



University Center Economic Development Program FY 2021 Competition

April 7, 2021

EDA's University Center Program is a competitively-based partnership between EDA and academic institutions that makes the varied and vast resources of universities available to the economic development practitioner community.

AGENDA

- Program Overview
- Allocation
- Eligibility
- Award Period
- Match Requirements
- Application Documents
- Application Review Criteria
- Review and Selection Process
- Tools and Resources

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The University Center (UC) Program – Enables institutions of higher education to establish and operate programs focused on leveraging university assets to foster regional economic development.

- Builds regional economic ecosystems that support innovation and high-growth entrepreneurship as well as resiliency and inclusiveness.
- Collaborates with other EDA partners by providing expertise and technical assistance to develop, implement and support regional strategies.
- Results in job creation, high-skilled regional talent pools, and business expansion in a region's innovation clusters.



PROGRAM OVERVIEW – FY21 NOFO

This program funds technical assistance provided by an accredited institution of higher education or a consortium of accredited institutions of higher education that is focused on one or more of the following program focus areas:

- Advancing regional commercialization efforts
- Advancing high-growth entrepreneurship
- Cultivating innovation
- Encouraging business expansion in a region's innovation cluster(s)
- Developing a high-skilled regional workforce
- Increasing the resiliency of a region

PROGRAM ALLOCATION

For FY 2021, EDA has allocated approximately \$7.4 million to the University Center program (\$2.5 million for the first year of awards under this competition) under funding appropriated through the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021 (P.L. 116-260).

Divided among 2 Regional Offices

- CRO
- PRO

Funds about 8 to 10 awards per EDA Region

Chicago Regional Office	Serves: Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio, Wisconsin, and Muscatine and Scott counties in Iowa
Philadelphia Regional Office	Serves: Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Puerto Rico, Rhode Island, Vermont, Virginia, U.S. Virgin Islands, and West Virginia

Eligible Applicants

- Accredited Institutions of Higher Education including
 - Community Colleges or Junior Colleges
 - Consortium of Accredited Institutions of Higher Education
- University-Affiliated Research Institutions
- Non-Profit Organizations



See Notice of Funding Opportunity for eligibility details.

Period of Performance:

- Awards will be for a 5-year period of performance
 - SF-424, SF-424A, Budget Narrative, and Staffing Plan should be for full 5 years
- Selected University Centers will **NOT** compete for 2nd - 5th funding years

Funding:

- Initial funding period will be for Year 1
- Matching funds for the project **must** be committed for at least Year 1

Funding beyond the first year will depend on the availability of funds and recipient performance.

Application Matching Requirements

- EDA will fund up to 50 percent of the **total project cost**
- In-kind contributions are allowed
- Other federal funds may be considered match if authorized by statute (requires EDA's prior approval)
- Matching share must: (i) be committed to the project for the project period, (ii) be available as needed, and (iii) not be conditioned or encumbered in any way
 - Supporting documentation!
- Local match must be committed at the time the application is submitted (only first year match amount required)

Scope of Work Activities

Applicants must describe specific activities to be undertaken by the University Center during the period of performance, including but not limited to providing technical assistance, conducting applied research, and disseminating information about, and the results of, the University Center's economic development activities.

- Technical assistance: all economic development activities whether undertaken at the request of an entity outside of the sponsoring institution (or consortium) or directly by the applicant or co-applicants.
- Applied research: the direct use of research to address a specific challenge, meet a specific need, or solve a specific problem experienced by innovators, entrepreneurs, economic planners, and cluster-based industries.
- Disseminating information: (1) informing the University Center's target audience of available assistance; (2) publicizing research findings and best practices; and (3) demonstrating to EDA how measurable economic development outcomes will be realized during the period of performance.

***see page 15 -16 of the NOFO for more detail**

- **Required Forms**

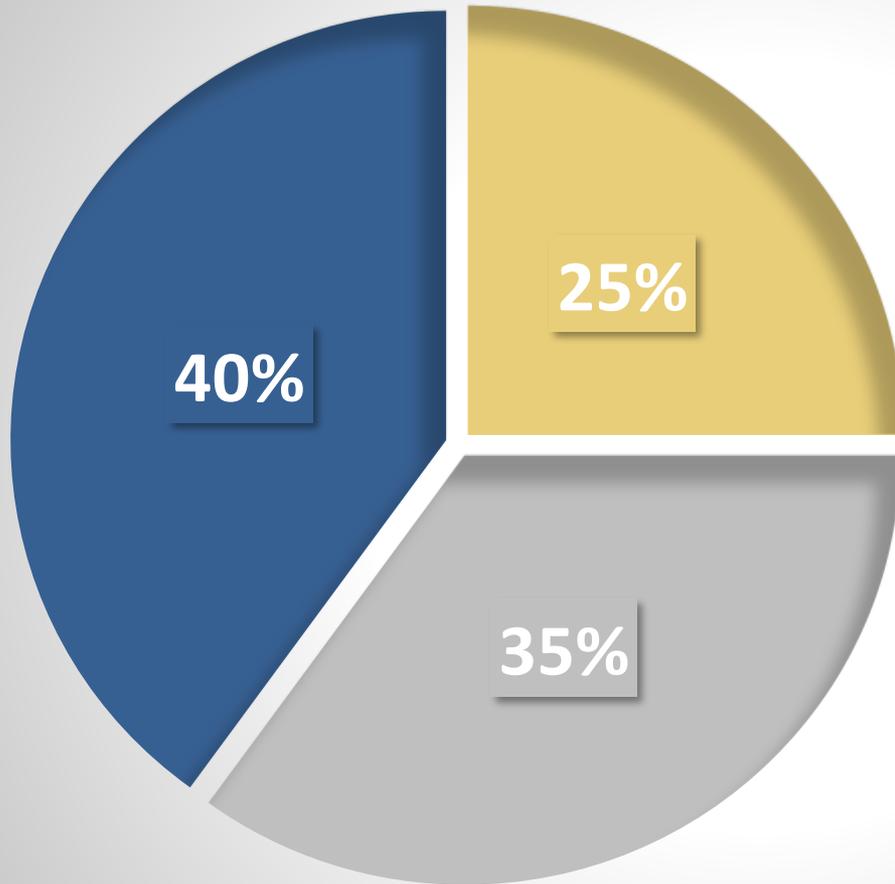
- Form SF-424 – Application for Federal Assistance
- Form SF-424A – Budget Information—Non-Construction Programs
- Form CD-511 – Certification Regarding Lobbying
- Form ED-900 – General Application for EDA Programs
- Form ED-900A – Additional EDA Assurances for Construction Or Non-Construction Investments

- **Other Forms (if applicable)**

- Form SF-LLL – Disclosure of Lobbying Activities

- **Other Attachments**

- Staffing plan
- Resumes
- Personnel summary
- Five separate itemized budgets
- Organizational documentation (if applicable)
- Indirect cost rate documentation (if applicable)



- Project Alignment with Investment Priorities
- Capacity of Applicant for Execution of Scope of Work
- The Responsiveness to the NOFO

#1 ALIGNMENT WITH INVESTMENT PRIORITIES

Projects **MUST** address one or more of the following EDA Investment Priorities:

- **RECOVERY AND RESILIENCE**
- **CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE**
- **WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AND MANUFACTURING**
- **EXPORTS AND FOREIGN DIRECT INVESTMENT**
- **OPPORTUNITY ZONES**

*See complete description of Investment Priorities on EDA's website at
<https://eda.gov/about/investment-priorities>.*

Four Equally Weighted Factors:

FOSTERS JOB CREATION AND PROMOTES PRIVATE INVESTMENT

INDICATES FEASIBILITY OF THE PROJECT

DESCRIBES SUSTAINABILITY AND DURABILITY OF RESULTS OF THE PROJECT

DEMONSTRATES ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY

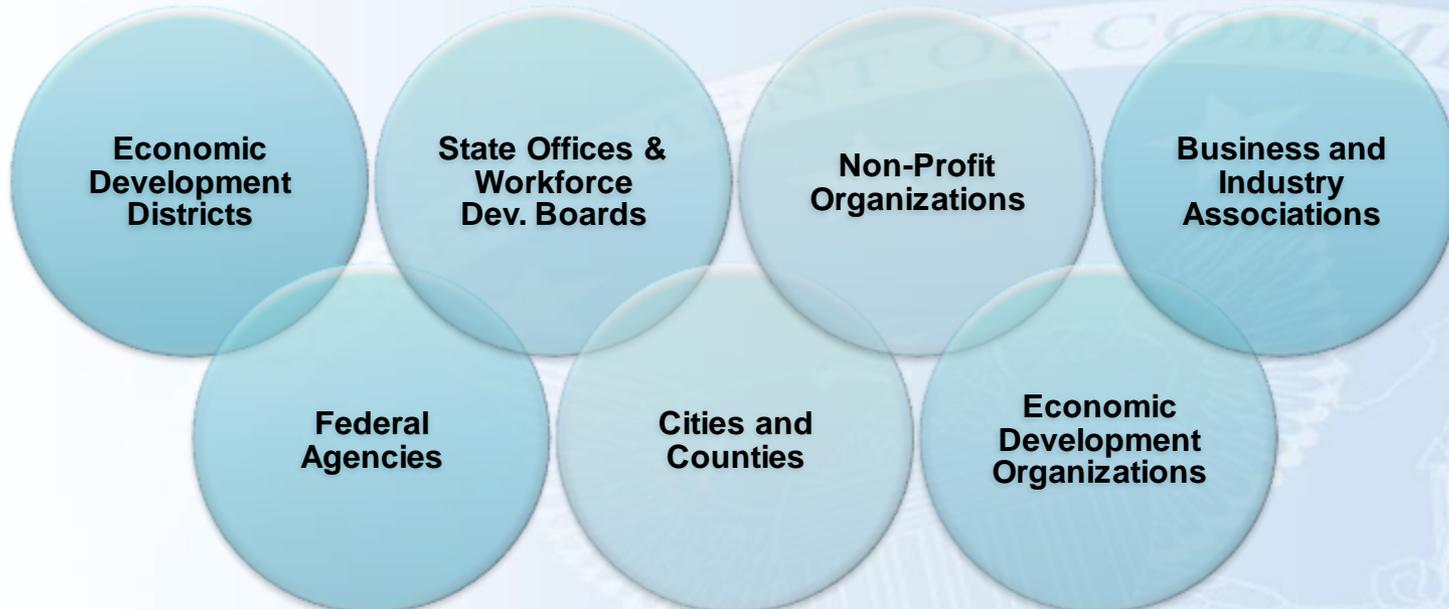
#3 RESPONSIVENESS TO PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

Successful applicants demonstrate the following:

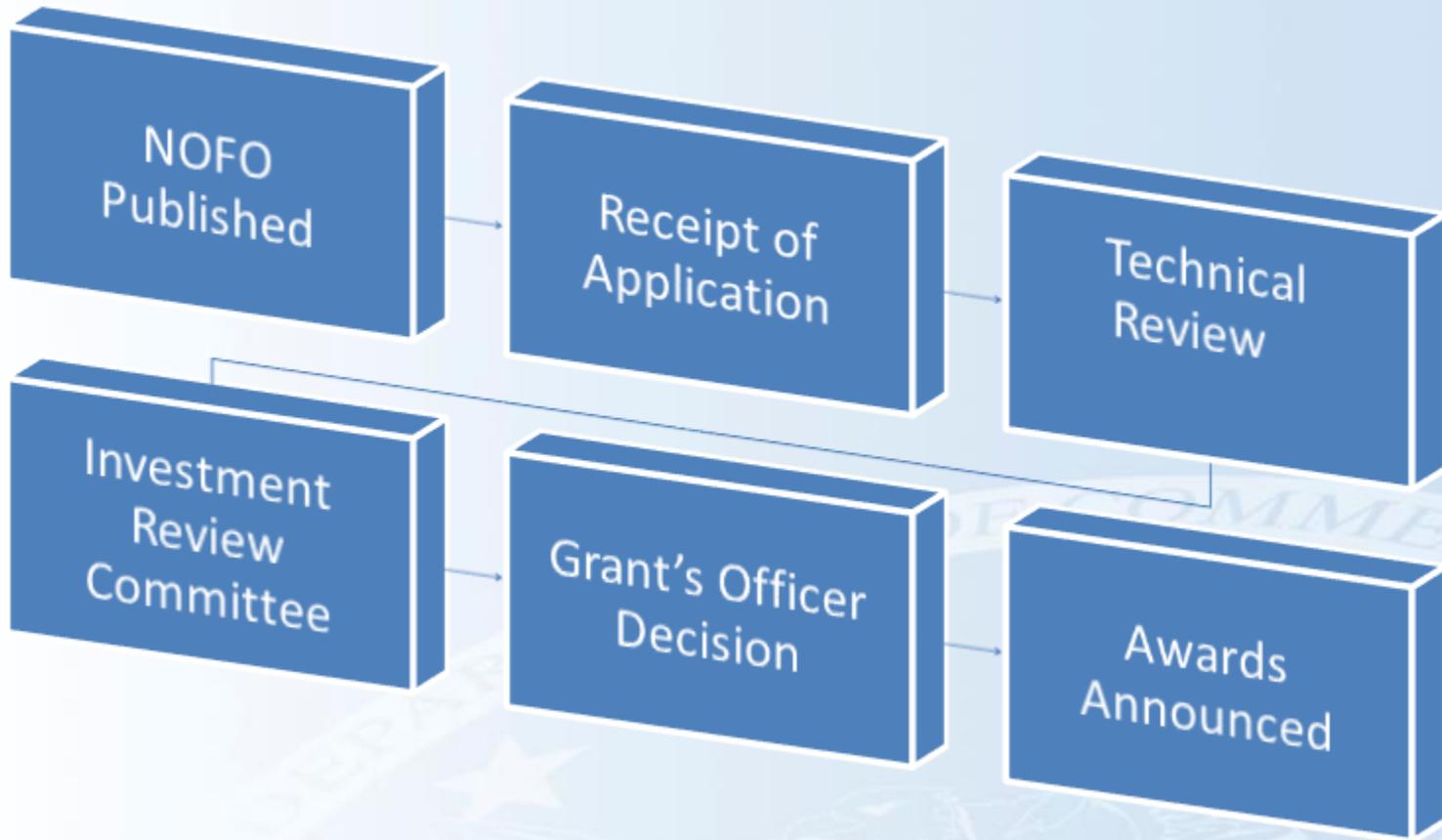
- Serve a well-defined geographic area and benefit distressed communities within that area
- Provide technical assistance, conduct applied research, and/or disseminate information to foster regional economic ecosystems
- Drive regional economic development and strategies
- Leverage other university assets that support regional economic ecosystems
- Engage EDA stakeholders and partners (e.g., EDDs, Indian Tribes, RDOs)
- Include measurable activities and outcomes
- Plan for sustaining success beyond period of performance

- One purpose of the UC program is to leverage existing university resources, so describe the institutional systems, information, and expertise available to you.
- Competitive applications document strong partnerships. Partnership letters should identify the role the support organization has in the program and detail contributions.

UC Partners



REVIEW AND SELECTION PROCESS



Applications Due: **June 4, 2021** at 11:59pm ET

Applications must be submitted through grants.gov:

- CRO: <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/view-opportunity.html?oppld=332622>
- PRO: <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/view-opportunity.html?oppld=332621>

1. Read the NOFO in its entirety. Many of your questions can be answered by thoroughly reading the document.
2. The project narrative of your application is limited to 10 pages.
3. The indirect costs are limited to no more than 20% of the total project costs. No exceptions.
4. Notably, any program income must be added to the funds committed to the project, and all funds must be used to further eligible program activities before expiration of the five-year period of performance.
5. Register in GRANTS.GOV early!
6. SAM registration must be up-to-date.
7. The Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR) is the only person who can submit the application in Grants.gov.
8. We recommend submitting your application a week in advance to give yourself plenty of time to address technical and other issues that may arise.

➤ Performance Evaluation

- In accordance with 13 C.F.R. § 306.7, EDA will conduct a performance evaluation of each University Center within three years after the initial start date of the award.
- EDA may conduct an additional performance evaluation prior to the end of the five-year award.
- Goal: assess the University Center's contribution to providing technical assistance, conducting applied research, meeting program performance objectives, and disseminating project outcomes in accordance with the scope of work funded during the period of performance.
- Will include participation of at least one other UC as part of peer review process.
- Cost-reimbursable – so bake this into your budget!

➤ Reporting

- Progress reporting
- Financial reporting
- GPRR reporting: <https://www.eda.gov/performance/gpra/>

2016 UC Competition Applications

	CRO	PRO
Applications	19	33
Awards Made	10	12
Average funding (per year)	\$115,806.31	\$116,667



EDA's University Center page:

<https://www.eda.gov/programs/university-centers/>

<https://www.eda.gov/programs/university-centers/applicant-resources/>

Best Practices and Other Resources:

- <https://www.eda.gov/files/programs/university-centers/uc-tools/Evaluation-of-UC-Best-Practices.pdf>
- <https://www.eda.gov/tools/>

Best Practices at EDA University Centers

Activities: Support for Start-Ups

- ✓ **Broad Technology Partnerships:** High-impact centers leverage connections and services from many sources to address start-up needs (gaining "economies of scope").
- ✓ **Map and Engage Communities:** Deliberate engagement of the community in fostering start-ups is critical, especially in regions without strong university connections.
- ✓ **Fill Financial Gaps:** Almost all start-ups need capital, and strong centers either connect these businesses with sources of finance or mobilize financial resources/networks themselves.

Best Practices at EDA University Centers

Underlying Conditions: Leadership & Institution

- ✓ **Leverage all one's resources:** Leveraging university and external resources is an important part of success.
- ✓ **Recognized Leader with Deep Experience:** An experienced leader – especially with off-campus experience – who provides strong intellectual/technical leadership and can build relationships makes a huge difference.
- ✓ **Salient, Client-Facing Institution:** A center that reports to a senior leader in the university and is responsive to external needs is more likely to succeed.

Activities: Support for Local & Regional Communities

- ✓ **Go to the Client:** The best centers spend time in the field and bring their programs directly to their clients, instead of waiting for clients to knock on their door.
- ✓ **Build Your Own Networks:** Caring for and nurturing networks – and drawing clients into these networks – is essential for success (especially in rural areas).

Activities: Support for Existing Businesses

- ✓ **Serving Two Clients through Use of Student Labor:** Well-directed and supervised student contributions can bring cost-effective expertise to meet business needs while also providing valuable work experience for the student.
- ✓ **Understanding Needs:** Assistance must be carefully adapted to the needs of local businesses and the market opportunities they face.

Activities: Support for Entrepreneurs

- ✓ **Well-Matched Mentors:** Experienced mentors (who have started a business themselves) can best provide structured counsel and guidance that addresses the real needs and concerns of new entrepreneurs.
- ✓ **Focused Communities:** Programs focused on certain technologies or sectors, leveraging resources to address specific technical needs, seem to yield significant results.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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EDA Mission: To lead the federal economic development agenda by promoting innovation and competitiveness, preparing American regions for growth and success in the worldwide economy.



QUESTIONS?

