

AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN COMMUNITY GUIDE



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Program Overview

There are 7 funding mechanisms within the Economic Development Administration's American Rescue Plan:

1. **Build Back Better Regional Challenge** - very large regional collaborative effort
2. **Good Jobs Challenge** - regional systems focused on workforce and job placement
3. **Economic Adjustment and Assistance** - flexible funding for local development
4. **Travel, Tourism, and Outdoor Recreation** - regional funds for broad tourism
5. Indigenous Communities - Tribal community support
6. Coal Communities Commitment - funds allocated to support coal impact
7. Statewide Planning, Research and Networks - funds awarded to Governors

Overview information for the first four are within this document, as they are the most relevant programs for our area. The information is brief; however, EDA has provided extensive resources for each program that are well-organized and important to read.

We cannot emphasize enough: take the time to read the NOFO and utilize the FAQ for a program you are interested in applying to. Direct links are available for each of the four programs described in this Community Guide.

Also included is a copy of the EDA Funding Priorities, an important document to consider as proposals are developed. Funding priorities are important to address where relevant within projects, particularly Equity as described in the document.

For our region, it appears the most appropriate programs are likely the Economic Adjustment Assistance and the Travel, Tourism, and Recreation.

Links for information include:

Home Page for American Rescue Plan Programs

[EDA American Rescue Plan Programs | U.S. Economic Development Administration](#)

For questions and additional information, your contact is the Denver Regional Office for ND. Initial contact by email is best. Always check the FAQ before contacting them, FAQs provide a great deal of information. Telephone meetings can be arranged by email.

EDA Denver Regional Office Contact

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Build Back Better Regional Challenge Overview

EDA invites eligible applicants to form regional coalitions to apply for funding to implement three to eight distinct but related projects in their region, in coordination with industry and community partners, and aligned around a holistic vision to build and scale a strategic industry cluster. Applicants should identify one key coordinating lead institution per regional cluster to lead the concept and projects into the implementation phase, while fostering collaboration and coordinating resources to ensure these investments have the greatest economic impact on our communities, regions, and the nation. ***This is an opportunity to THINK BIG and transform your region's economy.***

Coalition members eligible to apply for investment assistance for their region include a(n):

- District Organization of an EDA-designated Economic Development District
- Indian Tribe or a consortium of Indian Tribes
- State, county, 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
- Institution of higher education or a consortium of institutions of higher education
- Public or private non-profit organization or association acting in cooperation with officials of a political subdivision of a State

Individuals or for-profit entities are not eligible.

This program is designed as a two-phase competition. In Phase 1, interested regions form coalitions of eligible entities and collaborate to develop a Concept Proposal that outlines a vision for the development or expansion of a new or existing regional industry or industries, as well a collection of 3-8 potential projects that support that vision. EDA will select 50-60 Phase 1 coalition finalists and award technical assistance grants of up to \$500,000 each, through a lead institution, to further develop the coalition's concept and collection of projects for their regional growth cluster. Phase 1 **Concept Proposals must be submitted to EDA via Grants.gov by October 19, 2021.**

Build Back Better Regional Challenge Overview Cont'd

In Phase 2, coalition finalists will compete for significant implementation assistance. EDA will award 20-30 coalitions each a total of \$25-75 million, and up to \$100 million. These awards will assist communities in executing ambitious plans to supercharge their regional economies across a variety of strategic growth sectors.

Coalitions

Both the region covered and the industry targeted by the Build Back Better proposal should be defined by the applicant in their application materials. Examples of what a Build Back Better cluster of projects may look like and what makes a strong coalition can be found in section A.1.a of the Notice of Funding Opportunity (link is below).

Technical assistance grants to Phase 1 awardees may include costs associated with personnel to coordinate new or existing resources to benefit regional competitiveness, convening regional partners, and outreach activities to engage historically underserved populations, racial minorities, and women in the proposed cluster. Eligible uses of the technical assistance award funds also include development of environmental and engineering information, if applicable.

Eligible Phase 2 implementation grant costs include construction activities, such as water and sewer system improvements, industrial parks, shipping and logistics facilities, business incubators and accelerators, brownfield redevelopment, technology-based facilities, wet labs, multi-tenant manufacturing facilities, science and research parks, transportation enhancements, and telecommunications infrastructure (e.g., broadband). Eligible non-construction activities can include design and engineering, technical assistance, economic recovery strategy development, market feasibility studies, and the capitalization of revolving loan funds (RLFs).

Each project funded under the BBB Regional Challenge must be consistent with the current regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS).

A CEDS is a strategy-driven plan for regional economic development, prepared by an EDA-designated Economic Development District (EDD) organization. North Central Regional Planning Council prepares the CEDS for this region.

Build Back Better Regional Challenge Overview Cont'd

READ the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) thoroughly. It is well written and organized. Additionally, the Frequently Asked Questions are very helpful.

- [Notice of Funding Opportunity](#)
- [Frequently Asked Questions](#)
- [One Pager \(PDF\)](#)

***The webinar focused on this as an **unprecedented** opportunity to build jobs for today, communities for all, and regions for the future. This is large and long term. They are looking for big, bold ideas!

Economic Adjustment Assistance Fund Overview

The Economic Adjustment Assistance program is EDA's most flexible program, and grants made under this program will help hundreds of communities across the nation plan, build, innovate, and put people back to work through construction or non-construction projects designed to meet local needs.

A wide range of technical, planning, workforce development, entrepreneurship, and public works and infrastructure projects are eligible for funding under this program.

Eligible Applicants

- District Organization of an EDA-designated Economic Development District
- State, county, 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
- Institution of higher education or a consortium of institutions of higher education
- Public or private non-profit organization or association acting in cooperation with officials of a political subdivision of a State
- Local intermediaries doing economic development work.

This grant is focused on local development; accelerating the local economy and building a local economy that will be resilient to future economic shocks. EDA wants it to relate to your community/area. Put it into the context of your community or county...what are the needs and what are the opportunities through this funding. Retraining or bringing back jobs is allowable.

Match: The grant rate is 80%; EDA has discretion to reach 100%. Unlike with past EDA grant programs, applications that provide more than a 20% match may be more competitive.

Importantly, An applicant that submitted an application that was not funded under the CARES Act can resubmit with a letter to EDA requesting a review under the new American Rescue Plan Economic Adjustment Assistance NOFO. The letter must contain a certification that the project is unchanged and all matching funds remain available. If there are any changes to the application, applicants must submit a new application. (Please read the Notice of Funding Opportunity for more information.)

Economic Adjustment Assistance Fund Overview Cont'd

Applicants should note that the evaluation criteria for the Economic Adjustment Assistance under the American Rescue Plan are different than that under EDA's CARES program and EDA will be using the new criteria.

Deadline: EDA will accept applications on a rolling basis, beginning now, under the American Rescue Plan Economic Adjustment Assistance Notice of Funding Opportunity, the American Rescue Plan requires EDA to award funds by September 30, 2022. EDA plans to accept and award grant applications, subject to the availability of funds, until March 22, 2022. Applicants should apply well before that deadline to ensure adequate funding.

Additional, critical information is available within the Notice of Funding Opportunity, and there is a comprehensive Frequently Asked questions document that is very helpful.

Economic Adjustment Assistance Program Resources:

- [Notice of Funding Opportunity](#)
- [Frequently Asked Questions](#)
- [One Pager \(PDF\)](#)

Good Jobs Challenge Overview

EDA's American Rescue Plan Good Jobs Challenge aims to get Americans back to work by building and strengthening systems and partnerships that bring together employers who have hiring needs with other key entities to train workers with in-demand skills that lead to good-paying jobs.

Through the Good Jobs Challenge, EDA is allocating \$500 million to collaborative skills training systems and programs. EDA encourages efforts to reach historically underserved populations and areas, communities of color, women, and other groups facing labor market barriers such as persons with disabilities, disconnected youth, individuals in recovery, individuals with past criminal records, including justice impacted and reentry participants, serving trainees participating in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Women, Infants and Children (WIC), and veterans and military spouses.

These systems and partnerships will create and implement industry-led training programs, designed to provide skills for and connect unemployed or underemployed workers to existing and emerging job opportunities. Ultimately, these systems are designed to train workers with the skills to secure a union job or a quality job that provides good pay, benefits, and growth opportunities.

EDA will fund proposals within the following phases, as applicable to regional needs:

1. System Development
2. Help establish and develop a regional workforce training system with lasting impact, comprised of multiple sector partnerships
3. Program Design
4. Develop the skills training curriculum and materials, and secure technical expertise needed to train workers
5. Program Implementation
6. Implement non-construction projects needed to provide workforce training and connect workers with quality jobs, including wrap-around services

****Must place trainees within quality jobs.***

Good Jobs Challenge Overview Cont'd

Deadline: Not a rolling deadline; the deadline for applications is January 26, 2022.

Awards: 25-50 awards from \$5M - \$25M

Match: No match requirement, although it is encouraged.

No construction projects.

****This program depends upon workforce systems, in partnership with industry; difficult within our region.*

Applicants

The Good Jobs Challenge is designed to support the needs of an applicant's identified regional workforce system through a single integrated award. EDA will make awards to either the System Lead Entity of a regional workforce system or the Backbone Organization of a sectoral partnership as the lead applicant. These organizations may make subawards to other eligible recipients as necessary to the proposed project and as approved by EDA.

Eligible applicants for EDA's Good Jobs Challenge include a(n):

- District Organization of an EDA-designated Economic Development District
- Indian Tribe or a consortium of Indian Tribes
- State, county, 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
- Institution of higher education or a consortium of institutions of higher education
- Public or private non-profit organization or association acting in cooperation with officials of a political subdivision of a State

Resources include budget narrative and staffing plan templates. Please read both the Notice of Funding Opportunity and the Frequently Asked Questions, the FAQ provides definitions of the several uncommon terms within this program, as well as explanatory graphics that were within the webinar.

- [Notice of Funding Opportunity](#)
- [Frequently Asked Questions](#)
- [One Pager \(PDF\)](#)
- [Optional Budget Narrative and Staffing Plan Template \(XLSX\)](#)
- [Application Checklist \(PDF\)](#)

Travel, Tourism, and Outdoor Recreation Funds Competitive Grants Overview

Application Deadlines: For EDA Competitive Tourism Grants, there are no application submission deadlines. Applications are being accepted now. While EDA encourages eligible applicants to submit their applications as soon as possible, EDA strongly advises eligible applicants to submit complete applications no later than January 31, 2022. **Submission by January 31, 2022 is not a guarantee of funding. Any award is subject to the availability of funds.**

Eligible entities include a(n): (i) District Organization of an EDA-designated Economic Development District (EDD); (ii) State, county, 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; (iii) or (iv) public or private non-profit organization or association acting in cooperation with officials of a general purpose political subdivision of a State. Individuals or for-profit businesses are not eligible.

Funding Opportunity Description

EDA Competitive Tourism Grants

EDA will fund travel, tourism, and outdoor recreation projects that include non-construction and construction activities. For the most part, this program is intended to fund projects that are focused on new and expanded infrastructure, projects with a multi-state or national focus, and projects in regions most adversely affected by damage to the travel, tourism, and outdoor recreation sectors from the coronavirus pandemic.

Through this program, EDA can support both the development of travel, tourism, and outdoor recreation pandemic recovery strategies and the implementation of recovery projects, including in communities adjacent to National Park Service units, State Parks, National Marine Sanctuaries, and other natural destinations. This includes construction activities where the project is owned by the Eligible Applicant such as:

- Water and stormwater/wastewater improvements,
- Pier construction and improvements,
- New outdoor recreation and trail infrastructure and public access enhancements,
- Nature-based infrastructure projects to improve access to recreation,
- Cultural, arts, and tourism facilities (e.g., visitor or tourist information centers),
- Workforce training facilities and capacity building programs,
- Accessibility enhancements, and
- Country-wide or multi-state travel, tourism, or outdoor recreation promotion.

Travel, Tourism, and Outdoor Recreation Funds Competitive Grants Overview Cont'd

Please note the following:

Some projects are generally **ineligible** for EDA funding under this NOFO, including projects that are primarily residential in nature, projects to create community amenities that are not specific to regional tourism (e.g., swimming pools, golf courses), projects that directly support casinos or gaming, projects that support general governmental or public safety functions (e.g., buildings to house municipal government, firehouses, public safety equipment), and requests for funding to supplement operating budgets or replace lost revenue (including lost tax revenue). In addition, EDA will not fund projects that are primarily directed at public health responses to the coronavirus pandemic.

- Because state and local tourism promotion and marketing projects are eligible uses of funds under State Tourism Grants, such projects are not eligible under the EDA Competitive Tourism Grants component.
- The applicant must clearly notify EDA in the application if the applicant is also seeking or receives any other funding for the project, including funding under a State Tourism Grant.
- All project proposals must be consistent with CDC guidelines for safe travel.

It is important that investments support the economic recovery through strong employment opportunities for workers, including but not limited to opportunities for workforce development, rehiring of laid off workers, and creating and retaining union jobs and well-paying jobs with good benefits. Moreover, it is important that investments in infrastructure and construction projects be carried out in ways that produce high-quality infrastructure, avert disruptive and costly delays, and promote efficiency.

This is an opportunity to more fully develop tourism related facilities, as it does include construction. EDA generally expects to fund at least 80%, and up to 100%, of eligible project costs.

***Although applications are open now, please make sure to put together a comprehensive proposal/project. This is a very competitive program. The Notice of Funding Opportunity is available at the link below. It is well organized and well written. **PLEASE read through this information, as it is the primary resource.** Additionally the webinar slides provide helpful visual information.

Travel, Tourism, and Outdoor Recreation Funds Competitive Grants Overview Cont'd

Resources

- [Notice of Funding Opportunity](#)
- [Frequently Asked Questions](#)
- [Travel, Tourism and Outdoor Recreation Webinar](#)
 - [Travel, Tourism and Outdoor Recreation presentation slides \(PDF\)](#)
- [State Tourism Grant Allocations](#)
- [One Pager \(PDF\)](#)

EDA Investment Priorities

Below is the list of EDA Investment Priorities. Please indicate within your proposals any that are relevant to your project.

Equity: Economic development planning or implementation projects that advance equity across America through investments that directly benefit 1) one or more traditionally [underserved populations \(PDF\)](#), including but not limited to women, Black, Latino, and Indigenous and Native American persons, Asian Americans, and Pacific Islanders or 2) underserved communities within geographies that have been systemically and/or systematically denied a full opportunity to participate in aspects of economic prosperity, [Persistent Poverty Counties \(XLSX\)](#), and rural areas with demonstrated, historical underservice.

Recovery & Resilience: Economic development planning or implementation projects that build economic resilience to and long-term recovery from economic shocks, like those communities impacted by the decline of an important industry or a natural disaster, that may benefit from economic diversification-focused resilience.

Workforce Development: Economic development planning or implementation projects that support workforce education and skills training activities directly connected to the hiring and skills needs of the business community and that result in [well-paying, quality jobs \(PDF\)](#).

Manufacturing: Economic development planning or implementation projects that encourage job creation, business expansion, technology and capital upgrades, and productivity growth in manufacturing, including efforts that contribute to the competitiveness and growth of domestic suppliers or to the domestic production of innovative, high-value products and production technologies.

Technology-Based Economic Development: Economic development planning or implementation projects that foster regional knowledge ecosystems that support entrepreneurs and startups, including the commercialization of new technologies, that are creating technology-driven businesses and high-skilled, well-paying jobs of the future.

EDA Investment Priorities Cont'd

Environmentally-Sustainable Development: Economic development planning or implementation projects that help address the climate crisis including through the development and implementation of [green products \(PDF\)](#), [green processes \(PDF\)](#) (including green infrastructure), [green places \(PDF\)](#), and [green buildings \(PDF\)](#).

Exports & FDI: Economic development planning or implementation projects that enhance or build community assets to support growth in US exports or increased foreign direct investment.