

## ANNOUNCEMENT OF FEDERAL FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- **Federal Agency Name:** Economic Development Administration (EDA), Department of Commerce
- **Federal Funding Opportunity Title:** National Technical Assistance, Training, Research and Evaluation: Information Dissemination Project and Business Incubator Research Project
- **Announcement Type:** Federal Funding Opportunity (FFO)
- **Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Numbers:** 11.303, Economic Development—Technical Assistance; 11.312, Economic Development—Research and Evaluation
- **Dates:** To be considered timely, a completed application for either project, regardless of the format in which it is submitted, must be either: (1) received by the EDA representative listed in section VII. of this competitive solicitation no later than November 9, 2007 at 5:00 p.m. EST; or (2) transmitted and time-stamped at [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) no later than November 9, 2007 at 5:00 p.m. EST. Any application received or transmitted, as the case may be, after 5:00 p.m. EST on November 9, 2007 will be considered non-responsive and will not be considered for funding. *See* section IV.B. for information regarding format options for submitting completed applications. By December 7, 2007, EDA expects to notify the applicants selected for investment assistance. The selected applicants should expect to receive funding for their projects within thirty (30) days of EDA's notification of selection.
- **Application Submission:** Full or partial paper applications may be submitted to EDA Headquarters in Washington, D.C. by e-mail, hand-delivery or postal mail, as provided in section VII.B. of this announcement. Applications also may be submitted electronically in whole or in part via [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov). *See* section IV.B. of this announcement.
- **Funding Opportunity Description:** Pursuant to the National Technical Assistance, Training, Research and Evaluation program, EDA is soliciting applications for the following projects:
  1. Information dissemination to practitioners serving economically distressed areas; and
  2. Research addressing the area of business incubators.

## FULL ANNOUNCEMENT TEXT

### **I. Funding Opportunity Description**

#### **A. Program Objective**

The Economic Development Administration's (EDA) mission is to lead the federal economic development agenda by promoting innovation and competitiveness, preparing American regions for growth and success in the worldwide economy. Through its National Technical Assistance, Training, Research and Evaluation program (NTA Program), EDA works towards fulfilling its mission by funding research and technical assistance projects to promote competitiveness and innovation in distressed rural and urban regions throughout the United States and its territories. By working in conjunction with its research partners, EDA will help States, local governments and community-based organizations to achieve their highest economic potential.

On June 21, 2007 and July 6, 2007, EDA published two separate *Federal Register* notices soliciting applications for funding under its NTA Program. The June 21, 2007, *Federal Register* notice (72 FR 34225) solicited applications for funding that addressed one or both of the following two projects: (1) information dissemination to practitioners serving economically distressed areas; and (2) a national symposium to bring together leaders to discuss current and future trends in economic development. The deadline for receipt of applications closed July 23, 2007 at 5:00 p.m. EST. After completing its review of applications submitted, EDA decided not to make an award for the information dissemination project. EDA now solicits applications for the information dissemination project in accordance with the project description and deliverables set out in section I.B. of this announcement. This FFO does not address and does not solicit applications for the national symposium project.

The July 6, 2007 *Federal Register* notice (72 FR 36952) solicited applications for funding that addressed one or more of the following four research projects: (1) rural economic development policy; (2) business incubators; (3) 21<sup>st</sup> century regionalism; and (4) private sector community investment. The deadline for receipt of applications closed on August 3, 2007 at 5:00 p.m. EST. After completing its review of applications submitted, EDA decided not to make an award for the business incubator research project. EDA now solicits applications for the business incubator research project in accordance with the project description set out in section I.B. of this announcement. Because EDA has made awards for research projects for (1) rural economic development policy, (2) 21<sup>st</sup> century regionalism, and (3) private sector community investments, this FFO does not address and does not solicit applications for those projects.

EDA encourages applicants to read the descriptions of both the information dissemination and the business incubators research projects set forth below because this announcement contains additional information on important requirements that were not in the earlier FFO announcements and *Federal Register* notices. To be considered for funding, all applications for the projects solicited through this FFO must comply with the new program requirements set out below. Any applicant that submitted an application during the previous

solicitation period should submit a new and complete application, if it wishes to be considered for funding.

## B. Project Descriptions

Under the NTA Program, EDA is soliciting applications for funding the following projects:

- (1) Information dissemination to practitioners serving economically distressed areas; and
- (2) Research addressing the area of business incubators.

### 1. **Project Title: Information Dissemination to Practitioners Serving Economically Distressed Areas**

#### **Background Statement:**

As part of its ongoing mission to assist economically distressed areas, EDA supports the dissemination of information to economic development practitioners serving distressed communities. EDA's intent is to implement a coordinated and complementary information dissemination program that, through strategic linkages, reaches the maximum number of economic development practitioners. The dissemination effort includes the development of inclusive distribution lists for each deliverable, which will be made available to EDA for its use.

EDA is soliciting applications to fund three separate tasks that will continue its mission of serving the economic development needs of distressed rural and urban regions, taking greater advantage of new technologies for information dissemination (including use of the Internet, audio/videoconferencing, e-mail), and identifying and providing to practitioners information in new or emerging areas of economic development needed by practitioners. The project will include a variety of media, as described below in the proposed scope of work. As described in detail below, the information dissemination project has three component tasks: (i) producing and broadcasting strategy telecasts; (ii) preparing and disseminating monthly electronic newsletters; and (iii) preparing and disseminating a quarterly magazine/pamphlet. The applicant must address all three tasks in its application.

#### **Deliverables:**

##### Task 1 – Strategy Broadcasts

The applicant must demonstrate the ability to conduct a minimum of four (4), thirty-minute economic development strategy broadcasts – by telecast and Webcast – targeted to practitioners nationwide. Depending on the availability of funding, EDA may wish to conduct more than four (4) strategy broadcasts. Each broadcast must originate from a studio in Washington, D.C. and must be recorded digitally so that it can be made available and be viewable broadly on Internet distribution channels, including on EDA's and other Internet websites. This component task requires the applicant to demonstrate that it is able to:

- Suggest timely and relevant topics for each broadcast;
- Suggest strong candidates for speakers and panelists and select the topics, presenters or panelists and case studies for each broadcast, subject to EDA's concurrence;
- Arrange for the moderator and facilities to conduct each telecast;
- Draft high-quality scripts for each broadcast that require minimal editing from EDA;
- Undertake sufficient publicity to ensure the maximum audience is reached;
- Ensure that sufficient local viewer facilities are available;
- Continually increase viewership through successful marketing, explore additional broadcast outlet opportunities, and draft and execute a comprehensive publicity campaign; and
- Provide for a feedback mechanism that measures both the level of participation in and the effectiveness of the broadcasts.

**Completion Deadline:** The telecasts will take place at intervals during the year between October 1, 2007 and October 1, 2008, as determined in conjunction with EDA.

#### Task 2 – Monthly Electronic Newsletters

The applicant must demonstrate the ability to prepare and disseminate a monthly electronic newsletter with information targeted to a national audience of economic development practitioners. The applicant must (i) provide examples of electronic newsletters (e-newsletters) that it has developed previously; and (ii) demonstrate a strategy for maximizing e-newsletter distribution, including the identification of an existing and available distribution list that could immediately be used to distribute the e-newsletters to the economic development community, as well as strategies to grow a distribution list that includes fully all economic development practitioners and interested stakeholders. The e-mail distribution strategy may involve supplementing or combining existing lists that economic development organizations and others currently possess in order to achieve maximum target audience penetration as quickly as possible. All e-mail distribution lists developed for the project must be made available to EDA for its use.

The newsletter must be in hypertext markup language (html) and in an attractive and colorful format, but also must be available as a plain text document for those who cannot access it in html. The newsletter will ordinarily (i) be no more than two pages in length; (ii) cover three or four topics each month; and (iii) include summaries of critical information, subject to EDA's concurrence. Where appropriate, the newsletter will serve as a roadmap to other information resources through hot links that facilitate direct access to more in-depth information. The newsletter will be distributed at no cost to organizations and individuals working to improve the economic viability of distressed areas.

**Completion Deadline:** The electronic newsletter will be disseminated each month between October 1, 2007 and October 1, 2008.

### Task 3 – Quarterly Magazine/Pamphlet

The applicant must demonstrate the ability to prepare a quarterly magazine/pamphlet of approximately 5-8 pages in a four-color, high-quality format that provides information to practitioners on EDA activities, along with one or two key timely topics in the field of 21<sup>st</sup> century economic development, subject to EDA's concurrence. The magazine/pamphlet will cover subjects such as current government policy, interviews with key decision-makers and practitioners, and present and analyze best practice case studies in economic development. EDA expects that the magazine/pamphlet will be mailed in hard copy to up to 6,000 recipients (depending on costs), in accordance with a mailing list to be developed by the applicant in consultation with EDA. The mailing list also will be made available to EDA for its use. In addition to the hard copy dissemination, an html counterpart will be made available for posting on EDA's website at [www.eda.gov](http://www.eda.gov).

**Completion Deadline:** The quarterly magazines/pamphlets will be published at the end of each calendar quarter during FY 2008.

#### **2. Project Title: Business Incubators**

##### **Background Statement:**

Recent studies on economic development, including several EDA-funded reports, stress the importance of a regional approach to successful economic development efforts and the importance of fostering innovation and supporting entrepreneurship as key elements in regional economic development.

Pursuant to its NTA Program, EDA is soliciting applications to undertake research involving business incubators. Business incubators may provide wet lab or office space, and often also offer business support services, such as business planning and marketing assistance. Business incubators of whatever type share a common principle: to nurture the development of entrepreneurial companies. EDA solicits applications from qualified researchers to build on the existing body of knowledge about business incubators, distilling the characteristics of successful incubation efforts and discussing quantitative and qualitative approaches to measuring incubator success. The research must be peer-review quality, include coverage of recent developments, such as virtual incubators, and must be of sufficient scope that the results, including but not limited to identification of best practices, are generalizable across the United States.

##### **Deliverables:**

The purpose of this research project is the creation of practitioner-accessible tools that can be used to bring the best current thinking to bear on specific problems. Therefore, the scope of work for the project consists of the following elements:

1. A practitioner-accessible report of the findings in the subject area. The report should be presented in a visually-appealing brochure summarizing key elements and findings. Approximately 500 brochures should be provided to EDA, with

each brochure containing a compact disk (CD) version of the report in searchable Adobe (PDF) format. The CD should contain a full topical and subject index of the materials such that a practitioner seeking specific information can quickly locate the desired information and, utilizing intra-report links, quickly locate allied or associated information that may be necessary or useful for the completion of the task. A method by which practitioners may access updated data encapsulated in the final report without charge is desirable.

2. A presentation to senior EDA officials at the close of the study that outlines research methods in plain, non-technical language and summarizes the report's conclusions in a manner suitable for dissemination to the public.
3. Participation with EDA in conferences and meetings to discuss the results of the research. The location of the conferences and meetings is not known at this time. EDA anticipates inviting the recipient to five events likely to be at locations convenient to EDA regional offices in Austin, Texas; Atlanta, Georgia; Chicago, Illinois; Denver, Colorado; Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; Seattle, Washington; or the Headquarters office in the District of Columbia.

Any information disseminated to the public under this announcement is subject to the Information Quality Act (Pub. L. No. 106-554). Applicants are required to comply with the Information Quality Guidelines issued by EDA pursuant to the Information Quality Act, which are designed to ensure and maximize the quality, objectivity, utility and integrity of information disseminated by EDA. These guidelines can be found at EDA's website at [www.eda.gov](http://www.eda.gov).

### **Completion Deadline:**

The recipient will have one year from the award date to complete the scope of work, which consists of research, composing the resulting report and presenting the report to EDA senior management. The research project period will begin with an initial meeting between the recipient and EDA staff to ensure that all parties are in agreement as to project terms, expectations and procedures. After the initial meeting, the recipient will submit a final work plan to EDA staff for review and approval. Throughout the project period, there will be regular contact between EDA staff and the recipient for updates on project progress. Additionally, interim progress reports will be required throughout the project period. The schedule of interim progress reports will be determined subsequent to award. Typically, the recipient submits a draft research report to EDA at least 90 days before the end of the project period for EDA's review. If the draft research report is approved, EDA will approve publication of a final research report, and the recipient will brief EDA senior management on research methods and report results. After the project period has ended, it is possible that the recipient will need to remain available to present research findings at select meetings and conferences. This schedule may be determined after EDA has received the final research report. However, any such meetings and conferences will be scheduled in consultation with the recipient, and the recipient will have ample time to prepare.

### C. Program Authority

The authority for the NTA Program is section 207 of the Public Works and Economic Development Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. § 3147), as amended (PWEDA), and 13 C.F.R. part 306, subpart A.

EDA published final regulations (codified at 13 C.F.R. chapter III) in the *Federal Register* on September 27, 2006 (71 FR 56658). These regulations will govern an award made under this announcement. The final regulations and PWEDA are accessible on EDA's Internet website at [www.eda.gov/InvestmentsGrants/Lawsreg.xml](http://www.eda.gov/InvestmentsGrants/Lawsreg.xml).

## II. Award Information

### A. Funding Availability

EDA will use funds currently available to make awards under the NTA Program authorized by PWEDA.

Based on recent past awards for information dissemination projects similar to the project solicited under this announcement, the range of total expenditures for such projects has been from \$150,000 to \$250,000.

Based on recent past awards for research projects similar to the business incubator research project solicited under this announcement, the range of funding awarded for such a project has been from \$150,000 to \$350,000. The project period will be one year from the date the award is made, but the recipient may be required to remain available to present research findings at select meetings and conferences approximately six to twelve months beyond the project period. Although the schedule for such meetings and conferences will likely not be known until EDA has received the final research report, they will be scheduled in consultation with the recipient, and the recipient will have ample time to prepare.

### B. Type of Funding Instrument

For the information dissemination project, an award under this competitive solicitation will be in the form of a cooperative agreement. For the business incubator research project, an award under this competitive solicitation will be in the form of a grant.

## III. Eligibility Information

### A. Eligible Applicants and Eligible Recipients

Pursuant to PWEDA, eligible applicants for and eligible recipients of EDA investment assistance include a District Organization; an Indian Tribe or a consortium of Indian Tribes; a State; a city or other political subdivision of a State, including a special purpose unit of a State or local government engaged in economic or infrastructure development activities, or a consortium of political subdivisions; an institution of higher education or a consortium of institutions of

higher education; a public or private non-profit organization or association; and, as provided in section 207 of PWEDA (42 U.S.C. § 3147) for the NTA Program, a for-profit organization. *See* section 3 of PWEDA (42 U.S.C. § 3122) and 13 C.F.R. § 300.3.

#### B. Cost Sharing or Matching Share Requirement

Generally, the amount of the EDA grant may not exceed fifty (50) percent of the total cost of the project. However, a project may receive an additional amount that shall not exceed thirty (30) percent, based on the relative needs of the region in which the project will be located, as determined by EDA. *See* section 204(a) of PWEDA (42 U.S.C. § 3144) and 13 C.F.R. § 301.4(b)(1). Under this competitive solicitation, the Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Economic Development (Assistant Secretary) also has the discretion to establish a maximum EDA investment rate of up to one hundred (100) percent where the project (i) merits and is not otherwise feasible without an increase to the EDA investment rate; or (ii) will be of no or only incidental benefit to the recipient. *See* section 204(c)(3) of PWEDA (42 U.S.C. § 3144) and 13 C.F.R. § 301.4(b)(4).

While cash contributions are preferred, in-kind contributions, consisting of assumptions of debt or contributions of space, equipment and services, may provide the non-federal share requirement of the total project cost. *See* section 204(b) of PWEDA (42 U.S.C. § 3144). EDA will fairly evaluate all in-kind contributions, which must be eligible project costs and meet applicable federal cost principles and uniform administrative requirements. Funds from other federal financial assistance awards are considered matching share funds only if authorized by statute that allows such use, which may be determined by EDA's reasonable interpretation of the statute. *See* 13 C.F.R. § 300.3. The applicant must show that the matching share is committed to the project, available as needed and not conditioned or encumbered in any way that precludes its use consistent with the requirements of EDA investment assistance. *See* 13 C.F.R. § 301.5.

### **IV. Application and Submission Information**

#### A. Application Packages

The application package for each proposed project consists of the following three forms:

- (1) Form ED-900A, "*Application for Investment Assistance*" (OMB Control No. 0610-0094);
- (2) Form ED-900A's program-specific component, "*National Technical Assistance, Training, and Research and Evaluation Program Requirements*" (OMB Control No. 0610-0094); and
- (3) Form SF-424, "*Application for Federal Assistance*" (OMB Control No. 4040-0004).

Applicants should note that, despite references to Form ED-900P (*Pre-Application for Investment Assistance*) in the instructions for completing Form ED-900A, a pre-application is not required under this competitive solicitation. Applicants also must ensure that they access and complete the current version of all required forms.

## B. Submitting Application Packages

Applicants have the following three options for submitting a completed application package:

- (1) *Full electronic submissions.* This option is feasible only for applicants with access to a scanner. Applicants choosing this option first should complete and electronically submit Forms SF-424, SF-424A (*Budget Information—Non-Construction Programs*), and SF-424B (*Assurances—Non-Construction Programs*) in the [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) application package. You may access this grant opportunity synopsis (and the applicable forms) by following the instructions provided at <http://www.grants.gov/search/basic.do>, whereby you can perform a basic search for this grant opportunity by completing the “*Keyword Search*,” the “*Search by Funding Opportunity Number*,” or the “*Search by CFDA Number*” field, and clicking the “*Search*” button.

Since applicants are unable to electronically save completed versions of Form ED-900A and Form ED-900A’s program-specific component (*National Technical Assistance, Training, and Research and Evaluation Program Requirements*), applicants must print copies of these two (2) forms from EDA’s website at <http://www.eda.gov/InvestmentsGrants/Application.xml>, complete all pertinent sections (excluding pages 1-8 of Form ED-900A’s program-specific component, since pages 1-8 consist of Forms SF-424A and SF-424B), and scan and attach these two forms and all required additional narratives (per the information set out in section IV.C. of this FFO) to the [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) application package. Applicants may then submit the entire application package through [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov). Contrary to the instructions provided in the Form ED-900A, it is not necessary to submit hardcopies of the completed application to EDA.

- (2) *Electronic submission of Forms SF-424, SF-424A and SF-424B, followed by paper (hardcopy) submission of Form ED-900A and Form ED-900A’s program-specific component via mail.* Applicants choosing this option first should complete and electronically submit Forms SF-424, SF-424A and SF-424B in the [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) application package. You may access this grant opportunity synopsis (and the applicable forms) by following the instructions provided on <http://www.grants.gov/search/basic.do>, whereby you can perform a basic search for this grant opportunity by completing the “*Keyword Search*,” the “*Search by Funding Opportunity Number*,” or the “*Search by CFDA Number*” field, and clicking the “*Search*” button. Applicants should then print copies of Form ED-900A and Form ED-900A’s program-specific component (*National Technical Assistance, Training, and Research and Evaluation Program Requirements*), both of which can be found on EDA’s website at <http://www.eda.gov/InvestmentsGrants/Application.xml>, complete all pertinent sections (excluding pages 1-8 of Form ED-900A’s program-specific component, since pages 1-8 consist of Forms SF-424A and SF-424B), attach all required additional narratives (per the information set out in section IV.C. of this

FFO), and print or type their DUNS number at the top of Form ED-900A to allow EDA to match each paper (hardcopy) application received with the corresponding electronically-submitted forms. Applicants should then mail the completed Form ED-900A and ED-900A's program-specific component to EDA Headquarters as provided in section VII.B. of this announcement.

- (3) *Full paper (hardcopy) submissions.* Applicants choosing this option should first download and print Form SF-424. Applicants should then save blank copies of Form ED-900A and Form ED-900A's program-specific component (*National Technical Assistance, Training, and Research and Evaluation Program Requirements*), complete these forms and attach all required additional narratives (per the information set out in section IV.C. of this FFO); and mail the completed Form SF-424, Form ED-900A and Form ED-900 A's program-specific component to EDA Headquarters as provided in section VII.B. of this announcement. All forms may be downloaded and printed from EDA's website at <http://www.eda.gov/InvestmentsGrants/Application.xml>.

Applications completed in accordance with the instructions set forth in this announcement, regardless of the option chosen for submission, will be considered for EDA funding under this competitive solicitation. Incomplete applications will not be considered. EDA will evaluate applications consistent with the information set forth in section V. of this FFO.

### C. Content and Form of Application Submissions

To apply for an award under this competitive solicitation, an eligible applicant must submit a completed application package in accordance with the information set forth below.

#### 1. Application Format

Applications may be submitted in three formats: (i) full paper (hardcopy) format; (ii) partially in paper (hardcopy) format and partially in electronic format; or (iii) full electronic format, each in accordance with the procedures provided in section IV.B. of this FFO. EDA will not accept facsimile transmissions of applications.

For applicants submitting full electronic applications through [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov), the preferred file format for electronic attachments (e.g., the project narrative and additional exhibits to Form ED-900A and its program-specific component) is portable document format (PDF); however, EDA will accept electronic files in Microsoft Word, WordPerfect, Lotus or Excel formats.

The content of a completed application package is the same for full or partial electronic submissions and full or partial paper (hardcopy) submissions. Each application package must include the:

- a. Form ED-900A, *Application for Investment Assistance*;

- b. Form ED-900A's program-specific component, *National Technical Assistance, Training, and Research and Evaluation Program Requirements*
- c. Form SF-424, *Application for Federal Assistance*;
- d. Form SF-424A, *Budget Information—Non-Construction Programs*;
- e. Form SF-424B, *Assurances—Non-Construction Programs*;
- f. Description of how the applicant intends to carry out the scope of work (included in the project narrative requested in Part I of Form ED-900A's program-specific component, which should not exceed ten (10) pages);
- g. Proposed budget and accompanying explanation, including a detailed explanation of the matching share (i.e., non-federal share) to be contributed by the applicant's regional/local partners (as requested as Exhibit II.A. in Part II of Form ED-900A's program-specific component);
- h. Resumes/qualifications of key staff (which should not exceed two (2) pages per individual, with an additional two (2) pages allowed for a single summary description of all organizations or consultants named in the application); and
- i. Proposed schedule for completion of the project.

Applicants applying electronically should access the following link for assistance in navigating [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) and for a list of useful resources: [http://www.grants.gov/applicants/applicant\\_help.jsp](http://www.grants.gov/applicants/applicant_help.jsp). If you do not find an answer to your question under [Frequently Asked Questions](#), try consulting the [Applicant's User Guide](#). If you still cannot find an answer to your question, contact [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) via email at [support@grants.gov](mailto:support@grants.gov) or telephone at 1-800-518-4726. The hours of operation for [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) are Monday-Friday, 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. (EST) (except for federal holidays).

## 2. Submission Deadline

To be considered timely for either proposed project, a completed application, regardless of the format in which it is submitted, must be either: (1) received by the EDA representative listed in section VII. of this competitive solicitation no later than November 9, 2007 at 5:00 p.m. EST; or (2) transmitted and time-stamped at [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) no later than November 9, 2007 at 5:00 p.m. EST. Any application received or transmitted, as the case may be, after 5:00 p.m. EST on November 9, 2007 will be considered non-responsive and will not be considered for funding. The closing date and time are the same for paper submissions as for electronic submissions. By December 7, 2007, EDA expects to notify the applicants selected for investment assistance under this announcement.

As stated in section I.A. of this FFO, applicants that applied for either the information dissemination project or the business incubator research project during the prior solicitation period and are interested in applying under this competitive solicitation should submit a new and complete application, if they wish to be considered for funding. EDA will not accept any changes, additions, revisions or deletions to applications after the closing date and time have passed. EDA may contact an applicant for additional clarifications regarding its application after final evaluations by the review panel.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to start early and not to wait until the approaching due date before logging on and reviewing the instructions for submitting an application through [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov). Applicants should save and print written proof of an electronic submission made at [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov). If problems occur while using [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov), the applicant is advised to (i) print any error message received, and (ii) call [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) at 1-800-518-4726 for immediate assistance. EDA may allow more time for application submission due to system problems at [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) that are beyond the control of the applicant.

#### D. Intergovernmental Review

Applications for funding under this competitive solicitation are not subject to the requirements of Executive Order 12372, “*Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs.*”

### V. Application Review Information

#### A. Evaluation Criteria and Selection Procedures

To apply for an award under this competitive solicitation, an eligible applicant must submit a completed application package to EDA by the deadline specified and in the manner provided in sections IV.C. and VII.B. of this FFO. Applications that do not meet all items required or that exceed the page limitations set forth in section IV.C. of this announcement will be considered non-responsive and will not be considered for funding. Applications for both projects that meet all the requirements will be evaluated by a review panel comprised of at least three (3) EDA staff members, all of whom will be full-time federal employees. The review panel will evaluate the applications and rate and rank them using the following criteria of approximate equal weight:

1. Conformance with EDA’s statutory and regulatory requirements, including the extent to which the proposed project satisfies the award requirements set out herein and as provided in 13 C.F.R. § 306.2:
  - a. Strengthens the capacity of local, State or national organizations and institutions to undertake and promote effective economic development programs targeted to regions of distress;
  - b. Benefits distressed regions; and
  - c. Demonstrates innovative approaches to stimulate economic development in distressed regions;
2. The degree to which an EDA investment will have strong organizational leadership, relevant project management experience and a significant commitment of human resources talent to ensure the project’s successful execution (*see* 13 C.F.R. § 301.8(b));
3. The ability of the applicant to implement the proposed project successfully (*see* 13 C.F.R. § 301.8);
4. The feasibility of the budget presented; and
5. The cost to the Federal government.

## B. Selection Factors

The Assistant Secretary will be the Selecting Official. EDA expects to fund the highest ranking application for each project, as recommended by the review panel, submitted under this competitive solicitation. However, for either or both projects, the Assistant Secretary may not make any selection, or he may select an application out of rank order for the following reasons:

1. A determination that the application better meets the overall objectives of sections 2 and 207 of PWEDA (42 U.S.C. §§ 3121 and 3147);
2. The applicant's performance under previous awards; or
3. The availability of funding.

## VI. Award Administration Information

### A. Award Notices

Unsuccessful applicants will be notified by postal mail that their applications were not selected for funding.

The Selecting Official will issue the grant award (Form CD-450), which is the authorizing financial assistance award document. By signing the Form CD-450, the recipient agrees to comply with all award provisions. EDA will send the grant award by postal mail to the appropriate business office of the recipient's organization and it must be signed and returned without modification by the recipient within thirty (30) days of receipt.

### B. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

Administrative and national policy requirements for all Department of Commerce awards are contained in the *Department of Commerce Pre-Award Notification Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements*, published in the *Federal Register* on December 30, 2004 (69 FR 78389). This notice may be accessed by entering the *Federal Register* volume and page number provided in the previous sentence at the following Internet website:  
[www.gpoaccess.gov/fr/retrieve.html](http://www.gpoaccess.gov/fr/retrieve.html).

### C. Reporting Requirements

All recipients of EDA investment assistance are required to submit financial and performance (technical) reports in accordance with the terms and conditions of the grant award. All financial reports must be submitted in triplicate (one original and two copies) to the EDA Program Officer. See 13 C.F.R. § 302.16.

## **VII. Agency Contacts**

### **A. Additional Information**

EDA's Internet website at [www.eda.gov](http://www.eda.gov) contains additional information on EDA and its programs. For additional information on the NTA Program, please contact William P. Kittredge via email at [wkittredge@eda.doc.gov](mailto:wkittredge@eda.doc.gov) (preferred) or by telephone at (202) 482-5442.

### **B. Addresses for Application Submissions**

Full or partial paper (hardcopy) applications submitted pursuant to this competitive solicitation may be:

1. E-mailed to William P. Kittredge, Senior Program Analyst, at [wkittredge@eda.doc.gov](mailto:wkittredge@eda.doc.gov); or
2. Hand-delivered or mailed to William P. Kittredge, Senior Program Analyst, Economic Development Administration, Room 7009, U.S. Department of Commerce, 1401 Constitution Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20230.

Applicants submitting full or partial paper submissions are encouraged to do so by e-mail. Applicants are advised that, due to mail security measures, EDA's receipt of mail sent via the United States Postal Service may be substantially delayed or suspended in delivery. Applicants may wish to use a guaranteed overnight delivery service.

Applicants choosing to submit applications in whole or in part electronically through [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) should follow the instructions set out in section IV.B. of this announcement.

## **VIII. Other Information and Requirements**

EDA's currently effective regulations and PWEDA are available on its Internet website at <http://www.eda.gov/InvestmentsGrants/Lawsreg.xml>. Certain EDA, Department of Commerce, and other award requirements are noted below.

- A. Projects are expected to be completed in a timely manner consistent with the project scope of work. The completion deadline for each task or deliverable under the information dissemination project and the business incubator project is specified in section I.B. of this announcement.
- B. If an application is selected for funding, EDA has no obligation to provide any additional future funding in connection with an award. Renewal of an award to increase funding or to extend the period of performance under the award is at EDA's sole discretion.
- C. EDA is committed to a policy of non-discrimination in the administration of all its programs.