EDA's CEDS) by:

- Describing the requirements of other federal agencies for programs related to economic development and analyzing the extent to which existing CEDS fulfill these needs.
  - Successful applicants will demonstrate their understanding of the CEDS process and value added from CEDS;
  - Successful applicants will demonstrate knowledge of other agencies planning requirements, including any existing gaps; and
  - Successful applicants will discuss leveraging of EDA CEDS and possible synergies with other programs.
- Identifying any gaps and developing recommendations for how planning requirements could be aligned.
  - Successful applicants will discuss how steps to align planning requirements will be identified and recommendations developed;
  - Successful applicants will discuss how recommendations would be developed to be actionable and realistic.

4) Provide recommendations for media and technology delivery channels to maximize usability by EDA staff, practitioners and communities by:

- Identifying the pros and cons of different delivery channels and recommending optimal delivery channels to maximize usability of economic development program content by EDA staff, practitioners and communities.

b) Organizational Capacity and Project Management

A separate section on Organization Capacity, including Project Management experience should address all activities that will be undertaken using the funds requested under this FFO, a summary of how these activities support the overall project's goals, and a clear vision for the final report. Organization Capacity and Project Management may not exceed **5-single sided, 8.5x11-inch pages, with a minimum 12-point font and 1-inch margins**. Note: resumes for key personnel should be included under Addenda to the Proposal and will not count against the page limitations of this section. (*See* Addenda section below). Within the Organization Capacity and Project Management section, applicants should address how the applicant will be able to work collaboratively with Federal partners and economic development organizations, and demonstrate:

- Subject matter expertise in the various aspects of a regional ecosystem including, economic development, workforce development, planning and others.

- Functional expertise in the major components of the work, including leadership and facilitation of projects related to robust programmatic content, actionable recommendations and toolkits.

- Experience coordinating with Federal Project Managers and collaborating with various partners (including a discussion of the extent of participation of government agencies, private sector interests, education providers, non-profits, community and labor groups, workforce boards, utilities, etc).

c) Budget Description

A separate budget narrative must be created and submitted to describe the costs associated with each line item on the Form SF-424A. Supporting documentation listing the components of these categories must be included. The budget narrative should include the following:

1. A personnel plan listing all positions proposed to be charged to the project whether as Federal or non-Federal costs. The personnel plan must include the position titles, salaries, percentage of time dedicated to the project, and amount of salary charged to the project for each staff member assigned to the project. The sum of all salaries charged to the project must equal the amount on the "Personnel" budget line item on Form SF-424A. The personnel plan should provide a description of how the personnel will carry out the proposed plan, including the adequacy and previous performance of the proposed team to carry out project activities.
2. A description of the source, nature, and amount of all non-EDA funds for the project. All non-EDA funds must be committed to the project, available as needed, and not conditioned or encumbered in any way that would preclude their use consistent with the purpose of the project. Applicants must also attach documentation confirming non-EDA (matching or cost share) funding.

3. As described in section III.B above, if the applicant is requesting a federal share higher than 50% of the total project costs, then the applicant must provide justification as to why the project (a) merits, and is not otherwise feasible without, such an increase to the EDA investment rate; or (b) will be of no or only incidental financial benefit to the recipient.
4. If contracts will be used to complete part or all of this project, applicant must include a statement that contracts will be awarded by competitive bid, or if contracts will not be awarded by competitive bid, applicant must provide adequate documentation that sole source justifications can be made in accordance with the Uniform Administrative Requirements (2 C.F.R. part 200; see 2 C.F.R. § 200.320(f)).

d) **Schedule of Major Milestones and Deliverables**

All Applicants must submit a schedule detailing the expected start and end date of all major milestones and deliverables described in the Project Narrative. The schedule should be outlined in months, so that it is easily discernable in how many months the applicant could start the project from the date of project award, in how many months each of the key project milestones and deliverables will be accomplished from the date of project award, and the anticipated number of months after the date of project award that the project will be completed, not to exceed the twelve (12) month award period.

e) **Addenda to the Proposal**

Applicants must also submit the following Addenda to the Proposal in PDF format. Applications that do not include the required Addenda may be considered incomplete and/or non-responsive and may not be reviewed.

1) Resumes of Key Personnel

Applicants must attach the resumes of key project staff, which should not exceed two pages in length (per resume). Resumes should be compiled and uploaded together as one PDF file.

2) Additional Requirements for Non-Profit

In addition to all applicable items listed above, EDA applicants that are non-profit organizations must submit the following:

- A certificate of good standing from the State of its incorporation that is less than twelve (12) months old;
- A copy of the organization's Articles of Incorporation and By-Laws;
- A copy of the most recent (not older than 18 months) IRS Form 990 (Return of Organization Exempt from Income Tax) (without attachments or schedules).

3) Copy of Current, Approved Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (if Applicable)

If facilities and administrative costs (sometimes referred to as indirect costs) are included in the budget, the applicant must include a copy of its current Facilities and Administrative Cost Rate Agreement or documentation establishing that it has a pending application. An applicant that does not have a current Facilities and Administrative Cost Rate Agreement negotiated and approved by the Department of Commerce (or by the applicable cognizant Federal agency) may propose facilities and administrative costs in its budget. However, the applicant must prepare and submit a facilities and administrative cost allocation plan and rate proposal or a negotiated

indirect cost rate as required by 2 CFR part 200 "Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards." The allocation plan and the rate proposal must be submitted to EDA's Office of Regional Affairs (or applicable cognizant Federal agency) within ninety days from the award start date. In addition, in accordance with 2 C.F.R. § 200.414(f), any non-Federal entity that has never received a negotiated indirect cost rate, except for those non-Federal entities described in Paragraph D.1.b of Appendix VII to 2 C.F.R. Part 200 (specifically, a governmental department or agency that receives more than $35 million in direct Federal funding), may elect to charge a de minimis rate of 10 percent of modified total direct costs. The maximum dollar amount of allocable facilities and administrative costs for which EDA will reimburse a recipient shall be the lesser of the: (i) line-item amount for the Federal share of facilities and administrative costs contained in the EDA-approved budget for the award, or (ii) Federal share of the total allocable facilities and administrative costs of the award based on 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. The applicant should include a statement in its budget narrative if the applicant does not have, or has not applied for, a Facilities and Administrative Cost Rate Agreement.

4) Comments from the State Clearinghouse to comply with Executive Order 12372, "Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs," if applicable.

If the comment period has not expired or comments were not received, a copy of the applicant's request for comments is sufficient; however, in that instance, the final determination will be required prior to award. Detailed information on the State Clearinghouse process can be accessed at http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants_spoc.

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

Each applicant (unless the applicant is an individual or Federal awarding agency that is excepted from those requirements under 2 CFR §25.110(b) or (c), or has an exception approved by the Federal awarding agency under 2 CFR §25.110(d)) must: (i) be registered in SAM (www.sam.gov) before submitting its application; (ii) provide a valid unique identifier in its application; and (iii) continue to maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which it has an active Federal award or an application or plan under consideration by EDA. 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 the applicant has not fully complied with the requirements by the time EDA is ready to make a Federal award, EDA may determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive a Federal award and use that determination as a basis for making a Federal award to another applicant.

D. Deadlines for Submission

To be considered timely, a completed application, regardless of the format in which it is submitted, must be transmitted and time-stamped at www.grants.gov no later than Wednesday, January 13, 2016, at 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time. **Any application transmitted or received, as the case may be, after Wednesday, January 13, 2016 at 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time will be considered non-responsive and will not be considered for funding.**

Applicants are advised that they are solely responsible for ensuring that EDA receives complete, timely, and accurate applications. EDA will not accept any changes, additions, revisions, or deletions to applications after the closing date and time have passed. EDA may contact an applicant for additional clarifications regarding its application after final evaluations by the review panel.

E. How to Submit an Application

Applicants are required to submit applications electronically in accordance with the instructions provided at www.grants.gov. EDA will not accept facsimile and paper (hard copy) transmissions of applications.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to start early and not to wait until the approaching deadline before logging on and reviewing the application instructions at www.grants.gov. Applicants should save and print written proof of an electronic submission made at www.grants.gov. If problems occur, the applicant is advised to (a) print any error message received; and (b) call the www.grants.gov Contact Center at 1-800-518-4726 for assistance. The Contact Center is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week (except for Federal holidays). The following link is useful resources: http://www.grants.gov/help/help.jsp. If you do not find an answer to your question under "Applicant FAQ's." try consulting the "Applicant User Guide" or contacting www.grants.gov via email at support@grants.gov or telephone at 1-800-518-4726.

V. Application Review and Selection Process

A. Evaluation Criteria

To apply for an award under this announcement, an eligible applicant must submit a completed application package to EDA in accordance with section IV. of this FFO. Applications that do not meet all requirements or that exceed the page limitations set forth in section IV.B. of this announcement may be considered non-responsive and may not be considered by the review panel. A panel comprised of at least three Federal employees will be formed to review applications. The review panel will evaluate applications and rate and rank them using the evaluation criteria identified below, sub-criteria will be weighed equally towards the respective criteria's point total.

1. Strategic Approach (50 points)

- Documented approach to meeting the elements identified in the Scope of Work including:
    - Developing key content for a toolkit for integrating economic development across the federal government economic development programs;
    - Building a comprehensive inventory from existing models and researching additional content, as necessary, for economic development resources especially federal economic development programs;
        - Particularly, by identifying how key content will be selected, what the immediate parameters for inclusion and how additional parameters may be

identified, and how a lens consistent with EDA's logic model and definition of economic development will be applied,

- Providing noteworthy practices in collaboration and coordination that demonstrate positive confluences leading to accelerated recovery or expanded economic development;
- Analyzing and documenting the extent to which EDA's CEDS meet the requirements established by other federal agencies for plans related to economic development activities and highlight any gap areas; and
- Producing recommendations for bridging those gaps (i.e. aligning the planning requirements of other federal economic development programs to those of EDA's CEDS).
- Producing recommendations for media and technology delivery channels to maximize usability by EDA staff, practitioners and communities

2. Organizational Capacity and Personnel (20 points)

- Adequacy of the applicant's team to carry out the proposed work and achieve success;
- Qualified personnel that, as a group, demonstrate project management expertise, as well as demonstrated success in all aspects of the scope of work;
- The education, experience, and professional accomplishments of each organization and all key personnel;
- Adequacy of the applicant's team in the various subject matter necessary to implement research on performance measurement, metrics and economic development and deliver practical, sound recommendations;
- Previous performance of the organizations and key personnel making up the team, as applicable;
- Strength of the proposed management plan to achieve the project goals and manage partner organizations and project staff.

3. Feasibility of Budget and Any Proposed Match (15 points)

Meet the proposed Scope of Work covering Budget including:

- Completeness of a proposed budget, including the extent to which it adequately supports and covers complete project;
- Strength of any proposed match including documented commitments;
- Identification of how Federal funds will be used and how any cash match will be used;
- Extent to which budgetary challenges and risks are identified and mitigation strategies are proposed.

4. Feasibility of Milestones and Deliverables (15 points)

Meet the proposed Scope of Work covering "Milestones and Deliverables" including:

- Strength of the proposed management plan to achieve the project goals and manage partner organizations and project staff;
- Completeness of a proposed schedule including the extent to which appropriate targets, deliverables, and milestones are clearly defined;
- Strength of the plan to achieve key milestones and timeline dates, measure progress toward targets and the likelihood that milestones will be met;
- Extent to which challenges and risks to the timeline are identified and mitigation strategies are proposed.

B. Review and Selection Process

As set forth below, EDA staff will review all applications received to ensure that they are complete and eligible to receive funding.

1. Review for Eligibility and Completeness

EDA staff will conduct an eligibility and technical completeness review of all applications received by the application deadline. Applications received from ineligible entities will not be considered for funding. Additionally, applications that do not contain all forms and required documentation listed in section IV.B. of this FFO may be deemed non-responsive and excluded from further consideration. EDA expects all applicants to complete and include all required forms and documentation. However, EDA, in its sole discretion, may determine that an omission is a non-substantive technical deficiency if it can easily and quickly be rectified or cured, and therefore, may continue its consideration of the application despite the deficiency.

2. Merit Review Panels

Merit Review Panels, comprised of at least three Federal employees, will evaluate the applications against the evaluation criteria enumerated in section V.A. of this FFO and award up to 100 points to each application. Application scores will be determined by each panelist on an individual basis, and the average of the individual ratings will produce a panel score. For each competition, the Merit Review Panels will prepare a priority funding order for the applications—based on its consideration of the evaluation criteria—and recommend to the EDA Grants Officer, in such priority order, those applications that merit consideration for EDA funding.

3. Grants Officer's Decision

The Merit Review Panel's recommendations will be forwarded to EDA's Deputy Assistant Secretary for Regional Affairs (DAS/RA), who is the Grants Officer under this announcement. The DAS/RA 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 Merit Review Panel's priority recommendations based on any of the following four (4) Selection Factors or use these four Selection Factors to break a tie for applications that are otherwise considered equal in merit:

1) A determination that the selected application better meets the overall objectives of the R&E program (*see* section I.H. of this FFO);

2) The ability of a project to start quickly;

3) The applicant's performance under previous awards; or

4) The availability of funds.

The DAS/RA's final decision must be consistent with EDA's and DOC's published policies. Should the DAS/RA make a selection that differs from the Merit Review Panels' ranked applications, the DAS/RA will document the rationale for the decision in writing. However, if EDA does not receive satisfactory applications, the DAS/RA may not make any selection.

VI. Award Administration Information

A. Award Notification

Under this FFO, EDA expects to notify applicants of its decision in writing within 60 days of the application deadline. If an application is selected for funding, the EDA Grants Officer will issue the signed grant award (Form CD-450), which is the authorizing financial assistance award document and includes the DOC Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions. A sample Form CD-450 is available at http://ocio.os.doc.gov/s/groups/public/@doc/@os/@ocio/@oitpp/documents/content/dev01_002513.pdf and the DOC Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions (December 2014) are available at http://www.osec.doc.gov/oam/grants_management/policy/documents/DOC_Standard_Terms_12_26_2014.pdf.

By signing Form CD-450, the recipient agrees to comply with all award provisions. EDA will provide Form CD-450 by mail or two-day delivery to the appropriate business office of the recipient's organization. The recipient must sign and return the Form CD-450 without modification within 30 days of the date of EDA's signature on the form. Failure to sign and return the CD-450 during this timeframe may be considered grounds for appropriate enforcement action pursuant to 2 C.F.R. § 200.338 ("Remedies for noncompliance"), including termination. 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 award(s). 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 provide written notice to all applicants informing them whether their application was selected for funding. EDA will retain all applications in accordance with EDA's record retention schedule.

B. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

Administrative and national policy requirements for all DOC awards apply to this competition. These requirements may be found in the "Department of Commerce Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions" (ST&Cs) and is summarized in the "Department of Commerce Pre-Award notification Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements," published in the Federal Register on December 30, 2014 (79 FR 78309). The Pre-Award notice may be accessed at the Government Printing Office (GPO) website at www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2014-12-30/pdf/2014-30297.pdf. The ST&Cs may be accessed at the following website: http://www.osec.doc.gov/oam/grants_management/policy/default.htm.

C. Reporting Requirements

1. 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 than semi-annually. All project progress and financial reports must be submitted to the applicable EDA program officer in electronic format. Recipients will be required to provide updates on their progress towards meeting any output and outcome measures identified in their application, as well as any other metrics requested by EDA and identified in the grant special award conditions.

2. The Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006 includes a requirement for awardees of applicable Federal grants to report information about first-tier subawards and executive compensation under Federal assistance awards issued in FY 2011 or later. All awardees of applicable grants and cooperative agreements are required to report to the Federal Subaward Reporting System (FSRS) available at www.FSRS.gov on all sub-awards over $25,000. *See* the OMB guidance published at 2 CFR part 170 (2014), which can be accessed at http://ecfr.gpoaccess.gov/cgi/t/text/text-idx?c=ecfr&tpl=/ecfrbrowse/Title02/2cfr170_main_02.tpl.

3. EDA may require additional data on actual impact of the funded investment, pursuant to the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA), to be submitted to EDA up to nine years after the grant award.

D. Regulations, Administrative Requirements, and Cost Principles

Specific regulations, administrative requirements, and cost principles govern the use of EDA funds. The general and administrative requirements for EDA awards are set forth in 13 CFR parts 300–302. Specific application and award requirements for the Technical Assistance program are set out at 13 CFR part 306. EDA funds may not be used directly or indirectly to reimburse any attorneys' or consultants' fees incurred in connection with obtaining investment assistance pursuant to this competitive solicitation. *See* 13 CFR § 302.10.

Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements: Please note that on December 26, 2013, OMB published final guidance titled Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements (OMB Uniform Guidance), which streamlines the language from eight existing OMB circulars, including Cost Principles (OMB Circulars A-21, A-87, A 122) and administrative requirements (OMB Circulars A-102 and A 110), into one consolidated set of guidance applicable to federal assistance awards. Note that the OMB Uniform Guidance supersedes DOC's uniform administrative requirements set out at 15 CFR parts 14 and 24. In accordance with the Federal Register notice published on December 19, 2014 (79 FR 75871) and the regulation at 2 CFR 1327.101, the DOC adopted the OMB Uniform Guidance, codified at 2 CFR part 200, effective December 26, 2014, which means that the guidance applies to all new awards and to additional funding to existing awards made on or after December 26, 2014. In addition, the audit requirements of the OMB Uniform Guidance apply to audits of non-Federal entities beginning on or after December 26, 2014. Therefore, applicants should familiarize themselves with 2 CFR part 200, which may be found at http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CFR-2014-title2-vol1/pdf/CFR-2014-title2-vol1-subtitleA-

chapII-subchap-id302.pdf. Additional information on the substance of and transition to the OMB Uniform Guidance may be found at https://cfo.gov/cofar/..

E. EDA's Non-relocation Policy

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

In signing this award of financial assistance, Recipient(s) 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. In the event that 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 cause, 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 the applicant estimates that such employer will create or save 100 or more permanent jobs as a result of the investment assistance, provided that such employer also is specifically named in the application as benefiting from the project, or 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. In smaller communities, EDA may extend this policy to the relocation of 50 or more jobs.

F. OMB Uniform Guidance Audit Requirements

Single or program-specific audits shall be performed in accordance with the requirements contained in the OMB Uniform Guidance (*see* 2 CFR part 200, Subpart F, "Audit Requirements"). The OMB Uniform Guidance requires any non Federal entity (i.e., non-profit organizations, including non-profit 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 OMB Uniform Guidance. Documentation regarding compliance with audit requirements may be requested at any time. In addition, applicants are reminded that EDA or the DOC's Office of Inspector General also may conduct an audit of an award at any time.

VII. Other Information

A. Freedom of Information Act Disclosure

The Freedom of Information Act (5 U.S.C. **§** 552) ("FOIA") and DOC's implementing regulations at 15 CFR 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 submitted by applicants may be released in response to

FOIA requests. In the event that 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.

B. 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 DOC (or any of its operating units) 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 award(s); (3) changing the method of payment from advance to reimbursement only; (4) imposing other special award conditions; (5) suspending any active DOC award(s); and (6) terminating any active DOC award(s).

C. 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) will be required in a format requested by EDA before any award will be made under this FFO.

D. Intergovernmental Review

Applications submitted under this FFO 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 the Office of Management and Budget's home page at http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants_spoc. Question 19 of Form SF-424 allows applicants to demonstrate compliance with EO 12372.

E. Implementing the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

The U.S. Department of Justice has issued revised regulations implementing Title II of the ADA (28 CFR part 35; 75 FR 56164, as amended by 76 FR 13285) and Title III of the ADA (28 CFR part 36; 75 FR 56164, as amended by 76 FR 13286). The revised regulations adopted new enforceable accessibility standards called the "2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design" (2010 Standards). The 2010 Standards are an acceptable alternative to the Uniform Federal Accessibility Standards (UFAS). DOC deems compliance with the 2010 Standards to be an acceptable means of complying with the Section 504 accessibility requirements for new construction and alteration projects under 15 CFR § 8b.18(c), as follows:

1. Public Recipients subject to Title II of the ADA may use either the 2010 Standards or UFAS where the physical construction or alternations commence on or after September 15, 2010 and before March 15, 2012 (*see* 28 CFR § 35.151(c)(2)); and

2. Private Recipients subject to Title III of the ADA may use either the 2010 Standards or UFAS if the date when the last application for a building permit or permit extension is certified to be complete by a State, county, or local government (or, in those jurisdictions where the government does not certify completion of applications, if the date when the last application for a building permit or permit extension is received by the State, county, or local government) is on or after September 15, 2010 and before March 15, 2012, or if no permit is required, if the start of physical construction or alterations occurs on or after September 15, 2010 and before March 15, 2012 (*see* 28 CFR § 36.406(a)(2)).

As of March 15, 2012, all new construction and alteration projects must comply with the 2010 Standards. In all cases, once a recipient selects an applicable ADA accessibility standard (i.e., the 2010 Standards or UFAS), that standard must be applied to the entire facility.

F. Requirements Pertaining to Publications and Data

EDA has right of first review of any publications funded through this FFO. Additionally, all materials, data, and reports created through this effort must be made available on a publically available website where they can be accessed at no cost, and EDA retains rights to disseminate and share all resources and IP created through this project with its stakeholders.

VIII. Agency Contact

For additional information on the R&E program or to obtain a paper application package for this announcement, please email RNTA@eda.gov. EDA's website at www.eda.gov contains additional information on EDA and its programs.

IX. Instructions for Application Submission via Grants.gov

Register early and submit early. In order to submit an application through www.grants.gov (Grants.gov), an applicant must register for a Grants.gov user ID and password. Note that this process can take between three to five business days or as long as four weeks if all steps are not completed correctly. To avoid delays, EDA strongly recommends that applicants start early and not wait until an approaching funding cycle deadline date before logging in, registering, reviewing the application instructions, and applying. Information about the Grants.gov registration process for organizations can be found at http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration.html. Please note that organizations already registered with Grants.gov do not need to re-register; however, all registered organizations must keep their registration for System for Award Management (SAM), 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 Authorized Organizational Representative (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. Note that a given 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.

Once an applicant is registered, the following list provides step-by-step instructions for accessing, completing and submitting an application via Grants.gov. Please also read the instructions posted at Grants.gov.

a. Ensure that you have installed a compatible version of Adobe Acrobat Reader on your computer, as incompatible versions of Adobe Acrobat Reader may cause errors. *See* http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/adobe-software-compatibility.html. Navigate to www.grants.gov and select "Apply for Grants" from the Applicants menu.
b. Select the link for "Download a Grant Application" package.
c. Enter Funding Opportunity Number "EDA-HDQ-RNTA-2016-2004525" and click "Search."
d. Click on the "Select Application Package to Download" link under "Actions" for the instructions and application specific to the type of project and EDA program (R&E) under which you are applying.
e. A new page should come up. On that page you may either enter your email address (in order to receive updates about this funding opportunity) or check the box that says "No, I do not wish to provide my email address." Click "Submit."
f. Two new links will appear. Click on "Download Application Instructions" to review the instructions posted on Grants.gov and "Download Application Package" when you are ready to begin the application.
g. Save the applicable application package to your computer or network drive. Note that the package file can be shared among multiple users; however, each user must have a compatible version of Adobe Acrobat Reader installed in order to save changes to the application package.
h. The application package should pre-populate with all mandatory forms embedded.
i. To add "Optional Documents" to the application, click on the checkboxes next to the form name on the first page of the application package. Form SF-LLL is required and must be completed if non-Federal funds have been or are planned to be used for lobbying in connection with this competitive solicitation. If you will be submitting your application via Grants.gov, also check the box next to "Attachments." The Attachments form allows applicants to attach any documents required as attachments under this competitive solicitation, such as a CEDS or letters of support.
j. Complete all mandatory fields (highlighted in yellow) on the forms. Note that mandatory fields will vary based on the type of applicant and the type of assistance sought. On Form CD-511, type "not awarded yet" in the "project

number" field. Save the application package at regular intervals to avoid losing work.

k. Attach any required attachments. The preferred file format for attachments is portable document format (PDF); however, EDA will accept electronic files in Microsoft Word, WordPerfect, or Excel formats. ·
l. When all mandatory fields have been completed, scroll to the top and click on "Check Package for Errors".
m. Click "Save".
n. Click "Save and Submit". At this point the applicant's AOR must be connected to the Internet and will be asked to enter their Grants.gov user id and password in order to submit via Grants.gov. As noted above, an AOR must submit the application for it to be validated by Grants.gov and received by EDA.

Field limitations and special characters. Please be advised that 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 (example: &,-,*,%,/,#) in attachment names and application form fields (including periods (.), blank spaces and accent marks) or attaching documents with the same name. An underscore (example: 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.

Do not use special characters (example: &,-,*,%,/,#) within the application form fields including periods (.), blank spaces and accent marks; an underscore may be used. Please note that if these guidelines are not followed, your application may be rejected.

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 that do not negatively affect your application submission.

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 check the 'Attachments' box under 'Optional Documents for Submission' 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 written proof 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.

EDA requests that applicants kindly refrain from submitting 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 office listed in section VIII. of this announcement to inquire if EDA is in receipt of 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, log on to Grants.gov and click on the "Track My Application" link from the left-hand menu. For a successful submission, the application must be received and validated by Grants.gov, and an agency tracking number assigned. If the date and time your application is validated and time-stamped by Grants.gov is later than 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time on Friday, August 21, 2015, your application is late. 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. Some of the reasons Grants.gov may reject an application can be found at http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/encountering-error-messages.html.

Grants.gov systems issues. If you experience a Grants.gov "systems issue" (technical problems or glitches with the Grants.gov website) that you believe threatens your ability to complete a submission before the application deadline, please (i) print any error message received; and (ii) call the Grants.gov Contact Center at 1-800-518-4726 for immediate assistance. Ensure that you obtain a case number regarding your communications with Grants.gov. Please note: problems with an applicant organization's computer system or equipment are not considered "systems issues." Similarly, an applicant's failure to: (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 are not considered systems issues. 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. In the event of a confirmed "systems issue," 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 The following link lists frequently asked questions (FAQs): http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/applicant-faqs.html. If you do not find an answer to your question under the "Applicant FAQs," try consulting the "Applicant User Guide" or contacting Grants.gov by email at support@grants.gov or telephone at 1-800-518-4726. The Grants.gov Contact Center is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

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

In accordance with current Federal appropriations law, 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 non-profit 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 Acts. This certification is further required to the extent that other appropriation Acts contain 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, which must be signed below by an authorized representative of the corporation. Recipients that are not corporations are not required to complete this representation.

(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 agreements 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: _____