



RECOMPETE

PILOT PROGRAM | U.S. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION

FACT SHEET

Phase 1 Finalists

The Biden-Harris Administration is announcing 22 Finalists in the Distressed Area Recompete Pilot Program. These communities will compete for \$200 million of implementation funding from the Department of Commerce’s Economic Development Administration (EDA) to combat long-term economic distress and create good jobs.

The economic conditions of one’s neighborhood and community are a fundamental building block to social and economic outcomes, yet too many Americans still live in communities where they struggle to find reliable jobs and opportunity. The Distressed Area Recompete Pilot (Recompete) program is targeted to address a critical gap: ensuring communities have the investments they need to grow, adapt, and remain competitive in a changing national and global economy.

Authorized for up to \$1 billion in the CHIPS and Science Act, the Recompete Program received \$200 million in initial appropriations for the 2023 competition. Through this funding, EDA aims to make transformational investments in distressed communities across the nation that catalyze renewed competitiveness and economic opportunity for workers and families in these areas.

On December 20, 2023, President Biden announced 22 Phase 1 Finalists of the Recompete Program and 24 Strategy Development Grant awardees.

Recompete Finalists will compete in Phase 2 of the competition, with 4-8 Recompete Plans ultimately receiving implementation funding averaging between \$20 and \$50 million each. Strategy Development Grant awardees will receive ~\$500,000, on average, to further develop their Recompete Plans, hire staff, and identify follow-along resources for their communities.

The Recompete Program addresses critical gaps in the national economy by providing community-driven investments to re-engaging workers into the workforce.

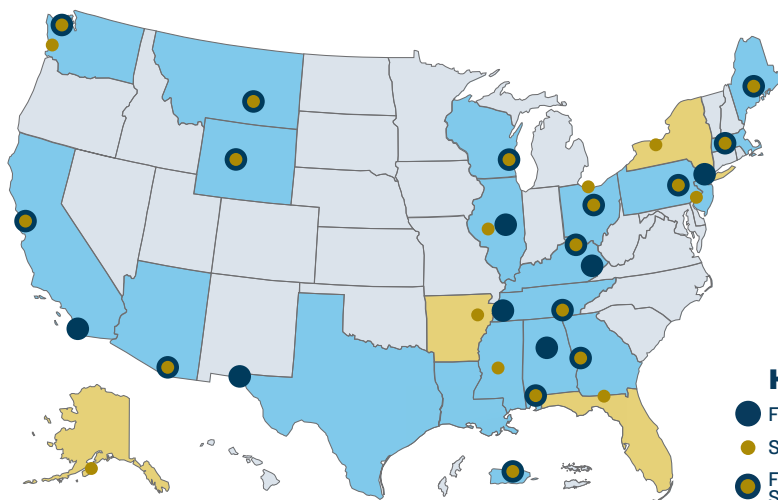
The Recompete program aims to catalyze long-term economic opportunity in highly distressed communities with investments that target the unique underlying conditions of a particular place. Through its bottom-up, community-driven approach, Recompete will provide employment opportunities in concentrated areas. Reducing the number of places experiencing joblessness is not only one of the best ways to improve social and economic outcomes, but also supports the broader U.S. economy through a stronger, more resilient workforce.

EDA received more than 560 applications during the Recompete Program’s initial competition, representing the highest demand of any national program in EDA’s history. On average, Recompete Finalists have prime-age (25–54-year-old) employment rates that trail the national average by more than 10 percentage points and an average median household income one-third below the national average.

Recompete Finalists reflect a spectrum of economic distress in America and proposed a variety of economic strategies focusing on:

- **Supporting rural and Tribal communities** by addressing barriers to job creation and economic opportunity through regionally-aligned investments to reconnect residents across isolated areas;
- **Addressing distress in large cities** through a series of highly concentrated investments in targeted neighborhoods to reverse historic urban inequities and connect workers to good jobs; and
- **Strengthening small- and medium-sized towns** ranging across post-industrial centers, suburban areas in proximity of growing labor markets, and rural and remote cities.

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KEY

- Finalist HQ
- SDG Recipient HQ
- Finalist and SDG Recipient HQ
- Finalist States Served
- States Served by Only SDG

"Recompete helps fulfill President Biden's promise that no community in America will be left behind as we continue to grow our nation's economy and invest in American workers. These Recompete Finalists and grant recipients have presented a wide range of inspiring solutions to create jobs, develop long-term economic growth, and realize the full potential in communities that for too long have been overlooked or counted out."

GINA RAIMONDO

Secretary, U.S. Department of Commerce

To combat long-term distress, each Finalist built a Recompete Plan that articulated a tailored investment thesis based on specific root causes, ranging from shifting global markets, to addiction, to economic isolation. These plans brought together strong public, private, and civic partnerships — together, Finalists submitted more than 530 letters of support, many of which represent specific and targeted partnerships and local commitments from local elected officials (116), the private sector (125), higher education and workforce training organizations (104), and community-based and labor organizations (103).



125
Private Sector

116
Local Elected Officials

104
Higher Education and Workforce Training Organizations

103
Community-Based and Labor Organizations

Finalists also demonstrated a clear commitment to equity, with all 22 Recompete Plans proposing strategies intentionally centered on underserved communities. Of the 22 Finalists, seven are focused exclusively on rural America and five are led by or involve Tribal organizations as a primary partner. Additionally, seven Finalists' plans involve labor organizations as part of their proposed investments.

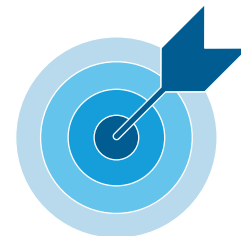
Recompete Finalists proposed investments will catalyze regional growth and opportunity. Together, the 22 Phase 1 Finalists represent nearly \$800 million in preliminary funding requests that will be refined in their Phase 2 applications. These include approximately:

- \$300 million in funding for workforce training to connect workers to good jobs;
- \$190 million in social and wraparound services such as transportation, child/elder care, counseling, addiction and post-incarceration support and other supports to ensure residents can meaningfully participate and stay in the labor force;
- \$150 million in entrepreneurship and small business supports to provide local business enterprises the skills, resources, and networks needed to thrive;
- \$150 million in infrastructure investments to revitalize public infrastructure, commercial corridors, and improve residential wellbeing; and
- \$80 million in governance and local coordination resources to ensure Recompete Plans are designed by and for the communities they serve.

Note that EDA asked for preliminary budgets in Phase 1; Finalists will revise and resubmit their projects in Phase 2 of the competition.

WHAT SETS THE RECOMPETE PROGRAM APART?

Since 2000, labor force participation has **declined by 5 percent**, and this decline has been associated with a **decrease in life expectancy**, **poorer outcomes for children** and **lower U.S. overall competitiveness**. That's why **economists** have found that programs like Recompete — that specifically focus investments into those places with low prime-age employment — tend to have a much larger return on investment than untargeted programming.



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COMMUNITY CALLOUTS

Recompete recognizes social factors, such as substance abuse or community blight, as well as economic factors influence regional distress, and the program invests in root causes of joblessness.

Creating economic opportunity requires attacking the underlying conditions that keep workers from accessing good jobs. The Recompete program aims to meet communities where they are and based on their unique needs — social and economic. For example, the Finalists have proposed nearly \$200 million in funding to address social and wraparound services needed by workers and families.

FINALIST EXAMPLE

St. Claire Medical Center's Recompete Strategy is focused on coupling addiction treatment with training and access to good jobs, stating: “We recognize recovery is most successful when treatment is immediately followed by employment opportunities.” By comprehensively addressing the social, wellbeing, and economic needs of community members in Bath, Menifee, Montgomery, Morgan, and Rowan counties in Eastern Kentucky, St. Claire and its partners aim to alleviate systemic distress.

Recompete aims to end the cycle of poverty by investing in a community's long-term competitiveness.

Investing in the right programs and people can activate the competitive advantage of a region and create a positive cycle of jobs and economic opportunity for its residents. However, too often those underlying assets are not adequately invested in, which is particularly the case for rural areas. Recompete Finalists have identified specific competitive strengths of their regions and built investment priorities that can catalyze domestic and foreign direct investment, exports, new businesses, and jobs growth.

FINALIST EXAMPLE

“Native households own only eight cents of wealth for every dollar owned by a white household.” That’s why **Wind River Reservation's** Recompete Plan develops local capacity to capitalize on sustainable natural assets. Based on an analysis conducted with the National Park Service, if Wind River — located next to Yellowstone National Park — can capture just 15 percent of Yellowstone tourism, it will create over 1,300 reservation jobs and a long-term economic lifeline for the community.

Recompete strengthens American manufacturing.

The decline of traditional manufacturing over the past forty years has impacted communities across the county. Yet in many American cities and towns, the loss of manufacturing jobs was geographically concentrated and its impacts compounded by racist policies like redlining. The Recompete Pilot is strengthening American manufacturing through investments to revitalize communities and neighborhoods that once were thriving centers of production.

FINALIST EXAMPLE

In 1970, 98 percent of the population of **Allentown, Pennsylvania** was white, and the economy was driven by the steel industry. Today, more than half of the city's residents are Hispanic, and the economy ranges from advanced manufacturing to health care. The city's Recompete Plan doubles down on the diversity of its people and economy, especially by investing in Allentown's Black and brown neighborhoods, to create economic pathways to good jobs and a thriving, future-looking, local economy for all residents.

Recompete supports minority-owned businesses that restore underinvested-in Black and Brown neighborhoods.

Thriving small businesses are a leading indicator of thriving neighborhoods. Yet, for example, only 3 percent of all U.S. businesses are majority-owned by Black Americans. Supporting entrepreneurship provides an oversized impact to distressed communities by creating good jobs and sustainable local communities. For example, Black-owned businesses employ 1.3 million workers and create over \$141 billion in sales — much of which stays directly in the community.

FINALIST EXAMPLE

Historically, **Milwaukee, Wisconsin's** manufacturing sector served as a source of opportunity for Black residents. “In 1970, 43 percent of the Black population in Milwaukee worked in blue-collar jobs, a rate higher than in Detroit. However, by 2000 almost all those jobs were lost and the central city neighborhoods, home to the city's Black residents, suffered the most and have had poverty rates exceeding 20 percent since.” That’s why Milwaukee's Recompete Plan proposes providing operational and flexible financing to over 1,000 small businesses and construct a new manufacturing business accelerator within the 30th Street Industrial Corridor to provide minority-owned small businesses support to grow.

OVERVIEW OF THE 22 RECOMPETE PLAN FINALISTS

Here is an overview of our 22 Recompete Plan Finalists, 15 of which were also awarded a Strategy Development Grant (SDG) as indicated by a (●) next to their name. Note that budgets are preliminary at this time – implementation funding will be awarded in Phase 2 of the competition to 4-8 of the following Finalists.¹

- The **Borderplex Region Workforce Recompete Plan**, led by the city of El Paso, Texas, requests approximately \$50 million to connect residents to good jobs by providing workforce development in advanced manufacturing, healthcare, and IT, upscaling wraparound services, and connecting participants to existing employers.
- The **City of Allentown Recompete Plan ●**, led by the city of Allentown, Pennsylvania, requests approximately \$20 million to connect residents to good jobs by working with labor organizations and manufacturing and healthcare employers to create targeted economic opportunities in the most distressed parts of downtown Allentown's 1st and 6th wards, the city's primarily Black and brown neighborhoods.
- The **Closing the Gap Recompete Plan ●**, led by Plenty Doors Community Development Corporation, requests approximately \$50 million to recover jobs lost in the decline of the coal industry by investing in critical business and municipal infrastructure, business incubation, and vocational training in the trades. The Finalist's eight investments will curb economic leakage by growing businesses that provide needed services and job opportunities for the Crow Reservation in Montana.
- The **Decatur, Illinois' Recompete Plan**, led by Richland Community College, requests approximately \$50 million to catalyze two growing industries in the region and connect them to underserved populations in Decatur, Illinois. Taking advantage of its successful "EnRICH" training model, the Finalist will prepare thousands of workers for manufacturing job opportunities in the emerging electric vehicle and precision fermentation sectors.
- The **Eastern Kentucky Runway Recompete Plan**, led by Shaping Our Appalachian Region, requests approximately \$50 million to reduce barriers to employment and address skills mismatches in the healthcare and tech sectors in southeastern Kentucky. The Finalist's seven projects would fund healthcare and remote training programs, customize training and resources to individual needs, and create a social enterprise accelerator to grow small businesses focused on addressing workforce participation barriers like access to childcare.
- The **East Oakland Partnership Recompete Plan ●**, led by the Black Cultural Zone Community Development Corporation, requests approximately \$20 million to upskill workers for careers in emerging technologies and the trades. Through investments in wraparound services, digital literacy programs, and small business development, the Finalist will connect East Oakland, California, a predominantly Black and Hispanic community, with existing IT and infrastructure jobs across the region.
- The **Grow Milwaukee Recompete Plan ●**, led by the Northwest Side Community Development Corporation, requests approximately \$50 million to support business growth, modernize industrial sites, and create workforce pathways into quality jobs. The Finalist will connect Milwaukee, Wisconsin's historically segregated 30th Street Industrial Corridor to broader economic prosperity in the surrounding region.
- The **Gulf Coast Chambers Network (GCCN) Recompete Plan ●**, led by the Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce Foundation, requests approximately \$40 million to upskill Gulf Coast residents for jobs prevalent in Alabama, Louisiana, and Mississippi. The GCCN's investment strategies leverage six chambers of commerce and "workforce influencers" to address transportation and other shared barriers to good jobs facing coastal communities in the Gulf region.
- The **Lithium Valley Recompete Plan**, led by San Diego Regional Policy and Innovation Center, requests approximately \$65 million to reskill workers and equip small businesses to take advantage of the region's burgeoning lithium extraction industry. The applicant's seven proposed projects will address gaps in educational attainment and STEM workforce training to ensure new growth industries serve residents of California's Imperial Valley.
- The **Newark Builds Newark Recompete Plan**, led by the city of Newark, requests approximately \$20 million to connect residents to good jobs created by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law in New Jersey. With projects like the \$6.9 billion Gateway Project underway, the Finalist – in partnership with the Carpenter's Union (Local 253) – aims to connect historically underserved communities to job opportunities in the local building trades.

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¹ Budgets will be re-submitted in Phase 2; amounts may be revised based EDA's funding decisions.

OVERVIEW OF THE 22 RECOMPETE PLAN FINALISTS *continued*

- The **North Olympic Peninsula Recompete Plan** ●, led by Clallam County, requests approximately \$50 million to renew competitiveness of its natural resources and maritime industries. The applicant's seven investment strategies will address barriers to business growth and employment through marine transport, manufacturing facilities and critical infrastructure, and social support services within the rural and tribal regions of Clallam and Jefferson Counties, Washington.
- The **Oasis Expansion Recompete Plan** ●, led by the Platform for Social Impact, requests approximately \$50 million to invest in comprehensive, equitable economic development in the Villa Prades public housing community of San Juan, Puerto Rico. Recognizing the community's unique needs, the Finalist aims to address obstacles to participating in the formal economy, provide training and comprehensive wraparound supports like child and elder care, and support the growth of small businesses.
- The **Prosper Memphis 2030 Recompete Plan**, led by the Memphis Chamber Foundation, requests approximately \$20 million to diversify the local economy and build job pathways into growth industries in Tennessee, including advanced manufacturing and technology. The Finalist seeks to enable economic mobility and growth in the region's persistently impoverished communities by providing Industry 4.0 workforce training, increasing childcare capacity, and supporting local small businesses and entrepreneurs.
- The **Reconnecting Canton Recompete Plan** ●, led by the Stark Economic Development Board, requests approximately \$20 million to combat a history of redlining, urban renewal, and industry decline in southeast Canton, Ohio by creating new workforce pathways, providing small business supports, expanding community resource hubs to provide wraparound services, and removing transportation barriers faced by underserved populations.
- The **Reinvest Northwest: Birmingham Career Accelerator Recompete Plan**, led by the city of Birmingham, requests approximately \$20 million to connect residents in the neighborhoods of North Birmingham, Pratt, Smithfield, and Northside in Alabama to good jobs. The applicant's four investment strategies will address persistent economic distress by providing workforce training and affordable shared transportation, as well as establishing new childcare centers and a business entrepreneurship center.
- The **Revitalization of Central Maine Recompete Plan** ●, led by Main Street Skowhegan, requests approximately \$50 million to connect residents to good jobs and revitalize the downtown economy. The Finalist's proposed projects bridge community and economic development by creating a small business incubator and community kitchen, training workforce in tandem with regional employers, and increasing connectedness through downtown improvements in Skowhegan and Waterville.
- The **Santa Cruz River/Sonoran Corridor (I-19) Recompete Plan** ●, led by Santa Cruz County, Arizona, requests approximately \$50 million to counter job displacement and connect people to quality jobs with household sustaining wages in sustainable industries. The coalition's five proposed projects will serve residents in Arizona's Pima and Santa Cruz Counties through regional climate resiliency, digital equity and inclusion and industry re-investment.
- The **South Chattanooga/East Lake Economic Revitalization Recompete Plan** ●, led by the city of Chattanooga, requests approximately \$20 million to address economic disparity and persistent poverty in four neighborhoods in the urban core of Chattanooga, Tennessee. The Finalist's investment strategies will expand tech-focused apprenticeship programming and wraparound services such as micro-childcare centers, case management, and transportation pilots.
- The **Springfield-Holyoke Recompete Plan** ●, led by the MassHire Hampden County Workforce Board, requests approximately \$20 million to train and connect workers to career pathways through inclusive hiring commitments, integrated workforce training, and a shared wraparound services hub. The Finalist's four investment strategies will address the social determinants of work and health in Hampden County, Massachusetts.
- The **St. Claire HealthCare Recompete Plan** ●, led by St. Claire Medical Center, requests approximately \$10 million to help individuals with substance use disorders find sustainable and meaningful employment. The applicant's four investment strategies tackle the impact of the opioid crisis on eastern Kentucky by using a 12-week curriculum complemented by the expansion of tuition assistance, training, and peer support programs.
- The **UWCV: Addressing Economic Distress Recompete Plan** ●, led by the United Way of the Chattahoochee Valley, requests approximately \$20 million to prepare residents in the Columbus, Georgia-Alabama Metropolitan Statistical Area for jobs in advanced manufacturing and construction, and to combat barriers to employment through targeted investments in childcare and job readiness.
- The **Wind River Indigenous-based Economy Recompete Plan** ●, led by the Wind River Development Fund, requests approximately \$50 million to establish a cultural preservation and ecotourism economy. The Finalist's seven investment strategies aim to create new growth opportunities for the Wind River Indian Reservation and in Fremont County, Wyoming by accessing the growing tourism industry in nearby Yellowstone National Park.

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OVERVIEW OF THE 9 STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT GRANT RECIPIENTS

Below are the 9 applicants that were awarded only a Strategy Development Grant (SDG).

- **“Where did our people go?” – Alutiiq: Natmen Suupet agellriit? (SDG)**, led by Kodiak Area Native Association, will study factors leading to five Alaskan tribal areas’ population loss, develop intervention strategies, create new jobs, train workers to fill new and existing jobs, and identify how the target age group can return home to their village communities.
- **Accelerate Mississippi Recompete Strategy (SDG)**, led by the Mississippi Department of Employment Security (MDES), will organize a strategy to address regional regional prime-age employment; identify and evaluate barriers to labor force participation and occupational skills attainment in key regions and industry sectors; and develop strategic implementation planning.
- **Chester Recompete Program (SDG)**, led by the city of Chester, Pennsylvania, will use the planning grant during a critical moment of the city’s transition through bankruptcy and position the local economy for new growth. Activities will support a Recompete Plan Coordinator and contracts for a work assessment study, capacity study, and revising local policies to improve business conditions.
- **FAMU Gadsden County Opportunity for All (SDG)**, led by Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University (FAMU), will determine the key transportation, childcare, and agricultural strategies for the region’s small, rural farms to increase productivity and job opportunities.
- **Recompete Rochester (SDG)**, led by RochesterWorks, Inc., will build capacity for interventions to increase the employment rate of prime-age residents, especially among Black and Hispanic or Latino communities – activities include convening regional stakeholders and conducting community outreach. The applicant’s efforts will focus on increasing access to good jobs for residents of Rochester, New York.
- **Recompete Washington State Coastal Counties Initiative (SDG)**, led by Greater Grays Harbor, Inc., will develop a comprehensive and inclusive 10-step process to address the prime-age employment gap in Grays Harbor County and Pacific County in Washington state. Funding will also support hiring a Recompete Plan Coordinator and necessary staff.
- **Site Readiness and Good Jobs Initiative (SDG)**, led by The Fund for Our Economic Future, will connect land use and growth initiatives with community development in Cleveland, Ohio. Activities include hiring a Recompete Plan Coordinator and necessary staff and funding contracted support for community outreach and strategic implementation planning.
- **Springfield Economic Empowerment Project (SDG)**, led by the city of Springfield, will serve the 12 census tracts with the most acute prime-age employment gap within the Springfield, Illinois metro area. Activities include hiring a Recompete Plan Coordinator and Economic Development Officer and supporting strategic implementation planning.
- **Working for Southeast Arkansas (SDG)**, led by The Alliance for Rural Impact, will develop a strategy to reverse the impacts of persistent poverty, out-migration, and economic distress in the Mississippi Delta region. Activities include community outreach and research in partnership with Rural Local Initiatives Support Corporation and other local partners.

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WHAT SUPPORT CAN FINALISTS EXPECT FROM EDA DURING THE PHASE 2 COMPETITION?

The Recompete Pilot Program is a two-phase competition that was designed to help Finalists move from high-level conceptual plans in Phase 1 to detailed multi-project proposals in Phase 2. This allows EDA to provide substantial support to Finalists to improve the quality of proposals for the Phase 2 applications and increase the readiness for project implementation regardless of whether a Finalist receives implementation funding.

III EDA will offer Recompete Finalists the following:

■ 1-on-1 Finalist Feedback Session

The Recompete Pilot Program team will provide individualized feedback based on Phase 1 applications in January 2024. These feedback sessions provide an opportunity for Finalists to reflect on their Phase 1 application, discuss questions, and refine their vision and strategy to better prepare for Phase 2 submission.

■ 1-on-1 Sessions with External Experts

As they prepare Phase 2 applications, a Finalist may benefit from engaging with experts on specific topics. EDA will work with its partner network to connect Finalists to relevant experts when possible, to provide an independent sounding board during application development.

■ Thematic Webinars

EDA and its partners will offer virtual sessions to highlight best practices on the investment strategies commonly proposed across the 22 Recompete Finalists. These sessions — designed in partnership with field experts in economic and workforce development, economic mobility, community development, economic competitiveness, and other areas — will inform Finalists as they build their Phase 2 proposals. **Example topics include:** engaging and partnering with industry, effectively structuring wraparound services, and strengthening community engagement and equity.

■ Ongoing Support

EDA will offer “Ask the Program” Office Hours for Finalists to raise strategic questions for Phase 2 application development, and “Technical Office Hours” for questions specific to application mechanics (e.g., questions on EDGE, filling out required forms and documentation), especially for first-time national competition participants.



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