Competition Debrief Webinar 2023

Agenda

Build to Scale

- Competition Summary and Program goals
- Evaluation Criteria and common misunderstandings
- Tips for grant writing

This will be recorded and posted online

There will not be 1:1 feedback sessions available this year.

EDA's mission is to lead the federal economic development agenda

Build to Scale

1 **SUPPORT COMMUNITY-LED ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**
Build capacity for economic development based on local business conditions and needs.

2 **HELP COMMUNITIES DEVELOP RESILIENT AND AGILE LOCAL ECONOMIES**
Distressed and underserved areas have experienced deep challenges with economic recovery from the pandemic.

3 **MAKE IT EASIER FOR BUSINESSES IN THE U.S.**
Investments in planning, technical assistance, and infrastructure support business start-up and expansion, producing good wages for American workers.

Promoting innovation and competitiveness - preparing American regions for growth and success in the worldwide economy.

EDA Investment Priorities

Build to Scale

Investment Priorities

- Equity
- Recovery & Resilience
- Workforce Development
- Manufacturing
- Technology-Based Economic Development
- Environmentally Sustainable Development
- Exports & Foreign Direct Investment

EDA supports projects that strengthen communities and drive innovation through locally-driven economic development.

Applicants should be able to demonstrate the project's economic impact on the region. Impacts vary by project but may include:

- ✓ Facilitate job creation
- ✓ Foster business expansion
- ✓ Increase capacity for economic development
- ✓ Increase resilience to future economic disasters

Statutory Authority

- Since 2014, EDA has administered the Build to Scale program, which was established in Section 603 of the America COMPETES Reauthorization Act of 2010. B2S funds efforts to facilitate innovation and entrepreneurship and increase access to risk capital.

- Authorized under Section 27 of the Stevenson-Wydler Act of 1980

Build to Scale

$50 MILLION FUNDING

VENTURE CHALLENGE

IGNITE
<$300K

BUILD
<$750K

SCALE
$750K — $2M

CAPITAL CHALLENGE

FORM
<$400K

DEPLOY
$400K — $750K

EDA
U.S. Economic Development Administration
A bureau of the U.S. Department of Commerce

Program Goals

Build to Scale

- build public and private capacity for innovators to invent, improve, and bring to market new products and services

- expand regional knowledge ecosystems to realize economic and job growth

- accelerate regional economies that are focused on industries of the future

- catalyze regional leadership through TBED strategies

- empower communities to provide proof-of-concept and commercialization assistance to technology innovators and entrepreneurs

- equitably and inclusively increase access to capital for technology-enabled entrepreneurs

EDA
U.S. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION

Application Acceptance

- 223 Applications received

- 60 grants made = 27% grant rate

- 40 Venture Challenge

- 20 Capital Challenge

Build to Scale / 2023 AWARDEES
U.S. Economic Development Administration

KEY
2023 Venture Challenge Grant Recipients
2023 Capital Challenge Grant Recipients

E·D·A

Technical Requirements

As noted in the NOFO, applications that are technically insufficient may not be considered for merit

Technical Requirements

- **Ineligible Entities**
  Small businesses and individuals are not eligible applicants.
  Applicants must have an active SAM registration at the time of award.

- **Missing Government Support Letters**
  Non-public entities (any org that is not a political subdivision of a state) is required to show support from a Political Subdivision of a state.

- **Missing Match letters**
  All match sources (whether provided by the applicant or a third party, cash or in-kind) require a signed letters with a valuation showing the match is committed, unencumbered, and available.

- **Undermatching – 50% maximum grant rate required (1:1)**
  Ineligible use of funds, not documented, or missing valuations

Technical Requirement Tips

Build to Scale

Checklists were provided in the appendices!

Know your entity type!

- Public

- Non-Public

Document Checklist for Nonprofit Organization, Institution of Higher Education, Public-Private Partnership, Science or Research Park, Federal Laboratory, Venture Development Organization, and Economic Development or Similar Organization Applicants/Co-Applicants		
Document	**Title/Description/Requirements**	**Checklist**
Project Narrative	*See* section D.2.i	*One per Application*
Budget Narrative and Staffing Plan	*See* section D.2.i 15	*One per Application*
Matching Share Commitment Letters	*See* section D.2.i 15	*One per match source*
State/Local Government Support	*See* section D.2.i	*One per Application*
Form SF-424	Application for Federal Assistance	*One per Applicant or Co-applicant (not needed for subrecipients)*
Form SF-424A	Budget Information-Non-Construction Programs	*One per Application*
Form CD-511	Certification Regarding Lobbying (if applicable)	*One per Applicant or Co-applicant (not needed for subrecipients)*
Form SF-LLL	Disclosure of Lobbying Activities	*If applicable, one per Applicant or Co-applicant (not needed for subrecipients)*
SPOC/EO 12372 Compliance Documentation	*See* section D.2.ii and https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/SPOC-4-13-20.pdf (if applicable)	*If applicable, one per State in the project's service area*
Organizational Documentation	E.g., certificates of good standing, articles of incorporation, bylaws, establishing authorities; *see* section D.2.ii (if applicable)	*If applicable, per Applicant Or Co-applicant (not needed for subrecipients)*
Public Private Partnership Documentation	If applicable, documentation defining the public private partnership which contains details of the agreement, including roles and responsibilities, and is signed by all parties. See 13. C.F.R. § 312.5 and the discussion of documentation for public-private partnerships in footnote 8 to section C.1. Please note, Public Private Partnerships must also provide all documentation required for Co-applicants.	*One per Application*
Indirect Cost Rate (ICR) Agreement	*See* section D.2.ii	*One per Applicant*
Project Area and FIPS Codes	See section D.2.ii. Add as an attachment to the SF-424.	*One per Application*

E·D·A

U.S. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION

Ineligible Activities

- Construction
- Prize competitions
- Fund capitalization, equity investments, and loans
- Subsidies to participant firms
- Advertising and marketing
- Internships and wages/stipends
- Contractor providing matching share
- Research that doesn't yield near-term economic benefits

Merit Review

Focusing on the content

Evaluation Criteria

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree

Summary of Criteria
Leveraging Ecosystem Resources and Assets – 15%
Proposed Solution and Implementation – 30%
Capacity and Feasibility – 15%
Likelihood of Growing Innovation Economies – 20%
Continued Effects – 5%
Equity – 15%

Leveraging Ecosystem Resources and Assets – 15%

To what extent do you agree that the region's assets and needs are clearly defined, explained, and aligned with the proposed project?

Lower score:
Lacks any partners, particularly employer or training partners.

Lack of evidence on/unclear what role named partners will play and/or a mismatch of partners and program goals.

Little-to-no identification of and/or explanation of regional assets.

"Regional Service Area is adequately defined. Ecosystem, partnership commitment, roles, resources and collaborations are not adequately addressed."

High Score:
Clear understanding of roles of industry partners, and diverse groups of stakeholders are engaged in the project scope.

Clear understanding of regional ecosystem assets or lack of assets and specific plans to leverage or address these needs.

"The proposal will leverage regional partnerships utilizing combined assets for the project's success. Manufacturing is integral to the local economy, and maintaining and growing is a strategic priority at the city, county, and state levels."

Proposed Solution and Implementation – 30%

To what extent do you agree that the proposed solution is achievable, and meets the regional ecosystem needs?

Lower score:
Implementation plan/strategy is missing.

Solution is not tied to opportunity or regional needs.

Project goals are not enumerated.

"Problem identification is adequate, but solutions are weak or non-existent. Implementation plan/strategy is missing."

High Score:
Proposed solution and regional needs are clearly stated and the solution will directly address the region's needs.

Clear, feasible strategy is presented to meet SMART goals and is supported by regional-level data.

"The proposal focuses on tech-based entrepreneurs to address the community's environmental issues. The goals were SMART and included contingency plans incorporating several resources and partnerships."

Capacity and Feasibility – 15%

To what extent do you agree that the application clearly identifies the financial, human, and programmatic resources that will support the successful execution of this proposed project and that the applicant organization and team have the operations and management capacities to execute the proposed project successfully?

Lower score:

Unrealistic workload given a maximum timeline.

Lack of staffing plan or internal capacity to manage a Federal grant of this size/complexity.

Cost of program delivery is unrealistic and does not support the feasibility of the proposed solution.

"The budget narrative provides no insight on staffing plans, including not knowing if key personnel are in place and what these roles entail. Budget has very vague details on each line item. There is no substance to the budget narrative."

High score:

Project team time allocation and skillset matches the proposed project workload.

Each goal is achievable given the context of the proposed level of effort.

Clear commitment and plan for executive oversight, particularly during interim staffing periods.

"The proposal is incredibly well detailed. The project timeline and outcomes are extremely precise and extremely doable given how experienced this staff is and how established their footprint is."

Likelihood of Growing Innovation Economies – 20%

To what extent do you agree that the submission will accelerate regional innovation economies?

Lower score:
Proposed solution will not have direct effect on the region's innovation economy.

Solution is misaligned and does not support TBED strategies or TBED industries.

Project may have some impact but is not intentionally aimed at the regional level.

"Applicant makes no mention or translation in how it's program's focus on VC fund manager will lead to the funding of valuable TBED type of sustainable businesses in the economic ecosystems it will focus on."

High Score:
Regional TBED strategy will be fully implemented under the proposed scope of work.

Project supports innovation, entrepreneurship, and addresses barriers in the target industries directly.

Proposed project is likely to lead to significant gains for the region's TBED community.

"Detailed regional mapping, industry pioneers, academic partnerships, and equity focus all show potential to accelerate innovation and regional growth. Proposal has a great chance to provide high paying jobs over time."

Continued Effects – 5%

To what extent do you agree that the proposed project will continue to increase the ecosystem's ability to enable technology entrepreneurs to start and grow after the grant period?

Lower score:
Lack of plan for project continuation after the period of performance.

Sustainability plan is not feasible.

Plan fails to address identified needs in the regional innovation economy.

"Acknowledges potential challenges and plans for EDA support, a clearer and more assured strategy for long-term sustainability is needed. Post-award operations rely on local funds that may not materialize."

High score:
Plan includes multiple contingencies and shows strong commitment to continue the program after the grant has ended.

Plan has considered strategies for evolution for the program over time to adapt to changing regional/industry needs.

"Sustainability is very promising as they have an extensive development strategy in place, leveraging an inhouse development team and strong partnerships with energy sector investors and industry leaders worldwide."

Equity – 15%

To what extent do you agree that the proposed project benefits are shared across all affected communities, and stakeholders from target populations in an equitable way?

Lower score:
Project plan lacks equity considerations and/or does not identify strategies to recruit and retain diverse leaders and participants

Plan mentions equity but does not actually explain how this project aims to address inequity.

"Applicant demonstrates little understanding of the affected community or addressing systemic barriers. Project narrative only included a vague commitment to diversity and equity."

High score:
Acknowledges and incorporates plans to address systematic barriers to underrepresented groups' participation in the project.

Leverages diversity and equity opportunities to facilitate inclusion and broaden access to project benefits.

"The applicant shows its passion for empowering underrepresented communities within the entrepreneurship ecosystem. Project strives to address and diminish the significant gap in business ownership for BIPOC, women and low-income entrepreneurs."

Selection Factors

- See NOFO page 24 – Grant's Officer Decision
- Considerations for:
  Geographic Diversity
  Industry Diversity
 And many more!
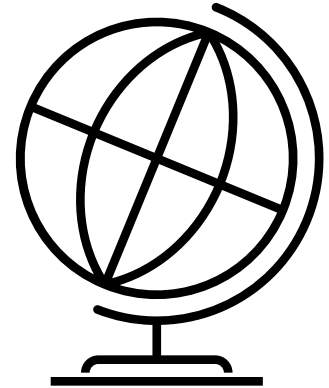
Overall Tips

- Read the NOFO and develop a plan of attack
- Plan for match requirements <u>early</u>
- Have a partner read the application to avoid assumptions
- Proofread match letters for valuations and make sure the math adds up and that required language is present
- Program fit is key! Refer to project examples on the website

EDA
U.S. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION

TBED Community of Practice
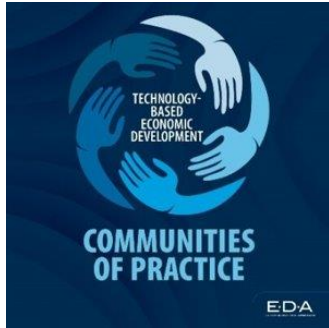
The State, Science, and Technology Institute (SSTI), a leader within the TBED field, facilitates this CoP with expert knowledge and meaningful experience.

- Monthly virtual meetings with peer-to-peer sharing
- 1:1 Coaching and Technical Assistance
- Topical Webinars with SMEs
- Toolkits, information briefs, and videos

tbedcop@ssti.org
https://ssti.org/tbedcopinfo

Resources

- Future Funding Opportunities at EDA: https://www.eda.gov/funding/funding-opportunities

- Application Toolkits: https://www.eda.gov/funding/programs/build-to-scale

- TBED Community of Practice: tbedcop@ssti.org

- Reach out to EDA: oie@eda.gov
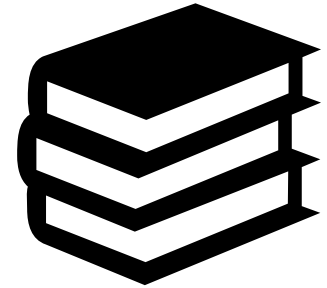
Office of Innovation and Entrepreneurship