

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**Economic Development
Administration**

[Docket No. 950302065-6203-05]

RIN 0610-ZA03

**National Technical Assistance,
Research and Evaluation—Additional
Request For Proposals****AGENCY:** Economic Development Administration (EDA), Department of Commerce.**ACTION:** Notice of availability of funds.

SUMMARY: A total of \$328,500,000 is available to EDA for all of its programs for FY 1996 (See Notice of Funding Availability for FY 1996 at 61 FR 29526), of which approximately \$2,125,000 (including funds to be transferred to EDA from the Department of Defense's Office of Economic Adjustment, DOD/OEA) is or will be available for National Technical Assistance and for Research and Evaluation for specific projects which will aid in better understanding the causes of and solutions to economic distress/ underemployment and unemployment throughout the Nation in the specific priority areas described herein. EDA published a Request for Proposals in 61 FR 31782, June 20, 1996, hereinafter referred to as NOFA-RFP #1 requesting proposals for projects to be funded under these programs. EDA is soliciting proposals for the specific project described in this Notice (hereinafter referred to as NOFA-RFP #2) to be funded if acceptable proposals are received. If a proposal submitted under NOFA-RFP #2 is funded during this fiscal year, it will be funded from funds remaining after consideration of applications submitted under NOFA-RFP #1, if any. This NOFA-RFP #2 describes the conditions under which eligible applications for this program under either National Technical Assistance (13 CFR Part 307, Subpart C) or Research and Evaluation (13 CFR Part 307, Subpart A) will be accepted and selected for funding. It is not known at this time whether National Technical Assistance or Research and Evaluation funds will be used for the project described herein, because such funding is contingent upon the availability, if any, of funds under each program, as well as the primary focus of the project to be funded.

DATES: Full proposals must be received in the Office of Technical Assistance and Research (see Addresses section below) by close of business, August 15, 1996, followed by submission of

completed applications, OMB Control Number 0610-0094, from proponents selected by EDA, at a date to be determined by EDA. EDA will make the award by September 30, 1996.

ADDRESSES: Send proposals, and later full applications, if invited to do so, (see Section IV) to either: Lewis R. Podolske, Technical Assistance Program, Economic Development Administration, Room 7315, U.S. Department of Commerce, Washington, D.C. 20230 (National Technical Assistance); or John J. McNamee, Research and Evaluation Program, Economic Development Administration, Room 7315, U.S. Department of Commerce, Washington, D.C. 20230 (Research and Evaluation).

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: John J. McNamee, (202) 482-4085 (Research and Evaluation); Lewis R. Podolske, (202) 482-2127 (National Technical Assistance); or David McIlwain, (202) 482-5265, (Public Works, Flood Coordinator).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**I. Introduction****A. Authority**

The Public Works and Economic Development Act of 1965, (Pub. L. 89-136, 42 U.S.C. 3121-3246h), as amended (PWEDA) at § 3151 authorizes EDA to: provide technical assistance which would be useful in reducing or preventing excessive unemployment or underemployment by conducting, among other things, studies evaluating the needs of, and the development of potential for economic growth in distressed areas (42 U.S.C. 3151(a)); and to conduct a program of research to assist in the formulation and implementation of national, state and local programs to raise income levels and other solutions to the problems of unemployment, underemployment, underdevelopment and chronic depression in distressed areas and regions (42 U.S.C. 3151(c)(B)). The Omnibus Appropriations Act of 1996, Public Law 104-134, makes funds available for these programs.

B. Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance

11.303 Economic Development-Technical Assistance; 11.312 Economic Development—Research and Evaluation Program.

C. Program Descriptions

For descriptions of these programs see EDA's final rule at 13 CFR chapter III, 61 FR 7979, March 1, 1996, as corrected at 61 FR 15371, April 8, 1996, and its interim-final rule at 60 FR 49670, September 26, 1995.

D. Additional Information and Requirements

No award of Federal funds will be made to an applicant who has an outstanding delinquent Federal debt until either: (1) The delinquent account is paid in full; (2) A negotiated repayment schedule is established and at least one payment is received; or (3) Other arrangements satisfactory to DoC are made.

Unsatisfactory performance under prior Federal awards may result in an application not being considered for funding.

Applicants seeking an early start, i.e., to begin a project before EDA approval, must obtain a letter from EDA allowing such early start. Such approval may be given with the understanding that an early start does not constitute project approval. Applicants should be aware that if they incur any costs prior to an award being made they do so solely at their own risk of not being reimbursed by the Government. Notwithstanding any verbal or written assurance that may have been received, there is no obligation on the part of EDA to cover pre-award costs.

The total dollar amount of the indirect costs proposed in an application under any EDA program must not exceed either the indirect cost rate negotiated and approved by a cognizant Federal agency prior to the proposed effective date of the award, or 100 percent of the total proposed direct costs dollar amount in the application, whichever is less.

If an application is selected for funding, EDA has no obligation to provide any additional future funding in connection with an award. Renewal of an award to increase funding or extend the period of performance is at the sole discretion of EDA.

Unless otherwise noted below, eligibility, program objectives and descriptions, application procedures, selection procedures, evaluation criteria and other requirements for all programs are set forth in EDA's final rule at 13 CFR Chapter III, 61 FR 7979, March 1, 1996, as corrected at 61 FR 15371, April 8, 1996, and its interim-final rule at 60 FR 49670, September 26, 1995.

II. Areas of Special Emphasis

EDA seeks proposals for the specific project described as follows:

- Evaluate and Develop a Model Based on the Midwest Flood of 1993.

EDA invites proposals to study the management and implementation of disaster assistance, and to develop a model for use by governmental agencies and others interested in implementing

future programs for supporting economic recovery of affected disaster areas. The test subject for this project is EDA's implementation of its grant program to aid communities that were impacted by the Midwest Flood of 1993.

Background: Though there are other programs that provide financial assistance to aid communities affected by disasters, only EDA projects for the Midwest Floods of 1993 are being analyzed in this project. The Midwest Flood of 1993 affected nine states: Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Wisconsin. Congress appropriated \$200 million to EDA for emergency expenses resulting from the flood, which EDA used to assist in the development of post disaster economic recovery strategies and to meet local infrastructure needs not covered by other Federal programs. This EDA effort encompassed a broad geographic area impacted by the flood, and depended upon coordination with nine state governments, with different capacities of the affected states to deal with the disaster, and a wide variety of issues to be dealt with. It also involved program coordination with two EDA regional offices, resulted in the development of streamlined project processing, and an "ad hoc" system of interagency coordination to avoid funding duplication. In addition, EDA transferred funds to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for their participation in the levee repair component of the flood relief efforts.

Scope of Work: The successful applicant will (1) assess whether the EDA post-disaster assistance was appropriate and gave communities a better chance to enhance their economic recovery beyond their immediate emergency needs; (2) evaluate whether such assistance has ramifications beyond the immediate disaster impact area; (3) assess to what extent changes in project implementation timeframes were due to changes in grantee priorities or other external conditions, and investigate whether a time line for grant implementation should take into account the nature of the EDA assisted projects and the normal disaster recovery process; (4) examine the effectiveness of EDA's efforts and recommend key performance measures which EDA and others can use to assess implementation of future EDA and other disaster assistance; (5) compare the EDA/Corps of Engineers levee repair program to those of other government agencies (e.g., the Department of Agriculture's Soil Conservation Services) to determine best practices; and (6) highlight possible areas for

improving the post-disaster assistance process.

EDA is interested in measuring overall program performance, by assistance categories, that is, by the types of grants made. In undertaking this analysis, the applicant will need to examine selected grant files, interview EDA staff, interview state and local officials and others involved in implementing the recovery process in the affected communities. The resulting data must be appropriately analyzed and the results, with recommendations as appropriate, presented in a final report to be available for use by all Federal and state agencies and other interested parties. All project records are located in or are accessible through the Denver and Chicago regional offices.

The applicant will also be required to conduct briefings and training workshops for entities interested in the results of this project. These briefings and training workshops will be conducted in Washington, DC, and the six EDA regions, and will total no more than one such briefing/workshop for each of the seven locations.

Cost: If this project is funded under the National Technical Assistance program: if properly justified, the Assistant Secretary may consider a waiver of the required 25 percent local share of the project cost; if this project is funded under the Research and Evaluation program: no local match is required.

Timing: This project should be completed and the final report submitted by September 30, 1997.

- Other Models of Performance Measurement and Program Impact Analyses of Economic Development Programs or Projects.

EDA funds a variety of economic development projects to help economically distressed communities generate long-term, private sector jobs and diversify their economies. These include planning, technical assistance, research, infrastructure, and revolving loan fund projects. Other Federal and state agencies fund similar economic development projects. EDA is currently seeking to develop expertise in measuring the effectiveness of these kinds of economic development efforts. In addition to the specific proposals requested in NOFA-RFP #s 1 and 2, should there be funds left in either the Research and Evaluation or National Technical Assistance Programs after the first round of projects in NOFA-RFP #s 1 and 2, we would consider additional economic development program performance measurement and economic impact analysis proposals that qualified applicants may wish to

submit. Should resources be available, we would select projects on the basis of the requirements listed in EDA's Regulations at 13 CFR Chapter III, 61 FR 7979, March 1, 1996, as corrected at 61 FR 15371, April 8, 1996, and its interim-final rule at 60 FR 49670, September 26, 1995, and on their ability to increase the level of knowledge of the economic development profession concerning performance measurement and/or impact analysis. It must be made clear to all potential proposers, however, that funding for any additional projects is dependent upon there being uncommitted resources in either the Research and Evaluation or National Technical Assistance Programs, and that projects may be funded under either program depending upon where resources are available. Therefore, eligibility requirements for an award will be based on the program under which the potential award will be made.

III. How To Apply

A. Eligible Applicants

- National Technical Assistance—See 13 CFR 307.12 in EDA's final rule at 13 CFR chapter III, 61 FR 7979, March 1, 1996, as corrected in 61 FR 15371, April 8, 1996, and its interim-final rule at 60 FR 49670, September 26, 1995. Eligible applicants are as follows: public or private nonprofit organizations including nonprofit national, state, area, district, or local organizations; accredited educational institutions or nonprofit entities representing them; public sector organizations; and Native American organizations, including American Indian tribes; local governments and state agencies. Technical Assistance grant funds may not be awarded to private individuals or for-profit organizations.

- Research and Evaluation—See 13 CFR 307.17 in EDA's final rule at 13 CFR chapter III, 61 FR 7979, March 1, 1996, as corrected in 61 FR 15371, April 8, 1996, and its interim-final rule at 60 FR 49670, September 26, 1995. Eligible applicants are as follows: private individuals, partnerships, corporations, associations, colleges and universities, and other suitable organizations with expertise relevant to economic development research.

B. Proposal Submission Procedures

The proposals submitted by potential applicants may not exceed ten pages in length and should be accompanied by a proposed budget, resumes/qualifications of the key staff, and proposed time line.

IV. Selection Process and Evaluation Criteria

Proposals will receive initial reviews by EDA to assure that they meet all requirements of this announcement, including eligibility and relevance to the specified projects as described herein. EDA will carry out its selection process and evaluation criteria as described at 13 CFR part 304 and §§ 307.13, 307.14, 307.18, and 307.19 in

EDA's final rule at 13 CFR chapter III, 61 FR 7979, March 1, 1996, as corrected in 61 FR 15371, April 8, 1996, and its interim-final rule at 60 FR 49670, September 26, 1995.

EDA will select the applicants it deems most qualified and cost effective and will invite those applicants to submit full applications.

Paperwork Reduction Act

OMB has approved these information collection requirements under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 under OMB Control Number 0610-AA47.

Dated: July 23, 1996.

Wilbur F. Hawkins,

Deputy Assistant Secretary for Economic Development.

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