

PUBLICATION

EDA Publishes NOFOs Worth \$3 Billion in American Rescue Plan Act Grants

Authors: Erin J. Greten

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On July 22, 2021, the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA), a bureau within the U.S. Department of Commerce, announced that it will implement a series of programs, collectively called "Investing in America's Communities," to equitably invest the \$3 billion it received from the American Rescue Plan Act. The funds are intended to benefit communities that have been denied full access to economic prosperity and who have been disproportionately impacted by the coronavirus pandemic.

- **Build Back Better Regional Challenge** - to grow new regional industry clusters or scale existing ones through planning, infrastructure, innovation and entrepreneurship, workforce development, access to capital, and more.
 - \$1 billion
 - **Phase 1:** EDA will award 50-60 regional coalitions of partnering entities ~\$500,000 in technical assistance funds to develop and support three to eight projects to grow a regional growth cluster.
 - **Phase 2:** EDA will award 20-30 regional coalitions up to \$100 million to implement their regional growth cluster projects.
 - As part of the \$300 million **Coal Communities Commitment**, EDA will allocate at least \$100 million of the Build Back Better Regional Challenge funding to support coal communities.
 - The application period closes October 19, 2021.
- **Good Jobs Challenge** – for collaborative skills training systems and programs.
 - \$500 million
 - EDA will fund proposals within the following three phases, as applicable to regional needs:
 - **System Development** - Help establish and develop a regional workforce training system comprised of multiple sector partnerships.
 - **Program Design** - Develop the skills training curriculum and materials, and secure technical expertise needed to train workers.
 - **Program Implementation** – Implement non-construction projects needed to provide workforce training and connect workers with quality jobs, including wrap-around services.
 - The application period closes January 26, 2022.
- **Economic Adjustment Assistance Challenge** - to 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.
 - \$500 million
 - EDA's most flexible program. Intended to fund a wide range of technical, planning, workforce development, entrepreneurship, and public works and infrastructure projects.
 - Applicants are strongly encouraged to apply no later than March 31, 2022.

- **Indigenous Communities Challenge** - to develop and execute economic development projects that tribal governments and indigenous communities need to recover from the pandemic and build economies for the future.
 - \$100 million
 - Intended to fund a wide range of technical, planning, workforce development, entrepreneurship, and public works and infrastructure projects.
 - The application period closes September 30, 2022, but applicants are strongly encouraged to apply no later than March 31, 2022.

- **Travel, Tourism, and Outdoor Recreation Grants** – to accelerate the recovery of communities that rely on the travel, tourism and outdoor recreation sectors.
 - \$750 million
 - **State Tourism Grants:** \$510 million in non-competitive awards to help states quickly invest in marketing, infrastructure, workforce and other projects to rejuvenate safe leisure, business and international travel.
 - **Competitive Grants:** \$240 million to help communities that have been hardest hit by challenges facing the travel, tourism and outdoor recreation sectors to invest in infrastructure, workforce or other projects to support the recovery of the industry and economic resilience of the community in the future.
 - Applicants are strongly encouraged to apply no later than January 31, 2022.

- **Statewide Planning, Research, and Networks Grants**
 - \$90 million - \$59 million for Statewide Planning Grants and \$31 million for Research and Networks Grants to invest in research that assesses the effectiveness of EDA's programs, and provides support for stakeholder communities around key EDA initiatives.
 - Applications are accepted on a rolling basis until publication of a new NOFO, cancellation of the current NOFO, or all available funds have been expended. Applicants are strongly encouraged to apply no later than October 31, 2021.

Most of these programs are available to governmental entities, institutions of higher education or a consortium of institutions of higher education, and public or private non-profit organizations or associations acting in cooperation with officials of a political subdivision of a State. For most of the programs, individuals and for-profit entities acting outside a cooperative agreement with a State are not eligible. Those interested in the Indigenous Communities Challenge should closely review the description of eligible entities.

Links to the Notice of Funding Opportunity posted to grants.gov can be found from the links above. These competitive grants may be used to help communities quickly invest in improving infrastructure, developing local economies that are resilient to future economic shock and climate change. When considering whether to apply for assistance under these programs, applicants should consider whether the project involves existing facilities that were damaged by a Presidentially declared major disaster or emergency. If so, applicants should take care not to duplicate benefits received from other sources such as HUD's Community Disaster Block Grants or FEMA's Public Assistance, Hazard Mitigation, or other grant programs.

Contact [Erin Greten](#) or any member of [Baker Donelson's Disaster Recovery and Government Services Team](#) with any questions or for further information.