2017 Regional Innovation Strategies Program

Notice of Funding Availability



U.S. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION

Office of **INNOVATION** *and*

ENTREPRENEURSHIP

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Federal Awarding Agency Name	Economic Development Administration (EDA), U.S. Department of Commerce (DOC)
Funding Opportunity Title	2017 Regional Innovation Strategies Program
Announcement Type	Initial 2017 Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) publishing EDA's application submission requirements and review procedures for applications received under EDA's Regional Innovation Strategies (RIS) Program as authorized by the Stevenson-Wydler Technology Innovation Act of 1980 § 27, 15 U.S.C. § 3722 (2015) (originally enacted as the America COMPETES Reauthorization Act of 2010, Pub. L. No. 111-358, sec. 603, § 27, 124 Stat. 3982, 4030-37 (2011) and subsequently amended by the Revitalize American Manufacturing and Innovation Act of 2014, Pub. L. No. 113-235, sec. 705, § 27, 128 Stat. 2130, 2231-34 (2014)) [hereinafter Section 27]; *see also* 13 C.F.R. §§ 312.1-.12 (2017) (regulations implementing Section 27(b)).
Funding Opportunity Number	EDA-HDQ-OIE-2017-2005260
Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CDFA) Number(s)	11.020 Cluster Grants
Key Dates	The deadline for receipt of applications is **11:59 P.M. EASTERN TIME ON FRIDAY, JUNE 23, 2017**. Applications received after this deadline will not be reviewed or considered. Applications will only be accepted electronically through www.grants.gov (Grants.gov). Applicants are advised to carefully read the application and submission information provided in Section D (p. 7) of this NOFA.
Funding Opportunity Description	EDA is committed to fostering connected, innovation-centric economic sectors which support the conversion of research into products and services, businesses, and ultimately jobs through entrepreneurship. *See* Section 27. Funding is available for capacity-building programs that provide proof-of-concept and commercialization assistance to innovators and entrepreneurs and for operational support for organizations that provide essential early-stage funding to startups. Under the RIS Program, EDA is soliciting applications for two separate competitions: • the 2017 i6 Challenge; and • the 2017 Seed Fund Support (SFS) Grant competition. Applicants may, but are not required to, submit proposals for more than one competition under the RIS Program. Applicants must provide a matching share from non-Federal sources of at least 50 percent of the total project cost. *See* Section C.2 (p. 7) of this NOFA.
Eligible Applicants	EDA is not authorized to provide grants or cooperative agreements to individuals. Requests from such entities will not be considered for funding. Eligible applicants for EDA financial assistance under this NOFA include:

	1. A State; 2. An Indian tribe; 3. A city or other political subdivision of a State; 4. An entity that— a. is a nonprofit organization, an institution of higher education, a public-private partnership, a science or research park, a Federal laboratory, or an economic development organization or similar entity; and b. has an application that is supported by a State or a political subdivision of a State; or 5. A consortium of any of the entities described in subparagraphs (1) through (4).
Informational Webinar	An informational webinar for this NOFA will be available for viewing at http://www.eda.gov/oie/ris/.
Award Notification	Subject to the availability of funding, successful applicants should expect to receive grant award notification approximately 120 days from the application closing date set forth in this NOFA.

FULL ANNOUNCEMENT TEXT
2017 REGIONAL INNOVATION STRATEGIES PROGRAM

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A. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

1. Overview

EDA is committed to fostering connected, innovation-centric economies that increase job growth and global competitiveness through technology commercialization and entrepreneurship as described in Section 27 of the Stevenson-Wydler Technology Innovation Act of 1980[1]. Multi-stakeholder partnerships and collaborations that draw upon the resources of community and regional public, corporate, university, nonprofit, and philanthropic organizations foster regional economic growth, resilience, and vitality. Section 27 defines these regional innovation clusters as

> geographically bounded network[s] of similar, synergistic, or complementary entities that—
> (A) are engaged in or with a particular industry sector and its related sectors;
> (B) have active channels for business transactions and communication;
> (C) share specialized infrastructure, labor markets, and services; and
> (D) leverage the region's unique competitive strengths to stimulate innovation and create jobs[2].

In order to retain and increase global competitiveness and to realize job growth, regions must build public and private capacity to invent, improve, and bring to market new products and services. The Regional Innovation Strategies (RIS) Program helps communities realize those goals by providing funding that builds these capacities at the local and regional levels. Through the RIS Program, EDA funds capacity-building programs that provide proof-of-concept and commercialization assistance to innovators and entrepreneurs and for operational support for organizations that provide essential early-stage funding to startups. Under this 2017 RIS Program Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA), EDA is soliciting applications for two separate competitions, which are described in more detail below:

- the 2017 i6 Challenge; and
- the 2017 Seed Fund Support (SFS) Grant competition.

Applicants may, but are not required to, submit proposals for more than one competition under the RIS Program.

2. 2017 i6 Challenge

The i6 Challenge is a leading national program designed to increase entrepreneurship that is driven by innovations, ideas, intellectual property, and applied research through the process of technology commercialization and that ultimately results in new jobs, new businesses, and increased and sustainable regional economic growth.

Proof-of-concept and commercialization programs can be physical or virtual, existing or new. Existing programs need not have previously received EDA funds to be considered for this award. Pursuant to Section 27, i6 Challenge funding may be used for a variety of purposes, including but not limited to personnel, program development, and equipment; however, construction costs are not eligible[3]. For further details regarding funding restrictions see Section D.7 (p. 14) of this NOFA.

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[1] 15 U.S.C. § 3722 (originally enacted as the America COMPETES Reauthorization Act of 2010, Pub. L. No. 111-358, sec. 603, § 27, 124 Stat. 3982, 4030-37 (2011) and subsequently amended by the Revitalize American Manufacturing and Innovation Act of 2014, Pub. L. No. 113-235, sec. 705, § 27, 128 Stat. 2130, 2231-34 (Dec. 16, 2014)) [hereinafter Section 27].
[2] § 3722(f)(1).
[3] *See infra* note 9 (p. 7) (explaining the limited exception to this rule).

i. Proof-of-Concept and Commercialization Programs

Proof-of-concept and commercialization programs work with innovations, ideas, intellectual property, and research to provide documented evidence that a product or service can be successful. These programs typically work with innovations from pre-conception and from Technology Readiness Levels (TRLs)[4] 1 (i.e., observation) to 6 (i.e., lab demonstration) and consider not only technology viability (i.e., seeking to answer whether this *can* be done) but also market potential and financial viability (i.e., seeking to answer whether this *should* be done). Proof-of-concept programs tend to focus on capacity to move earlier-stage innovations from observations through proof-of-concept (i.e., from TRL 1 to TRL 3), while commercialization programs tend to focus on capacity to move later-stage innovations from proof-of-concept to lab demonstration (i.e., from TRL 3 to TRL 6). Both types of program also focus on the development of related strategies and resources to introduce innovations into the marketplace through startup formation, licensing, or other means. However, "proof-of-concept" and "commercialization" should not be interpreted as overly restrictive labels; programs should be tailored to the resources and needs of their respective regional innovation clusters.

ii. Strategies and Goals of Proof-of-Concept and Commercialization Programs

Proof-of-concept and commercialization programs—including former RIS Program and i6 grantees'[5] programs—function as critical nodes for translating cutting-edge innovation into high-growth entrepreneurship in their regions. They offer a range of programs and services that support innovation-based, high-growth entrepreneurship and startup acceleration through services such as technology advisement, market evaluation, business planning, mentorship, and access to early-stage capital. The most successful programs leverage the experiences of successful entrepreneurs and business executives and strive to foster communities with mindsets for and cultures of innovation.

EDA expects to fund proposals that develop or expand regional capacity to create high-growth entrepreneurial ventures consistently and regularly and that have a high likelihood of accelerating economic growth and competitiveness in their respective regions and in the United States. Applicants must demonstrate how they will leverage regional strengths, capabilities, and competitive advantages. Applicants should avoid the duplication of already existing, planned, or budgeted initiatives of the applicant's organization or by other organizations or consortia in the relevant regional innovation cluster.

iii. Example Activities and Desired Outputs and Outcomes

The i6 Challenge will provide funding to invest in the development, creation, or expansion of proof-of-concept and commercialization programs that accelerate innovation-led economic development in pursuit of a vibrant innovative economy and economic growth. These programs can be physical or virtual, existing or new. Existing programs need not have previously received EDA funds to be considered for this award. Proposed projects may aim for some or all of the following outputs and outcomes or others, as appropriate in light of each given proposed project's regional, sectoral, and economic contexts.

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[4] Technology Readiness Levels (TRLs) are a standardized system that categorizes the status of a technology innovation and its readiness for commercialization. The definitions of the TRLs used by EDA for the purposes of this NOFA can be found in Appendix B (p. 33) of this NOFA. Other TRL definitions include those developed by the Department of Defense, *see* http://www.acq.osd.mil/chieftechnologist/publications/docs/TRA2011.pdf; by the Department of Energy, *see* https://www.directives.doe.gov/directives-documents/400-series/0413.3-EGuide-04-admchg1; and by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, *see, e.g.*, http://www.hq.nasa.gov/office/codeq/trl/trl.pdf, http://esto.nasa.gov/files/trl_definitions.pdf.

[5] *See* https://www.eda.gov/oie/ris/grantees.htm and http://www.eda.gov/oie/ris/i6/ (linking to information about, including lists of grantees of, the RIS Program and the i6 Challenge).

a. Innovation

Projects should aim to foster cultures of innovation and to provide or connect the resources necessary to drive innovations from ideas to research and intellectual property, including by

- creating a broad-based, expansive culture of idea generation and identifying useful applications of resulting innovations, including converting research and development at universities and research centers into commercially viable enterprises;
- engaging an inclusive set of researchers, innovators, and practitioners that support commercialization of inventions, ideas, or research; and
- exposing industry professionals, investors, and successful entrepreneurs to innovations at their earliest stages in order to create the best climate, team, and opportunities for an emerging, high-growth startup or for the acceleration of an existing startup.

b. Entrepreneurship

Projects should aim to develop a large number of entrepreneurs within a region and to create an ecosystem in which those entrepreneurs can experiment with and can create businesses and jobs from their innovations, including by

- supporting educational programs or work experiences to prepare students[6] and researchers for entrepreneurial challenges and work environments; and
- growing innovation and entrepreneurial ecosystems to ensure a steady stream of high-growth startups that drive job and value creation in the primary service area, community, and region.

c. Regional Connectivity

Projects should aim to connect economic development and technology commercialization resources, including by

- hosting special events to showcase inventions, ideas, research, technologies, and entrepreneurs to promote the exchange of ideas that leads to the formation of new collaborations and ultimately to the commercialization of innovations;
- forging new and reinforcing existing relationships among an inclusive group of regional stakeholders; and
- engaging local business associations and governments to ensure that high growth entrepreneurs and companies are more fully integrated into the local business community and that their growing needs are addressed by a robust support network that includes specialized and readily-accessed technical assistance and access to capital, business associations, and government officials.

d. Commercialization of Research

Projects should aim to convert ideas, research, or prototypes into viable products and services that can be brought to market by new or existing businesses in a financially manageable and rapid manner, including by

- providing access to mentors, industry catalysts, and entrepreneurs-in-residence that provide advisory services and that link technology and researchers to external networks;
- identifying access to seed funding to support the commercialization of promising research;

[6] A student is defined as an individual enrolled in an accredited class or program. This definition includes, but is not limited to, individuals enrolled at colleges, at universities, and in non-degree granting programs.

- assisting with market evaluation, business planning, and business opportunity articulation; and
- creating of processes that integrate scientific review with market potential to greatly accelerate the best ideas from lab to market.

iv. i6 Challenge Examples: Past Recipients

Links to descriptions of past recipients can be found via https://www.eda.gov/oie/ris/. Please note that these scenarios are informational only and are intended to provide applicants with a clearer picture of how the i6 Challenge is intended to function. These examples in no way limit the range of potential proposed projects, combinations of eligible applicants, or anchoring organizations; EDA welcomes innovative proposals.

3. 2017 Seed Fund Support (SFS) Grant Competition

Access to capital for early-stage companies is an essential element of a healthy regional innovation cluster. Taking an idea or innovation from conception to market often requires capital, but, in many regions across the country, innovators and entrepreneurs struggle to find that capital.

EDA plans to provide funding for technical assistance and operational costs that support the formation, launch, or scale of cluster-focused seed funds that will invest their capital in innovation-based startups with a potential for high growth. For the purposes of this NOFA, a seed fund is an equity-based investment fund that generally focuses on companies less than three years old and with annual revenues under $1 million and that is operated by one or more professional fund managers. These managers develop an investment strategy, capitalize the fund with investment capital from one or more institutions or individuals, and deploy the investment capital by funding early-stage companies in exchange for equity stakes in those portfolio companies. Seed funds sustain their operations through those equity stakes as their portfolio companies increase in value and are acquired, conduct an initial public offering (IPO), or otherwise realize a cash return on that equity.

Neither EDA funds nor matching funds may be used to invest in startups or any other companies; i.e., project funds cannot capitalize a seed fund. The technical assistance and operational costs funded by EDA can jumpstart the creation or expansion of a seed fund by funding operations to raise investment capital for a fund, to market the fund to potential startups and investors, to educate potential seed fund investors about seed fund investing, or to evaluate potential investments in startup companies.

Seed funds may be existing or new; existing funds need not have previously received EDA funds to be considered for this award. Pursuant to Section 27, SFS Grant funding may be used for a variety of purposes, including but not limited to personnel, program development, and equipment; however, construction costs are not eligible. For further details regarding funding restrictions see Section D.7 (p. 14) of this NOFA.

i. Example Activities and Desired Outputs and Outcomes

The SFS Grants competition will provide funding for development, creation, or expansion of new or existing equity-based seed funds that increase one or more regional innovation clusters' innovators' and entrepreneurs' access to early-stage capital. Proposed projects may aim for some or all of the following outputs and outcomes or others, as appropriate in light of each given proposed project's regional, sectoral, and economic contexts:

a. Early-Stage Capital Support for Innovation-Based, Growth-Oriented Companies

Projects should aim to increase access to equity-based investments for new businesses (generally less than three years old with under $1 million in annual revenue) that are commercializing or using innovative

technologies or other intellectual property in the development or delivery of their products or services by creating or expanding a new or existing equity-based investment fund and by exploring novel investment models that fit the needs of the regional innovation cluster and its entrepreneurs. The businesses in which the fund invests should demonstrate potential for high growth and include performance targets for job creation.

b. Plan for Sustainability

Projects should include sustainability plans based on taking equity stakes in the businesses in which the program invests and should tailor its investment model and deal structures to optimize access to capital, sustainability, and regional economic impact, including regional job creation.

c. Demonstrated Ecosystem and Downstream Support

Projects should aim to build and maintain ties into the community—a critical element of success for nascent companies—through connections to relevant elements of the community and regional ecosystem, including to support organizations (e.g., commercialization centers, incubators, and other training programs) and to downstream funding sources to support the capital needs of portfolio companies as they scale up and grow. Depending on the extent of the relevant regional innovation cluster's connectedness and development, projects may include activities including outreach and education regarding early-stage risk investment and syndication and alignment of existing investors.

ii. SFS Grants Examples: Past Recipients

Links to descriptions of past recipients can be found via https://www.eda.gov/oie/ris/. Please note that these scenarios are informational only and are intended to provide applicants with a clearer picture of how this opportunity is intended to function. These examples in no way limit the range of potential proposed projects, combinations of eligible applicants, or anchoring organizations; EDA welcomes innovative proposals.

4. Statutory Authorities for the Regional Innovation Strategies (RIS) Program

The statutory authority for the RIS Program is Section 27.[7]

B. FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION

1. Available Funding Under this Announcement

The funding periods and funding amounts referenced in this notice are subject to the availability of funds at the time of award as well as to DOC and EDA priorities at the time of award. EDA has been appropriated $17 million in funds for grants authorized by Section 27 pursuant to the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2017, Pub. L. No. 115-31, ___ Stat. ___ (May 5, 2017). Neither DOC nor EDA will be held responsible for application preparation costs. Publication of this announcement does not obligate DOC or EDA to award any specific grant or cooperative agreement or to obligate all or any part of available funds. Subject to the availability of funding, EDA expects to allocate funds as follows:

i. 2017 i6 Challenge

EDA plans to award approximately **$13,000,000** under the 2017 i6 Challenge. The maximum Federal share of each i6 Challenge grant is **$500,000**.

[7] *See supra* note 1 (p. 1).

ii. 2017 Seed Fund Support (SFS) Grants

EDA plans to award approximately **$4,000,000** under the 2017 SFS Grant Competition. The maximum Federal share of each SFS Grant is **$300,000**.

2. Type of Funding Instrument Used; Period of Performance

Subject to the availability of funds, EDA may award grants to eligible applicants to help support project activities.

Periods of performance are dependent on the type of project, the scope of work, and the EDA program under which the grant for the project is awarded. *See* Section F.1 (p. 24) of this NOFA for award notification information.

- For the i6 Challenge**,** anticipated awards typically will have an initial period of performance of approximately three (3) years with an estimated start date on or about 30 days after EDA makes the award.
- For the SFS Grants competition, anticipated awards will have an initial period of performance of approximately three (3) years with an estimated start date on or about 30 days after EDA makes the award.

EDA expects all projects to proceed efficiently and expeditiously, and EDA expects applicants to clearly document in their applications a reasonable and appropriate timeline that includes the start and completion dates of the proposed scope of work. As a condition of their respective awards, grantees will be required to provide timely periodic progress reports and performance data as set forth in Section F.3 (p. 26) of this NOFA.

C. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

1. Eligible Applicants

EDA is **not** authorized to provide grants to individuals, and such requests will not be considered for funding.

Pursuant to Section 27, eligible applicants for and eligible recipients of EDA investment assistance under this NOFA include

- a State;
- an Indian tribe;
- a city or other political subdivision of a State;
- an entity whose application is supported by a State or a political subdivision of a state and that is—
  - a nonprofit organization;
  - an institution of higher education;
  - a public-private partnership;
  - a science or research park;
  - a Federal laboratory; or
  - an economic development organization or similar entity; or
- a consortium of any of the immediately aforementioned entities.

Additionally, while entities that have *completed* the performance period of a previously-awarded RIS Program grant under a given competition **are** eligible for a grant under that competition, entities that are or plan to be operating *within* the performance period of a previously-awarded RIS Program grant at the time of the award of a grant under this NOFA **are not** eligible for a grant *under the same competition*. (E.g., a 2015 i6 Challenge grantee that is within that grant's performance period as of the expected date of award

under this NOFA would *not be eligible* for a 2017 i6 Challenge grant under this NOFA but *may be eligible* for a grant under the 2017 SFS Grant Competition.)

2. Cost Sharing or Matching

Under this NOFA, applicants must demonstrate **AT THE TIME OF APPLICATION** a matching share of at least 50 percent of the total project cost from non-Federal[8] sources. **Applicants must show, by submitting from each source organization providing matching share a commitment letter or equivalent document signed by an authorized representative of that organization, that matching shares will: (i) be COMMITTED to the project for the period of performance, (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.** Under this NOFA, a separate match is required for each submitted application. **The amount of an EDA grant may not exceed 50 percent of the total cost of each project**. Additional documentation may be requested by EDA in order to substantiate the availability of the matching funds.

i. In-Kind Matching Share

In-kind contributions may provide the required non-Federal share of the total project cost and can consist of contributions directly related to the proposed project, such as space, equipment[9], or services. EDA will fairly evaluate all in-kind contributions, which must be eligible project costs and which must meet applicable Federal cost principles and uniform administrative requirements.[10]

Applicants are strongly encouraged to work with the appropriate EDA representative listed in Section G (p. 26) of this NOFA to determine how in-kind contributions may be utilized to satisfy the matching share requirement based upon the project concept and application.

ii. Certain Specific Matching Share Restrictions

Please note that all project funds—both Federal funds and matching funds—are subject to certain restrictions. In particular, NEITHER FEDERAL NOR MATCHING SHARE FUNDS CAN INCLUDE FUNDS TO BE INVESTED IN STARTUPS OR OTHER COMPANIES, whether through equity, debt, or hybrid mechanisms. Additionally for these competitions, neither Federal nor matching share funds can be used for construction activities, except in limited circumstances[11]. *See* Section D.7 (p. 14) of this NOFA.

D. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

1. Address to Request Application Package

An applicant may obtain the appropriate application package electronically at http://www.grants.gov/ (Grants.gov). Applicants may search for this funding opportunity on Grants.gov using Funding Opportunity Number "EDA-HDQ-OIE-2017-2005260." All components of the appropriate application package may be accessed and downloaded via www.grants.gov/web/grants/search-grants.html. The preferred electronic file format for attachments is Adobe portable document format (PDF) and, where appropriate, Microsoft Excel; however, EDA will accept Microsoft Word-formatted electronic files. Alternatively, an applicant eligible for assistance under this announcement may request a paper application package by contacting EDA's Office

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[8] Funds from other Federal financial assistance awards are considered matching share funds only if authorized by statute, which may be determined by EDA's reasonable interpretation of the statute.

[9] Eligible activities include the purchase of equipment and equipment-related modifications or renovations of a facility, but only to the extent that such equipment and any related modifications or renovations are used to support another eligible activity.

[10] *See* 2 C.F.R. § 200.306.

[11] *See supra* note 9 (p. 7) (noting that equipment-related modifications or renovations of a facility are eligible activities).

of Innovation and Entrepreneurship (OIE) via email at oie@eda.gov, via phone at (202) 482-8001, or via mail addressed to

U.S. Department of Commerce
Economic Development Administration
Office of Innovation and Entrepreneurship
1401 Constitution Ave NW Rm 78018
Washington, DC 20230.

Applicants are advised that they must complete the registration process prior to submitting an application through Grants.gov; however, registration is not required for applicants 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**. *See* Sections D.2 (p. 8), D.3 (p. 12), and H.9 (p. 29) of this NOFA for details of the Grants.gov registration process.

2. Content and Form of Application Submission

i. What Is Required for a Complete Application?

In order to be considered for funding, applicants **must submit a complete application package** by the applicable deadline for each competition to which they are applying. A complete application **includes all required documents as set forth below**. All documentation and data submitted as part of the application package should be current as of the date of application submission. Throughout the review and selection process, EDA, at its sole discretion, may request from applicants written clarification or corrected or missing documents and require that applicants provide such clarifications or corrections in order to continue to be considered for an award under this NOFA. EDA will provide applicants a reasonable amount of time to provide any additional documentation. Failure to provide complete and accurate supporting documentation in a timely manner *when requested by EDA* may result in the denial of your application.

Applications must include the following documents:

1. One **Form SF-424** (Application for Federal Assistance) **from each applicant or co-applicant**;
2. One **Form SF-424A** (Budget Information-Non-Construction Programs) **per application** (applicants should ensure that the SF-424A reflects a distinct budget for each competition for which the applicant is applying);
3. One **Form SF-424B** (Assurances-Non-Construction Programs) **from each applicant or co-applicant**;
4. One **Form CD-511** (Certification Regarding Lobbying) **from each applicant or co-applicant**;
5. One **Form SF-LLL** (Disclosure of Lobbying Activities) **from each applicant or co-applicant**;
6. One **Project Narrative** (*see* Section D.2.ii (p. 9) of this NOFA for requirements) **per application** of no more than ten (10) single-sided pages using one of Arial, Calibri, or Times New Roman fonts of size no less than eleven (11) points;
7. One **Budget Narrative** (*see* Section D.2.iii (p. 10) of this NOFA for requirements), which contains a **staffing plan**, **per application** of no more than four (4) single-sided pages using one of Arial, Calibri, or Times New Roman of size no less than eleven (11) points;
8. **Commitment letters or equivalent documents** that demonstrate that **all matching funds** (whether cash or in-kind) from **all sources** (i.e., any applicant, any co-applicants, and any other sources of matching funds) referenced in the application will be **unencumbered, unrestricted,**

and committed at the time of award and that are **signed by authorized representatives**[12] of the sources of the matching funds;

9. Documentation demonstrating compliance with **Executive Order 12372, "Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs,"** if applicable[13]. (*See* Section D.6 (p. 13) of this NOFA and https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/omb/grants_spoc.)
10. Documentation that supports the applicant's or co-applicants' **organizational status as an eligible entity** (*see* Section C.1 (p. 6) of this NOFA) (e.g., articles of incorporation, certificates of good standing, bylaws, proof of tax-exempt status, State or local organizational establishment law, regulation, or order).
11. One or more **resolutions or letters** that demonstrate that the applicant's or co-applicants' application is supported by a State or a political subdivision of a State (e.g., a county, a municipality) that encompasses all or a substantial portion of the regional innovation cluster served by this project. If, however, the applicant or co-applicant is a State, an Indian tribe, or a city or other political subdivision of a State, this requirement does not apply.
12. A copy of each applicant's or co-applicant's **current, approved Indirect Cost Rate (ICR) Agreement**, if applicable. *See* Section D.2.iv (p. 11) of this NOFA.

All application forms submitted through Grants.gov **must be signed electronically by an Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR)**; *see* Section D.8.ii (p. 14) of this NOFA for information on AOR requirements. See also Sections D.5 (p. 12) and D.8 (p. 14) of this NOFA for important information on submitting your application.

ii. i6 and SFS Project Narrative Requirements

As outlined in Section D.2.i (p. 8) of this NOFA, all applicants must provide a project narrative in order to be considered for funding. Applicants are strongly encouraged to provide a clear and concise narrative that includes a compelling justification for the project and articulates a clearly defined regional economic gap, how the proposed project will uniquely meet this need, and the expected outcome(s) that will result from the proposed project. This should be addressed in a concise manner; lengthy applications will not receive greater consideration. Note that the project narrative and budget narrative are separate documents with different technical requirements and should be submitted separately. *See* Section D.2 (p. 8) of this NOFA. A competitive application will address the following elements in the project narrative:

[12] Such authorized representatives must have the authority to execute documents and obligate and expend funds on behalf of the respective organization.

[13] Only certain States participate in the intergovernmental review process; the current list of these States and their respective Single Points of Contact (SPOC) can be found at https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/omb/grants_spoc. Each State may choose to participate in this process for all or a subset of federal grant programs. EDA strongly encourages applicants to contact their respective SPOCs early in this NOFA's application period in order to determine the relevant State's process and the requirements thereof. Based on the applicant's State, EDA requires the following documentation:

State does not participate	No documentation required
State participates; this grant program not subject to review	Documentation (e.g., a State executive order, a signed letter from the SPOC) showing that this grant program is not subject to review
State participates; this grant program subject to review	Documentation (e.g., a signed letter from the SPOC) with comments or indicating that this project was not selected for review, or, if the comment period has expired or comments were not received, a copy of the applicant's request for comments

a. Description of Project Region, Location, and Impact

Applicants must clearly describe the region in which the project will be located, including the specific geographic location of the project within the region, corresponding to applicants' answers to Questions 14 and 16 of the SF-424. Additionally, applicants must clearly describe background on the assets of the area, which may include clusters, workforce, and physical, educational, and financial infrastructure. If the applicant expects the project's impact to expand beyond the noted region, the applicant should note the region of expected impact.

1. Primary Service Areas

Applicants must explicitly identify their proposed programs' or projects' primary service area(s) by county or county equivalent (collectively, "counties") and must show a concrete plan to benefit innovators and entrepreneurs in the primary service area(s). The counties that make up an application's proposed programs' or projects' primary service area(s) should be identified **both** by name and by their respective 5-digit FIPS codes (e.g., the FIPS code of Marion County, AL, is 01093; of Park County, MT, is 30067; and of Alexandria, VA—an independent city and thus a county equivalent—is 51510). *See, e.g.*, https://www.census.gov/geo/reference/codes/cou.html (providing access to FIPS codes for counties and county equivalents). **Applicants should submit their primary service area's county names and FIPS codes in response to Question 14 of the SF-424**, using an attachment as necessary.

b. Clear Description of Proposed Project

Applicants must clearly document the concrete activities that will be undertaken under and the specific deliverables that will be produced as a result of the proposed project. The description of the proposed project must include (i) a clear statement of the overall purpose of the project; (ii) the role of each applicant, co-applicant, and key personnel (including brief descriptions of their qualifications that substantiate each key person's expertise and experience relevant to her or his role); (iii) key milestones along with an estimated project start date, estimated completion dates for key milestones, and an estimated project completion date; and (iv) a scope of work, no longer than one page, for the proposed project. For clarity and conciseness, it is suggested that applications include a detailed list- or bullet-style scope of work as part of the description of the proposed project. **Applicants must clearly indicate throughout the project narrative the specific activities that are part of the scope of work** of the proposed project; applicants must clearly distinguish between aligned ancillary activities, if any, and project activities.

c. Documentation of Anticipated Project Impacts

Applicants must provide a clear and compelling justification of the long-term potential economic impact of the proposed project by including metrics (e.g., anticipated job creation or retention, anticipated private investment leveraged, anticipated number of businesses or collaborations supported, and other appropriate measures; *see* Appendix C (p. 34) of this NOFA). All impact estimates, including but not limited to job and private investment leverage estimates, should reflect the anticipated impact at the end of the grant performance period, two years after the end of the grant performance period, and five years after the end of the grant performance period. In all cases, applicants must **document the benefit**, **provide third-party data or information** to support these claims, and **include practical and clear tracking and reporting mechanisms** for metrics that will measure the economic impact during and after the project.

iii. Budget Narrative and Supporting Documentation Requirements

Applicants must provide a clear budget narrative that identifies and justifies how funds in each line item of the budget will be used to support the proposed project and that links each line item to its relevant commitment letter. The budget narrative should specifically address each budget line item (including both

the Federal Share and matching Non-Federal share) and the narrative total should match the total project costs listed in both the SF-424, Question 18, Line g ("TOTAL") and the appropriate totals fields of the SF-424A. The budget narrative should include itemized valuations of any in-kind matching funds (which, for personnel costs, should be supported by the staffing plan; *see* Section D.2.iii.a (p. 11) of this NOFA). Each line item in the budget narrative should clearly indicate

- a description of the intended use of funds for each line item;
- the budget category (from the SF-424A) to which the line item corresponds;
- the Federal share allocated to the line item;
- the matching share allocated to the line item; and
- if any matching share is allocated to a given line item, a citation to the one or more commitment letters that documents each relevant matching organization's commitment to provide the matching share of the given line item.

The non-Federal share, whether in cash or in-kind, is expected to be paid out at the same general rate as the Federal share; however, if the applicant's budget narrative proposes otherwise, applicants must also include information that clearly indicates what project elements the matching share funds will support and explain why deviation from paying out at the same general rate is required for the project to be implemented. Finally, **the applicant must submit supporting documentation to indicate these funds will be UNENCUMBERED, UNRESTRICTED, and COMMITTED at the time of award to support the proposed project**. For page limits and other technical requirements, *see* Section D.2.i (p. 8) of this NOFA.

a. Staffing Plan

As part of the budget narrative, applicants also must submit a staffing plan that lists all positions that would be charged to the Federal and non-Federal portion of the budget for each year of the period of performance. The staffing plan must include position titles, maximum annual salaries, percentage of time dedicated to the project, and the total amount of annual salaries that would be charged to the project. The total amount of annual salaries that would be charged to the project must be consistent with the amount reflected on the "Personnel" budget line-item on the Form SF-424A for each project year.

iv. Copy of Current, Approved Indirect Cost Rate Agreement

If indirect costs are included in the budget the applicant must include a copy of its current Indirect Cost Rate (ICR) Agreement or documentation establishing that it has a pending application.

The maximum dollar amount of allocable indirect costs for which EDA will reimburse a recipient shall be the lesser of the (i) line-item amount for the Federal share of indirect costs contained in the EDA approved budget for the award, or (ii) Federal share of the total allocable indirect 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.

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

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

3. Environmental and Historic Preservation Requirements

Applications may be reviewed by EDA for compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended (NEPA), depending on the nature and specific elements of each given application. During the NEPA review process, applicants may be instructed to contact the designated State and/or Tribal Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO/THPO), provide approvals from other governmental agencies, or provide more detailed environmental information. EDA, after compliance with requirements for consultation with Federally recognized Indian Tribes, may require applicants to participate in Tribal consultation, as necessary. The implementing regulations of NEPA require EDA to provide public notice of the availability of project-specific environmental documents, such as environmental impact statements, environmental assessments, findings of no significant impact, and records of decision, to the affected public.[14] For further guidance and information, please contact the representative listed in Section G (p. 26) of this NOFA.

4. Unique entity identifier and System for Award Management (SAM)

To enable the use of a universal identifier and to enhance the quality of information available to the public as required by the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006, to the extent applicable, applicants are required to: (i) be registered in the System for Award Management (SAM) before submitting its application; (ii) provide a valid unique entity 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 a Federal awarding agency. EDA may not make a Federal award to an applicant until the applicant has complied with all applicable unique entity identifier and SAM requirements and, if an applicant has not fully complied with the requirements by the time the EDA is ready to make an award, EDA may determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive an award and use that determination as a basis for making an award to another applicant. Recipients will be subject to reporting requirements, as identified in OMB guidance published at 2 C.F.R. Parts 25 and 170 (2015). The guidance set out at 2 C.F.R. Part 25 may be located at https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CFR-2016-title2-vol1/pdf/CFR-2016-title2-vol1-part25.pdf, and the guidance set out at 2 C.F.R. Part 170 may be located at https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CFR-2016-title2-vol1/pdf/CFR-2016-title2-vol1-part170.pdf. Note that SAM now encompasses the Central Contractor Registration (CCR), and that **the unique entity identifier is commonly the Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) Number**.

5. Submission Dates and Times

The closing date and time for receipt of applications for funding under this NOFA is **11:59 P.M. EASTERN TIME** on **FRIDAY, JUNE 23, 2017** (the "Application Deadline").

Applications submitted electronically via www.grants.gov (Grants.gov) must be received by the Application Deadline. The date and time that an application will be deemed to be electronically received will be determined in accordance with the electronic submission instructions provided at Grants.gov for this NOFA. See Sections D.5 (p. 12) and H.9 (p. 29) of this NOFA for information regarding electronic submissions. **APPLICATIONS RECEIVED AFTER THE APPLICATION DEADLINE WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED FOR FUNDING.**

[14] As specified in 40 C.F.R. § 1506.6(b).

In addition, please note the following:

- EDA will not accept any unsolicited changes, additions, revisions, or deletions to applications after the submission deadline.
- Throughout the review and selection process, EDA reserves the right to seek clarification in writing from applicants whose applications are being reviewed and considered.
- Applicants may be asked to clarify objectives and work plans and modify budgets or other specifics as necessary to comply with Federal requirements and provide supplemental information required by the agency before award.
- See Section E (p. 16) of this NOFA for application review and selection information.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to start early and not to wait until near the application deadline before logging on and reviewing the instructions for submitting an application through Grants.gov. Applicants should **SAVE AND PRINT WRITTEN PROOF** of an electronic submission made at Grants.gov.

i. Systems Issues

If problems occur while using Grants.gov, the applicant is advised to (i) print any error message received; and (ii) call Grants.gov at (800) 518-4726 for immediate assistance. EDA, in its sole discretion, may **pre-approve in writing** submission via an alternate method (e.g., email) due to a systems issue at Grants.gov **only insofar as any such systems issue is beyond the control of the applicant; however, any submission via this alternate method must be received before the deadline**. See Section D.5.i (p. 13) regarding what does and does not constitute a systems issue. **LATE APPLICATIONS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED** for any reason, including but not limited to late submissions caused by issues with Grants.gov, SAM, or AOR registrations. See Sections D.5 (p. 12) and H.9 (p. 29) of this NOFA for more information on electronic submissions.

In situations described in this subsection, applications must have email or facsimile receipt timestamps no later than the Application Deadline or must be postmarked or the equivalent on or before the Application Deadline's date. **An application that is not timestamped or postmarked, as applicable, by the Application Deadline WILL NOT BE REVIEWED**.

6. Intergovernmental Review

Applications submitted under this NOFA 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.[15] 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 at https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/omb/grants_spoc. Question 19 of Form SF-424 allows applicants to demonstrate compliance with EO 12372; however, note that **applicants must supply as part of their application packages documentation that supports the answer provided to Question 19**. *See* Section D.2.i (p. 8) and footnote 13 (p. 9).

[15] As provided for in 15 C.F.R. Part 13.

7. Funding Restrictions

Construction activities are not allowable costs under either competition and may not be charged to the EDA funds of the project or provided as matching share, except in limited circumstances[16]. For the purposes of an award made pursuant to this NOFA, construction includes any activity, including the installation of equipment, that disturbs the ground or modifies a structure. Additionally, the use of project funds to make equity investments is not an allowable cost; neither EDA funds nor matching share may be used for such purposes.

8. Other Submission Requirements

i. Means of Submission

APPLICATIONS MUST BE SUBMITTED THROUGH GRANTS.GOV. EDA will not accept paper, facsimile, or email transmissions of applications for this program except in cases of documented systems issues as described in Sections D.5.i (p. 13) and H.9.v (p. 31) of this NOFA. Applications must be successfully validated and timestamped by Grants.gov no later than the Application Deadline set forth in Section D.5 (p. 12) of this NOFA. **An application that is not validated and timestamped by Grants.gov by the Application Deadline WILL NOT BE REVIEWED. Note that the Grants.gov registration is a multi-stage process that involves a number of steps, including validation, verification, and registration through other websites such as sam.gov.** *See* Sections D.1 (p. 7), D.5 (p. 12), and D.8.ii (p. 14) of this NOFA. Please visit http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/applicant-tools-and-tips.html for resources and guides on the Grants.gov registration process.

Once an application is submitted, it undergoes a validation process through Grants.gov during which the application may be accepted or rejected by the system. **Please be advised that the validation process may take 24 TO 48 hours to complete. Applications that contain errors will be rejected by Grants.gov, and will not be forwarded to EDA for review. The applicant must correct the error before Grants.gov will accept and validate the application. EDA WILL NOT ACCEPT LATE APPLICATIONS THAT WERE REJECTED BY GRANTS.GOV DUE TO APPLICANT ERRORS. Accordingly, EDA STRONGLY SUGGESTS THAT APPLICANTS SUBMIT THEIR APPLICATIONS AT LEAST FIVE (5) DAYS BEFORE THE DEADLINE to allow the application to be accepted and validated in the system and to allow time for any errors to be corrected. EDA will consider the timestamp on the validation from Grants.gov (or on a pre-approved alternate method) as the official submission time.**

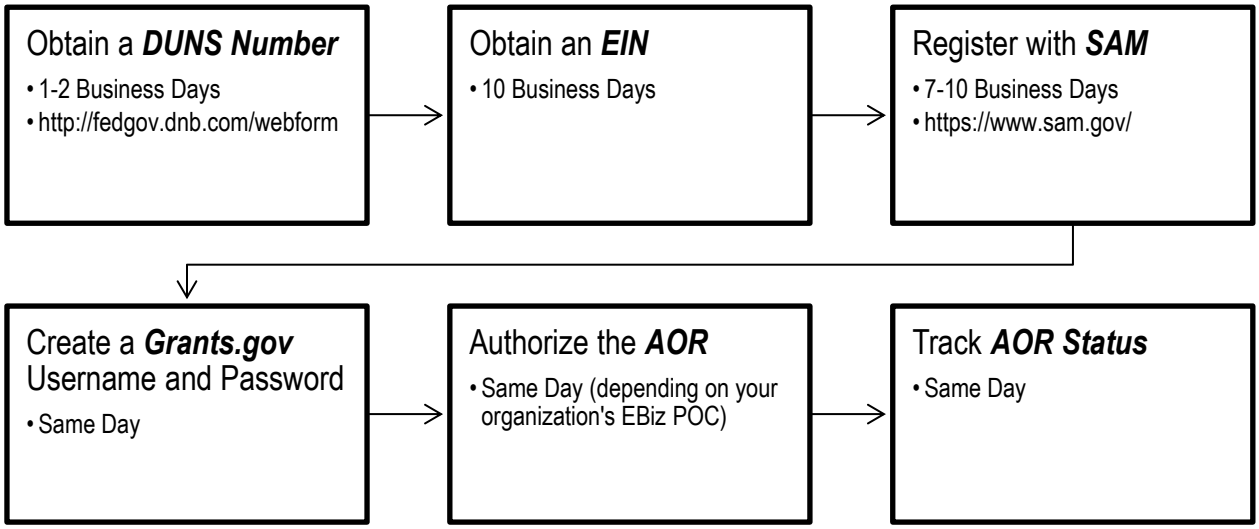
Please see Section H.9 (p. 29) of this NOFA for more detailed instructions and information on the requirements for submitting applications electronically via Grants.gov.

ii. Pre-Submission Registration

Before applying to a competition under this NOFA, each applicant must both register its organization with Grants.gov and register its Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) with Grants.gov. **Applicants should note that this process can be lengthy, requires interaction with multiple organizations not affiliated with EDA, and requires confirmation at each step.**

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[16] *See supra* note 9 (p. 7) ("Eligible activities include the purchase of equipment and equipment-related modifications or renovations of a facility, but only to the extent that such equipment and any related modifications or renovations are used to support another eligible activity.").



Applicants may have already completed one or more of the above steps set forth in the above flowchart, which depicts an example of how the pre-submission registration process generally flows. E.g., organizations may have already registered with Grants.gov, in which case they do not need to re-register. However, note that **applicant organizations that have not completed any of the above steps may require 23 OR MORE BUSINESS DAYS to complete the required steps serially; this process may take some applicants fifty percent (50%) or more of this NOFA's application period**. EDA **STRONGLY ENCOURAGES** prospective applicants to begin the pre-submission process as early as possible in the application period. Grants.gov is a centrally-managed Federal grants portal, and changes or updates to the process outlined above may occur after the publication of this NOFA. Prospective applicants should visit http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration.html to ensure that they follow the most up-to-date instructions.

iii. Optional Pre-Submission Technical Review

Applicants may submit a copy of their application via email and receive feedback on technical aspects of their application before the deadline. Based on this feedback, the applicant may revise or supplement its application or submit a substantially revised application by the deadline. Applicants who submit complete applications for pre-submission technical review will be informed whether their application is technically complete (i.e., if it includes all the documents required by Section D.2.i (p. 8) of this NOFA) and whether the applicant is an eligible entity. No other review will be conducted and no additional feedback (including, e.g., feedback on the application's merits) will be provided. Additionally, during the application period of this NOFA, EDA cannot provide comments or any other feedback on applications that were submitted under any preceding RIS program or i6 Challenge NOFAs, whether or not they were selected for funding.

Pre-submission technical review is designed **ONLY** to provide feedback on the technical completeness of an application and the applicant's eligibility for funding, and is **NOT** designed to provide any review or feedback of an application's merits or to provide assistance in the development of an application. EDA staff will attempt to provide pre-submission technical review within two weeks of receipt of a request therefor; however, such review is not guaranteed, may not be comprehensive, and does not guarantee or suggest

that the final submitted application will proceed to the Merit Review evaluation stage or be selected for funding.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to seek this technical feedback from EDA no later than three (3) weeks prior to the application deadline set forth in Section D.5 (p. 12) of this NOFA in order to allow adequate time to address any technical issues before final submission. EDA, in its sole discretion, may stop performing pre-submission technical review at any time. Applicants must submit requests for pre-submission technical review and all related documents to their geography's respective contact set forth in Section G (p. 26) via email; pre-submission technical review via Grants.gov is not available. The review and feedback described in this subsection are optional. Applicants need not seek preliminary feedback on their application in order to submit an application for consideration. See Section G (p. 26) of this NOFA for contact information for EDA representatives.

E. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

Throughout the review and selection process, EDA reserves the right to seek clarification in writing from applicants whose applications are being reviewed and considered. EDA may ask applicants to clarify application materials, objectives, and work plans, or modify budgets or other specifics as necessary to comply with Federal requirements.

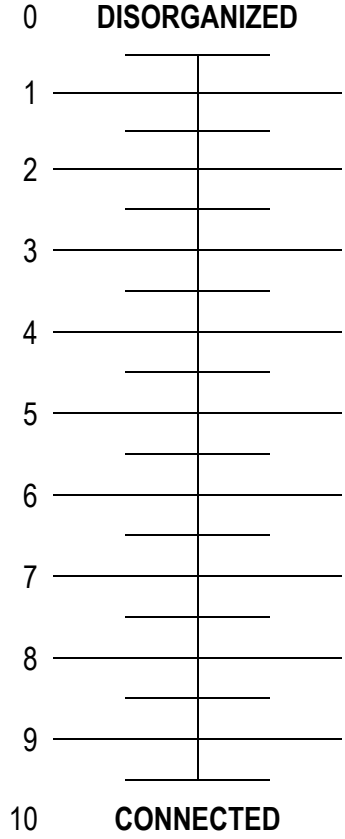
1. Criteria

Merit Reviewers will evaluate applications against the following six criteria by awarding between 0 and 10 points (by the whole and half point) under each criterion. These criteria apply to all competitions set forth in this NOFA. Applications from each competition will be scored competitively against applications from that same competition using the following common criteria. Applicants that apply for multiple competitions under this NOFA may not necessarily receive favorable consideration for each competition.

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i. Project Support and Cluster Connectivity

Is the regional innovation cluster supported by the private sector, State and local governments, and other relevant stakeholders?



Failed to identify any supporting stakeholders; operations are wholly independent of other organizations or otherwise fragmented; failed to identify any sources of financial or programmatic support from the relevant regional innovation cluster; no evidence of collaboration with third-party regional organizations.

Identified some supporting stakeholders; operations are independent of other organizations within the relevant regional innovation cluster; minimal evidence of financial or programmatic collaboration with third-party regional organizations.

Identified relevant stakeholders that support the proposal; presented potential financial or programmatic collaborations with other organizations within the relevant regional innovation cluster but did not provide evidence of concrete commitments.

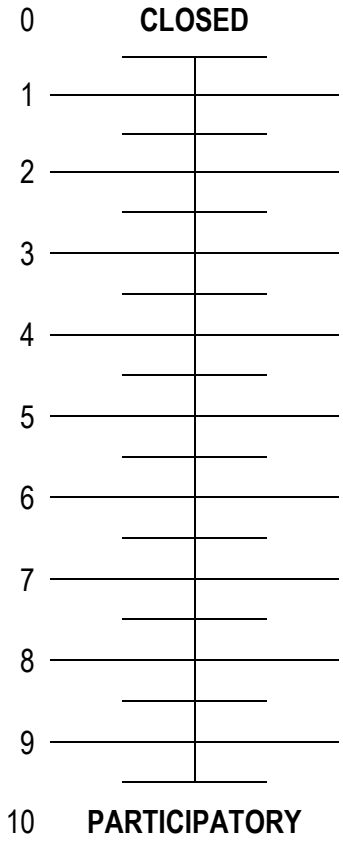
Documented strong support by some relevant stakeholders; presented evidence of committed financial or programmatic collaborations with third parties from the relevant regional innovation cluster and of a coordinated cluster development plan.

Documented strong support by a broad variety of relevant public and private stakeholders; presented evidence of strong, committed, active, and deeply interconnected financial or programmatic collaborations and of a long-term, adaptable, coordinated cluster development plan.

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ii. Cluster Diversity and Engagement

How will the existing participants in the regional innovation cluster encourage and solicit participation by all types of entities that might benefit from participation, including newly formed entities, rival existing participants, and underrepresented or unconnected populations and organizations?



Failed to provide a plan to engage a broad set of people and organizations; focused on providing support and assistance to a limited or homogenous network or community.

Identified a set of but did not provide a plan to engage people or organizations outside an existing network or community to participate in cluster activities; provided limited plans to expand the network or community to include those people or organizations.

Identified a broad array of people, organizations, or networks that can be brought together to strengthen a regional innovation cluster; set forth plans to engage both new and existing entities.

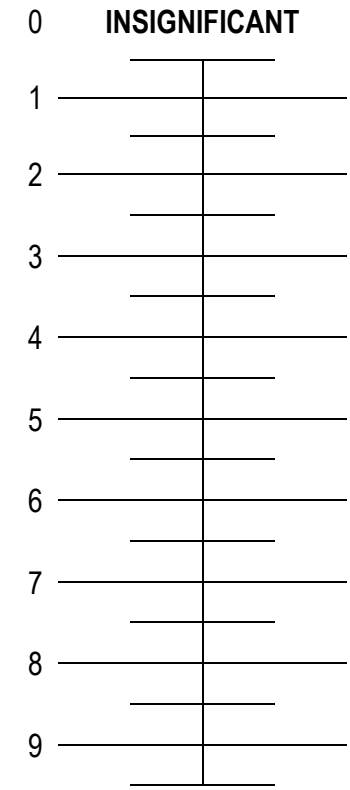
Presented a robust plan to engage and reach out to a diverse set of people and organizations; set forth plans to engage people and organizations that are underrepresented in or unconnected to the cluster's innovation and entrepreneurship activities and resources.

Documented partnerships with diverse organizations that represent existing and new regional innovation cluster participants; set forth concrete, collaborative strategies and tactics to engage and serve new, existing, underrepresented, and unconnected people and organizations.

[The remainder of this page is intentionally left blank.]

iii. Project Economic, Job, and Innovation Impacts

To what extent is the regional innovation cluster likely to stimulate innovation and have a positive impact on regional economic growth and development, including but not limited to the creation of new jobs? Additionally, EDA shall give special consideration to applications from regions that contain communities negatively impacted by trade.



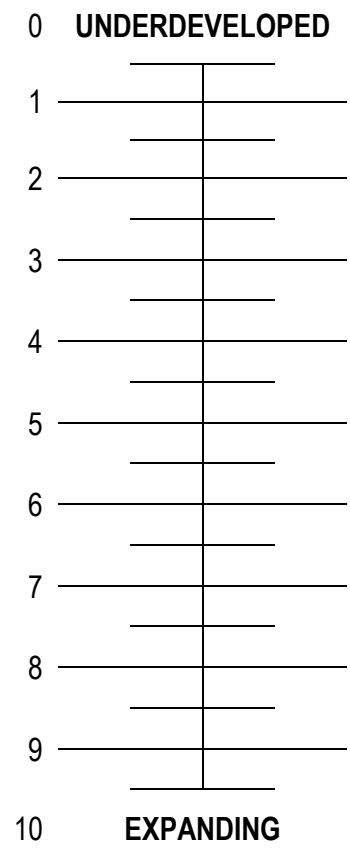
0 **INSIGHIFICANT**	
1	Failed to demonstrate the proposed project's potential to stimulate or accelerate innovation; no reasonable likelihood of additional regional economic growth and development.
2	
3	Identified a potential opportunity for increased regional innovation; outlined a project that may support additional regional economic growth and development or of regional job growth; marginal ability to measure project impacts.
4	
5	Illustrates a reasonable opportunity to stimulate innovation and increase regional economic and job growth; identified regional strengths and resources relevant to the opportunity; offered reliable evidence of projected impacts; presents a plan to measure actual impacts.
6	
7	Proposed a reasonable project that connects regional resources to a realistic opportunity; uses reliable and widely-accepted data and methodologies to forecast sustainable, scalable economic and job growth; presents a mechanism for measuring the project's short- and long-term impacts.
8	
9	Proposed a compelling project that leverages diverse regional resources and seizes a high-impact opportunity; uses reliable and widely-accepted data and methodologies to forecast sustainable, scalable economic and job growth and agility; illustrates a robust mechanism for measuring the project's impacts during and beyond its term.
10 **SUBSTANTIAL**	

Special Consideration
Award **up to 0.5 extra points** to applicants who clearly demonstrate the primary service area's **negative impact due to import competition or global trade** and the proposal's ability to address and counter that negative impact, **but do not award more than 10 total points.**

[The remainder of this page is intentionally left blank.]

iv. Cluster Assets and Infrastructure

Will the participants in the regional innovation cluster have access to, or contribute to, a well-trained workforce, technology infrastructure, innovation pipelines, and sources of early-stage capital? Note that EDA shall give special consideration to an eligible recipient who agrees to collaborate with local workforce investment area boards.



Failed to present evidence of access to and use of resources relevant to the identified innovation cluster; presented no plans to identify, develop, or expand such resources.

Tied regional resources to an identified regional innovation cluster; failed to identify or plan to build connections between cluster participants and existing resources.

Documented a broad array of regional resources necessary for the growth of an identified regional innovation cluster; identified links between cluster participants and existing workforce.

Documented regional resources linked to demand from cluster participants; set forth ability to act as a conduit to create new connections between resource demand and resource supply entities; adaptable to demand for new resources as the cluster evolves.

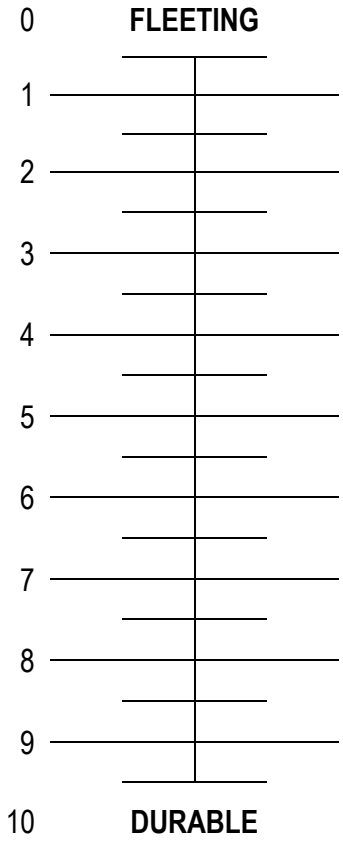
Presented evidence of active coordination with regional resource pipelines and with cluster participants to connect demand and supply; demonstrated a capacity to further develop existing and new resources; engaged with diverse cluster participants to facilitate resource development aligned with forecasted demand.

Special Consideration
Award **up to 0.5 extra points** to applicants who document an agreement to **collaborate on skill development and talent identification relevant to the identified regional innovation cluster** with one or more **local workforce investment area boards** that serve all or part of the proposal's primary service area**, but do not award more than 10 total points.**

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v. Project Sustainability and Adaptability

What is the likelihood that the participants in the regional innovation cluster will be able to sustain activities once grant funds under this subsection have been expended? Are the participants in the regional innovation cluster capable of attracting additional funds from non-Federal sources?



Fails to demonstrate the availability of or likelihood of securing financial resources after the grant period to sustain the proposed project's activities and impacts; high likelihood of project ending once grant funds have been expended.

Identifies potential future sources of financial support or a plan to solicit funds or generate revenue; marginal likelihood of financial stability and of ability to continue to provide programmatic support once grant funds have been expended.

Illustrates a reasonable likelihood of future financial or programmatic support from one or more non-Federal sources or of self-sustainability; documents current support from regional innovation cluster participants and stakeholders; some demonstrated capacity to sustain project activities once grant funds have been expended.

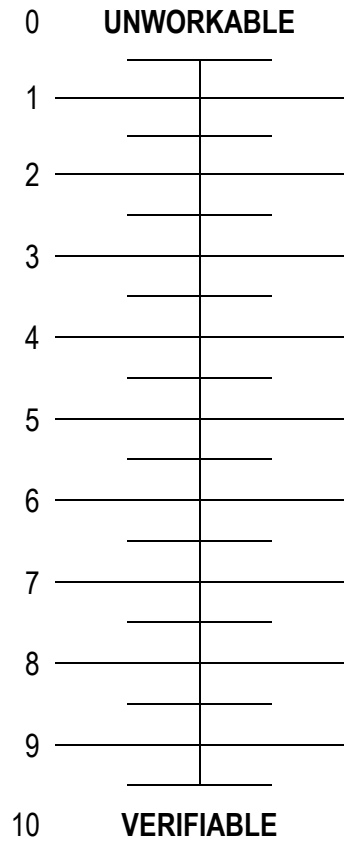
Presented evidence of a high likelihood of future financial or programmatic support from one or more non-Federal sources or documents a strong plan for self-sustainability; documents current and future relevant regional cluster participant support and collaboration; realistic capacity to grow and scale the project.

Demonstrates one or more concrete commitments of future financial support and/or a strong potential to become self-sustaining; documents committed support from public and private sector leaders and regional innovation cluster participants; realistic capacity to grow, scale, and evolve to fit the regional innovation cluster's needs

[The remainder of this page is intentionally left blank.]

vi. Project Feasibility

Do the operations and management capacities and experiences of the applicant organization(s) and its team demonstrate the ability to execute the proposed project successfully, and do the proposed project's budget and narrative reasonably and realistically correspond to the costs and activities necessary for the successful execution of the proposed project?



Failed to demonstrate the applicant's ability to execute the project; project budget and narrative do not correspond to proposed costs and activities.

Conveys the ability of the applicant and personnel to deliver some core aspects of the proposed project; project budget and narrative are aligned partially with proposed costs and activities.

Illustrates the ability of the applicant and personnel to execute the proposed project with its proposed budget; project budget and narrative reasonably and realistically correspond to proposed costs and activities.

Provides evidence of quantifiable results from past projects led by relevant organizations and personnel; project budget and narrative reasonably and realistically correspond to proposed costs and activities and align with evidence of the project team's past results.

Documents a consistent record of measurable, high-impact results from the relevant organizations and personnel; project budget and narrative not only reasonably and realistically correspond to proposed costs and activities but also are based on and align with previous successful execution by the project team.

[The remainder of this page is intentionally left blank.]

2. Review and Selection Process

As set forth below, EDA staff will review all applications received to ensure their completeness and eligibility.

i. Review for Eligibility and Completeness (Technical Review)

EDA staff will conduct an eligibility and technical completeness review (the "Technical Review") of all applications received by the application deadline. Applications received from ineligible entities will not be considered for funding. Applications that do not contain all forms and required documentation listed in Section D.2 (p. 8) of this NOFA 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 curable and therefore may continue its consideration of the application despite the deficiency. Technical Review will be conducted separately for each competition; an applicant that does not meet the Technical Review requirements for one competition will not be precluded from any other competitions for which it applied, provided the requirements for those competitions are met.

ii. Merit Review

Merit Reviewers will evaluate the applications against the evaluation criteria for the relevant competition enumerated in Section E.1 (p. 16) of this NOFA. Each application will be reviewed by at least three Merit Reviewers. Application scores will be determined by each Merit Reviewer on an individual basis, and EDA will average the individual scores. EDA, in its sole discretion, may use a statistical technique to normalize scores across Merit Reviewers. For each competition, the most highly ranked applications will be recommended to the Grants Officer as the applications that merit consideration for EDA funding.

iii. Grants Officer Decision

The most highly ranked applications will be forwarded to the Grants Officer under this announcement, which will be EDA's Deputy Assistant Secretary for Regional Affairs (DAS/RA) or the DAS/RA's delegate. The Grants Officer 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 most highly ranked applications based on any of the following Selection Factors or use these Selection Factors to break a tie for applications that are otherwise considered substantially equal in merit:

1. the extent to which the application meets the overall objectives of Section 27;
2. the extent to which the application provides assistance in one or more persistent poverty counties[17];
3. the ability of a project to start quickly, realistically achieve project goals, and catalyze additional resources;
4. the comparative financial or management capability of the applicant;
5. the applicant's performance under previous Federal financial assistance awards, including whether the grantee submitted required performance reports and data;
6. for previous grantees, the extent to which the application builds upon and creates synergies with previously funded work;

[17] "[T]he term 'persistent poverty counties' means any county that has had 20 percent or more of its population living in poverty over the past 30 years, as measured by the 1990 and 2000 decennial censuses and the most recent Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates." Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2017, Pub. L. No. 115-31, ___ Stat. ___, Div. B, Tit. V, sec. 539 (May 5, 2017).

7. for applicants to multiple competitions under this NOFA, the extent to which the proposal leverages dollars across the multiple programs to make their overall approach stronger;
8. the availability of program funding;
9. the extent to which the project supports EDA's goals of geographic balance in distribution of program funds, project types, sectoral focus (including but not limited to advanced wood products, advanced manufacturing, bioscience, energy, nanotechnology, telecommunications, etc.), organizational type (including smaller and rural organizations) and the overall portfolio; and
10. the extent to which any technical deficiencies or any budgetary or legal issues in the application may impact an applicant's ability to execute the project or achieve the desired impacts.

The final decision of the Grants Officer must be consistent with this NOFA and applicable law and regulation. Should the Grants Officer make a selection that differs from the most highly ranked applications, the Grants Officer will document the rationale for the decision in writing. **There is no appeal process for denied applications.**

3. Awards in Excess of the Simplified Acquisition Threshold

EDA expects to make awards under this NOFA that will be in excess of the Simplified Acquisition Threshold[18].

i. Federal Awardee Performance Integrity Information System (FAPIIS) Review

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

ii. Applicant Review of and Comment on Integrity and Performance Information

Each applicant, at its option, may review information in the designated integrity and performance systems accessible through SAM and comment on any information about itself that a Federal awarding agency previously entered and is currently in the designated integrity and performance system accessible through SAM.

iii. Agency Consideration of Applicant Comments

EDA will consider any comments by the applicant, in addition to the other information in the designated integrity and performance system, in making a judgment about the applicant's integrity, business ethics, and record of performance under Federal awards when completing the review of risk posed by applicants as described in 2 C.F.R. § 200.205.

4. Anticipated Announcement and Federal Award Dates

Subject to the availability of funding, successful applicants should expect to receive grant award notification approximately 120 days from the application closing date set forth in this NOFA.

F. FEDERAL AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

1. Federal Award Notices

Under this NOFA, EDA expects to notify applicants of its decision in writing within 120 days of the application deadline. If an application is selected for funding, the EDA Grants Officer will issue the signed

[18] 2 C.F.R. § 200.88.

grant award (Form CD-450), which is the authorizing financial assistance award document and includes the DOC Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions and Special Award Conditions. The DOC Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions (Mar. 2017) are available at http://www.osec.doc.gov/oam/grants_management/policy/documents/Department%20of%20Commerce%20Standard%20Terms%20&%20Conditions%2031%20March%202017.pdf.

By signing Form CD-450, the recipient agrees to comply with all award provisions. EDA will provide Form CD-450 via email through Grants Online, an electronic grants management system. The email will provide the authorized representative with instructions on how to create an account with Grants Online in order to view and sign the award. 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 AWARD 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 unsuccessful applications in accordance with EDA's record retention schedule.

2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

i. Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles and Audit Requirements

Recipients of an EDA award will be bound by the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards, which are codified at 2 C.F.R. Part 200 (Uniform Guidance). The Uniform Guidance streamlines the language from eight existing Office of Management and Budget (OMB) circulars, including Cost Principles (OMB Circulars A-21, A-87, A 122), administrative requirements (OMB Circulars A-102 and A 110), and audit requirements (OMB Circular A-133) into one consolidated set of guidance applicable to Federal assistance awards. Note that the Uniform Guidance supersedes DOC's Uniform Administrative Requirements set out at 15 C.F.R. Parts 14 and 24. Applicants are advised to familiarize themselves with 2 C.F.R. Part 200, which may be found at https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CFR-2016-title2-vol1/pdf/CFR-2016-title2-vol1-part200.pdf. Additional information on the substance of and transition to the OMB Uniform Guidance may be found at https://cfo.gov/cofar/.

ii. Department of Commerce Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions

The Department of Commerce will apply the Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions (ST&Cs) dated March 31, 2017, to this award. The ST&Cs may be accessed at the following website: http://www.osec.doc.gov/oam/grants_management/policy/documents/Department%20of%20Commerce%20Standard%20Terms%20&%20Conditions%2031%20March%202017.pdf.

iii. Department of Commerce Pre-Award Notification Requirements

The Department of Commerce will apply the Pre-Award Notification Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements dated December 30, 2014, 79 Fed. Reg. 78,390. The Pre-Award Notice may be accessed at the Government Printing Office (GPO) website at http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2014-12-30/pdf/2014-30297.pdf.

3. Reporting

i. Financial, Performance, and Impact Reports

All recipients are required to submit financial, performance, and impact reports in accordance with the terms and conditions of the grant award, generally no less 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. Furthermore, recipients will be required to provide economic development impact reports to EDA at the end of the grant performance period, two years after the end of the grant performance period, and five years after the end of the grant performance period. As part of good performance practices, EDA may conduct program evaluations. If so, recipients of grants under this program may need to furnish performance data to evaluators, including but not limited to EDA staff and outside parties contracted by EDA. EDA may also, for research purposes linked to improving economic outcomes, choose to share data with other Federal partners, including but not limited to statistical agencies.

ii. Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006

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. Please see the OMB guidance published at 2 C.F.R. Part 170 (2014), which can be accessed at https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CFR-2016-title2-vol1/pdf/CFR-2016-title2-vol1-part170.pdf.

iii. Government Performance and Results Act

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

iv. Information Sharing

For the purposes of achieving rigorous program evaluations, all applications (including those that are not selected for funding) may be shared with EDA staff, outside parties contracted by EDA for the purposes of evaluation, and other Federal agencies.

G. FEDERAL AWARDING AGENCY CONTACT(S)

For questions concerning this NOFA or for more information about EDA programs, you may contact the appropriate EDA Regional Office RIS Point(s) of Contact (RO RIS POC(s)):

Regional Office	RO RIS POC(s)	Email	Phone
Atlanta	Robin Cooley	rcooley@eda.gov	(803) 253-3640
Austin	Chris Rys	crys@eda.gov	(512) 381-8157
Chicago	Greg Becker	gbecker@eda.gov	(312) 789-9765
Denver	Zac Graves	zgraves@eda.gov	(303) 844-4092
Philadelphia	Chivas Grannum	cgrannum@eda.gov	(215) 597-8723
Seattle	Brian Parker	bparker2@eda.gov	(206) 220-7675

H. OTHER INFORMATION

1. Right to Use Information

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

2. Freedom of Information Act Disclosure

The Freedom of Information Act, 5 U.S.C. § 552 [hereinafter FOIA], and DOC's implementing regulations at 15 C.F.R. Part 4 set forth the rules and procedures to make requested material, information, and records publicly available. Unless prohibited by law and to the extent permitted under FOIA, contents of applications 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.

3. Notice of Government-Wide Procurement Restriction

The general rule for Federal financial assistance is that contractors that develop draft specifications, requirements, statements of work, invitations for bids or requests for proposals are prohibited from competing for the final procurement. Before the Uniform Guidance took effect, pursuant to the DOC grant regulations at 15 C.F.R. Parts 14 and 24, the prohibition applied to institutions of higher education, hospitals, non-profits and commercial and international organizations but did not apply to States, local governments or Indian Tribes. However, under 2 C.F.R. § 200.319 and 200.317, which are now controlling, only State recipients are expressly exempt from this prohibition. Despite this change, local governments and Indian Tribes may also take advantage of the exemption in two narrow circumstances: (i) if they are required (by statute, for example) to follow the State's procurement rules in full and without exception; or (ii) if they are required to follow a specific State procurement rule that creates an explicit conflict with the prohibition in 2 C.F.R. § 200.319(a) (i.e., there is a statute that requires or permits the local government or Indian Tribe to award the final procurement to the same contractor that developed the draft specifications). Absent one of these two scenarios, the local government or Indian Tribe must comply with the prohibition. Applicants are encouraged to contact the EDA representative listed for their applicable state in Section G (p. 26) of this NOFA with any questions regarding application of this regulation.

4. Past Performance and Non-Compliance with Award Provisions

Unsatisfactory performance under prior Federal awards may result in an application not being considered for funding. Failure to comply with any or all of the provisions of an award may have a negative impact on future funding by DOC (or any of its operating units) and may be considered grounds for any or all of the following actions: (1) establishing an account receivable; (2) withholding payments to the recipient under any DOC 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).

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

In accordance with current Federal appropriations law, execution by an applicant of the Representation by Corporations Regarding an Unpaid Delinquent Tax Liability or a Felony Conviction Under Any Federal Law (*see* Appendix A (p. 32) of this NOFA) will be required in a format requested by EDA before any award will be made under this NOFA.

6. 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: (i) the employer is specifically named in the application as benefitting from the project and the applicant estimates that the employer will create or save 100 or more permanent jobs as a result of the investment assistance (if the jobs in question were originally located in a smaller community, EDA may extend this policy to the relocation of 50 or more jobs); or (ii) the employer is or will be located in an EDA-assisted building, port, facility, or industrial, commercial, or business park constructed or improved in whole or in part with investment assistance prior to EDA's final disbursement of funds.

7. Audit Requirements

Single or program-specific audits shall be performed in accordance with the requirements contained in the OMB Uniform Guidance (*see* 2 C.F.R. Part 200, Subpart F, "Audit Requirements"). The OMB Uniform Guidance requires any non-Federal entity (e.g., nonprofit organizations, including nonprofit institutions of higher education and hospitals; States; local governments; and Indian Tribes) that expends Federal awards of $750,000 or more in the recipient's fiscal year to conduct a single or program-specific audit in accordance with the requirements set out in the OMB Uniform Guidance. Applicants are reminded that EDA or the DOC's Office of Inspector General also may conduct an audit of an award at any time.

8. Implementing the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

The U.S. Department of Justice has issued revised regulations implementing Title II of the ADA (28 C.F.R. Part 35; 75 Fed. Reg. 56,164 (Sep. 15, 2010), as amended by 76 Fed. Reg. 13,285 (Mar. 11, 2011)) and

Title III of the ADA (28 C.F.R. Part 36; 75 Fed. Reg. 56,236 (Sep. 15, 2010), as amended by 76 Fed. Reg. 13,286 (Mar. 11, 2011)).

9. Instructions for Application Submission via Grants.gov

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

1. navigate to https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/apply-for-grants.html;
2. click "`Get Application Package`";
3. in the "`Funding Opportunity Number`" field, enter "`EDA-HDQ-OIE-2017-2005260`";
4. click "`Search`";
5. under the "`Actions`" column, click the "`Apply`" link that corresponds to the competition to which you wish to apply (i.e., the 2017 i6 Challenge or the 2017 Seed Fund Support Grant Competition);
6. enter your email address (if you would like to receive updates from Grants.gov regarding this grant opportunity) or check the box that indicates you do not wish to provide it, then click "`Submit`";
7. choose to apply using Workspace by clicking "`Login to Apply Now`" or choose to download the legacy application package by clicking "`Download Package`"; and
8. follow the instructions provided on the Grants.gov website and on each webpage to complete and submit your application.

i. Register Early and Submit Early

In order to submit an application through http://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 the approaching 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 System for Award Management (SAM), which includes the Central Contractor Registration (CCR) database, registration up-to-date through sam.gov or their applications will not be accepted by Grants.gov.

ii. 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; 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 SAM, CCR, and AOR issues.

iii. Field Limitations and Special Characters

Please be advised that Grants.gov provides the following notice with respect to form field limitations and special characters:

a. Are There Restrictions on File Names for Any Attachment I Include with My Application Package?

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

b. 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 (e.g., &, –, *, %, /, #) within the application form fields including periods (.), blank spaces, and accent marks (e.g., á, ä, à); 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 (e.g., ′, ‵, `) 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 and clearly indicate in the form field that the information is included as an electronic file.

iv. Verify That Your 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.

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 representative listed in Section G (p. 26) 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, navigate to https://www.grants.gov and click on the "Track My Application" link under the "Applicants" tab. For a successful

submission, the application must be received and validated by Grants.gov, and an agency tracking number must be assigned. If the date and time your application is **validated and timestamped** by Grants.gov is later than 11:59pm Eastern Time on the Application Deadline set forth in Section D.5 (p. 12) of this NOFA, your application is late. Once validation is complete, the status will change to "`Validated`" or "`Rejected with Errors`." If the status is "`Rejected with Errors`," your application has not been received successfully. For more detailed information about why an application may be rejected, please see "`Encountering Error Messages`" at https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/encountering-error-messages.html and "`Frequently Asked Questions by Applicants`" at https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/applicant-faqs.html.

v. Grants.gov Systems Issues

If you experience a Grants.gov systems issue (i.e., a technical problem or glitch with the Grants.gov website) that you believe threatens your ability to complete a submission before the deadline, please (i) print any error message received; (ii) call the Grants.gov Contact Center at (800) 518-4726 for immediate assistance; and (iii) contact EDA using the contact information in Section G (p. 26) of this NOFA prior to the deadline for receipt of applications. Ensure that you obtain a case number regarding your communications with Grants.gov. Please note that problems with an applicant organization's computer system or equipment are **not** considered systems issues. Similarly, an applicant's failure to, e.g., (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 by Applicants`": https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/applicant-faqs.html. If you do not find an answer to your question there, try consulting the "`Applicant User Guide`" at https://www.grants.gov/help/html/help/Get_Started/Get_Started.htm or contacting Grants.gov by email at support@grants.gov or telephone at (800) 518-4726. The Grants.gov Contact Center is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week, except on Federal holidays.

APPENDIX A REPRESENTATION BY CORPORATIONS REGARDING AN UNPAID DELINQUENT TAX LIABILITY OR A FELONY CONVICTION UNDER ANY FEDERAL LAW

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:

- was convicted of a felony criminal violation under any Federal law within the preceding 24 months, unless any agency has considered suspension or debarment of the corporation and made a determination that this further action is not necessary to protect the interest of the Government; and/or,
- 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 an agency has considered suspension or debarment of the corporation and made a determination that this further action is not necessary to protect the interest 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 agreement with the authority responsible for collecting the tax liability.

By: _____

[Typed name and title of the signing individual]

[Typed phone number of the signing individual]

[Typed email address of the signing individual]

Date: _____

APPENDIX B TECHNOLOGY READINESS LEVELS SCALE

	Technology Readiness Levels (TRLs) Scale to Be Applied by EDA Grantees		
RIS?	**TRL Level**	**Definition**	**Questions to Be Answered and Reported**
Directly Supported by RIS Program Funding	**1: Observation**	Basic principles observed and reported	• What research has been conducted, where, when, and by whom? • What research papers and publications have reported the results?
	2: Formulation	Technology concept and/or application formulated	• What research has been conducted, where, when, and by whom? • What research papers and publications have reported possible applications?
	3: Proof-of-Concept	Proof-of-concept validated through experiment or analysis	• What research has been conducted, where, when, and by whom? • What test results have been reported? • How do they compare to analytical predictions?
	4: Lab Validation	Component and/or system/sub-system validated in a relevant laboratory environment	• What research has been conducted, where, when, and by whom? • What are the results of component/sub-system tests in laboratory setting?
	5: Commercial Validation	Component and/or system/sub-system validated in a relevant commercial environment	• What were the results of testing a complete system in a simulated operational environment? • How do the test results compare with expectations? • What problems, if any, were encountered? Was the system/sub-system refined to match expected system goals?
	6: Lab Demonstration	System/subsystem prototype demonstrated in a relevant laboratory environment	• What were the results of testing a complete system/prototype at required specifications? • How did the test compare with expectations? • What problems were encountered? • What are the plans or actions to resolve problems?
Not Directly Supported by RIS Program Funding	**7: Commercial Demonstration**	System/subsystem prototype demonstrated in a commercial environment	• What were the results from testing a prototype system in an operational environment? • How did the test compare with expectations? • What problems were encountered? • What are the plans or actions to resolve problems?
	8: Completion/ Qualification	Actual system completed and qualified through testing and demonstration in a commercial setting	• What were the results of testing the system in its final configuration in a commercial setting? • Did it meet its operational requirements? What problems were encountered? • What are the plans or actions to resolve problems?
	9: Successful Operation	Actual system proven through successful operation in a commercial setting	• What were the results of operating the technology in a commercial setting, using standard process metrics?

APPENDIX C EXEMPLARY OUTPUT AND OUTCOME MEASURES

Applications for both competitions under this NOFA will be evaluated on their approaches to measuring activities, outputs, and outcomes. *See, e.g.*, Section E.1 (p. 16). Applicants are encouraged to consider a broad range of relevant output and outcome measures in developing their proposed scope of work. Examples of such output and outcome measures include the following:

1. Exemplary Output Measures

- Number of events (e.g., networking or mentoring sessions, boot camps) held;
- Number of new facilities established and opened;
- Number of technologies licensed or commercialized;
- Number of patent applications filed;
- Number of patents granted;
- Number of Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) proposals supported and awards received;
- Number of participants gaining new certifications or degrees;
- Number of participants with new partnerships;
- Number and amount of loans obtained by each supported entity; and
- Number of investors in and amount of each investment in each seed fund investment round supported.

2. Exemplary Outcome Measures

- Number and amount of angel, seed, venture capital, or other equity investments in each supported entity;
- Number of new firms created and supported;
- Number of new products launched by participants;
- Percent of participants reporting new skills acquired from project activities;
- Percent of participants reporting use of new skills to support continued activities;
- Percent of participants reporting new or increased exports;
- Number of jobs supported by seed fund investments; and
- Percent investment return on sale, exit, initial public offering, or other liquidation event.

APPENDIX D OPTIONAL CHECKLIST-STYLE GUIDE FOR REQUIRED DOCUMENTS

1. For States, Indian Tribes, Cities, and Other Political Subdivisions of States

The following checklist table is meant to assist applicants that are States, Indian tribes, cities, and other political subdivisions of States (including consortia of one or more of these types of entities). As set forth in Section D.2.i (p. 8) of this NOFA, all documents are required for a complete application.

Note that this list **DOES NOT APPLY** to nonprofit organizations, institutions of higher education, public-private partnerships, science or research parks, Federal laboratories, or economic development or similar organizations. For these organizations, see Appendix D2 (p. 36) of this NOFA.

Document Checklist for States, Indian Tribes, Cities, and Other Political Subdivisions of States		Checklist for Applicants/Co-Applicants, as Applicable		
Document	**Title/Description/Requirements**	**Applicant 1**	**Applicant 2**	**etc.**
Form SF-424 (with UEI/DUNS[19])	Application for Federal Assistance			
Form SF-424A	Budget Information-Non-Construction Programs			
Form SF-424B	Assurances-Non-Construction Programs			
Form CD-511	Certification Regarding Lobbying			
Form SF-LLL	Disclosure of Lobbying Activities			
Project Narrative	*See* Section D.2.ii (p. 9) of this NOFA			
Budget Narrative with Staffing Plan	*See* Section D.2.iii (p. 10) of this NOFA			
Commitment Letters or Equivalents	*See* Section D.2.i (p. 8) of this NOFA			
Comments from the State Clearinghouse	*See* https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/omb/grants_spoc			
Indirect Cost Rate (ICR) Agreement	*See* Section D.2.iv (p. 11) of this NOFA			

[19] *See* Section D.4 (p. 12)

2. For Nonprofit Organizations, Institutions of Higher Education, Public-Private Partnerships, Science or Research Parks, Federal Laboratories, Economic Development or Similar Organizations

The following checklist table is meant to assist applicants that are nonprofit organizations, institutions of higher education, public-private partnerships, science or research parks, Federal laboratories, or economic development or similar organizations (as well as consortia that include one or more of these types of entities). As set forth in Section D.2.i (p. 8) of this NOFA, all documents are required for a complete application.

Document Checklist for Nonprofit Organizations, Institutions of Higher Education, Public-Private Partnerships, Science or Research Parks, Federal Laboratories, Economic Development or Similar Organizations		Checklist for Applicants/Co-Applicants, as Applicable		
Document	**Title/Description/Requirements**	**Applicant 1**	**Applicant 2**	**etc.**
Form SF-424 (with UEI/DUNS[20])	Application for Federal Assistance			
Form SF-424A	Budget Information-Non-Construction Programs			
Form SF-424B	Assurances-Non-Construction Programs			
Form CD-511	Certification Regarding Lobbying			
Form SF-LLL	Disclosure of Lobbying Activities			
Project Narrative	*See* Section D.2.ii (p. 9) of this NOFA			
Budget Narrative with Staffing Plan	*See* Section D.2.iii (p. 10) of this NOFA			
Commitment Letters or Equivalents	*See* Section D.2.i (p. 8) of this NOFA			
Comments from the State Clearinghouse	*See* https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/omb/grants_spoc			
Organizational Status Documentation	E.g., certificates of good standing, articles of incorporation, bylaws, establishing authorities; *see* Section D.2.i (p. 9) of this NOFA			
Demonstration of Government Support	*See* Section D.2.i (p. 9) of this NOFA			
Indirect Cost Rate (ICR) Agreement	*See* Section D.2.iv (p. 11) of this NOFA			

[20] *See* Section D.4 (p. 12)