

# EDA CARES ACT COMPETITIVE GRANT SUMMARY

Revision: 5/12/20

## Background

This document is intended to summarize a Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for an Economic Development Administration (EDA) Competitive Grant opportunity. The funding is a part of the federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act. Items highlighted are viewed as especially important information. Note that this document is not a commitment of funding and these guidelines are for informational purposes as the NOFO may change or close at any time.

## Timeframe

The funding opportunity was released on May 7, 2020. All funds have to be awarded by September 2022 and disbursed by September 2027.

## Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants under the Economic Adjustment Assistance (EAA) program include a(n):

- a. District Organization (East Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission);
- b. Indian Tribe or a consortium of Indian Tribes;
- c. 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;
- d. Institution of higher education or a consortium of institutions of higher education; or
- e. Public or private non-profit organization or association acting in cooperation with officials of a political subdivision of a State.

## Economic Distress Criteria and Special Need; Pandemic Response Requirement

EDA has determined that economic injury from the coronavirus pandemic constitutes a “Special Need”.

To be eligible for funding under EDA’s CARES Act Recovery Assistance, applicants must explain clearly in their application how the proposed project would “prevent, prepare for, and respond to coronavirus” or respond to “economic injury as a result of coronavirus.” This explanation is required to assist reviewers in understanding how a proposed project aligns with the goals of EDA’s CARES Act Recovery Assistance. For example, if Smith County has experienced significant small business closures as a result of the pandemic, Smith County must demonstrate how the project addresses small business recovery and resilience priorities and objectives established under a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) or other strategy acceptable to EDA (see below for information on strategy requirements). Projects that consider economic recovery in general must address the direct consequences of the coronavirus pandemic itself and how the project will contribute the community’s recovery and resiliency. The extent to which a proposed project responds to needs caused by the coronavirus pandemic is one factor that EDA will consider when evaluating applications for funding.

## Total Project Costs

Non-construction projects should start at \$80,000 total project cost. Construction projects should start at \$250,000 total project cost. Award ceiling is \$5 million. These are approximate guidelines and applicants should consult EDA for additional details.

## Cost Sharing or Matching

EDA generally expects to fund at least 80%, and up to 100%, of eligible project costs. In determining whether to fund a project’s Federal share above 80%, EDA’s Grants Officers in the applicable Regional Office will consider on a case-by-case basis whether the circumstances of the proposed project warrant a Federal share in excess of 80%, including whether the applicant has exhausted its effective taxing or borrowing capacity, the extent of the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on the region, or whether the region meets other thresholds

for elevated need based on the relative economic distress of the region. Additionally, EDA may establish a maximum investment rate of up to 100% for projects of Indian Tribes. Any portion of the costs for the EDA scope of work funded below 100% must be borne by the recipient or provided to the recipient by a third party as a contribution for the purposes of and subject to the terms of the award. The applicant is responsible for demonstrating to EDA that a grant rate above 80% is justified by providing statistics and other appropriate information on the nature and level of economic distress in the region, including information regarding other recovery-related needs facing the region and the level of resources available to address those needs.

### **CARES Act Recovery Assistance Projects**

Successful applications will enable affected communities to respond to the impacts of the coronavirus pandemic by supporting affected businesses and communities, including by providing technical assistance to retain existing and hire new employees; by providing a range of skills-training and workforce development projects to help employees compete for high-quality jobs; and by developing and implementing strategies to diversify regional economies to create jobs in new or existing industries. EAA investments are designed to help communities catalyze public-private partnerships to foster collaboration, attract investment, create jobs, and foster economic resiliency and prosperity.

Examples of projects that may be funded through CARES Act Recovery Assistance include:

- Economic recovery planning and preparing technical strategies to address economic dislocations caused by the coronavirus pandemic.
- Preparing or updating resiliency plans to respond to future pandemics.
- Implementing entrepreneurial support programs to diversify economies.
- Constructing public works and facilities that will support economic recovery, including the deployment of broadband for purposes including supporting telehealth and remote learning for job skills.

### **Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Requirements**

Except for a "Strategy Grant" to develop, update, or refine a CEDS, each project must be consistent with the region's current CEDS or equivalent EDA-accepted regional economic development strategy that meets EDA's CEDS or strategy requirements. ECWRPC's CEDS is available at <https://www.ecwrpc.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/2018-CEDS-5-Year-Update.pdf>. The CEDS Action Plan starts on page 4-1 and include the following goals:

1. Promote Quality of Life and Livability that Creates an Environment for Personal and Business Growth
2. Enhance Education, Technology, and Innovation to Meet Workforce and Production Demands
3. Enhance the Region's Infrastructure and Economic Competitiveness
4. Support and Meet the Needs of Current, New, and Emerging Businesses
5. Foster a Collaborative Ecosystem

### **Instructions for Applicants:**

- Download the FY20 PWEAA Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) and application package from <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/view-opportunity.html?oppld=321695>. - In Form ED-900, section B.3.b., include a description of the economic impacts in the region from the coronavirus pandemic and describe how the proposed project scope of work will respond to those impacts and support pandemic recovery and resilience efforts. Applicants may also provide a separate narrative statement, not to exceed one page in length, of the economic impacts in the region from the coronavirus pandemic and how the proposed project scope of work responds to those impacts. - Additionally, in Form ED-900, section B.6, explain how the proposed project would meet EDA's Recovery and Resilience investment priority, which all CARES Act Recovery Assistance projects are expected to meet. You may also explain in this space how the proposed projects will meet any of EDA's other investment priorities.

Consultation with Regional Office As with all EDA funding opportunities, prospective applicants are strongly encouraged to contact their applicable EDA Regional Office representatives to discuss their needs and project plans to help further refine the scope and intended outcomes of proposed projects. Prospective applicants can find current contact information for EDA Regional Office staff at <https://www.eda.gov/contact/>.

Please contact Tom Baron, Principal Economic Development Planner, at [tbaron@ecwrpc.org](mailto:tbaron@ecwrpc.org) or 920-751-4770 with questions.