2023 Call for Co-Learning Plan Authors

Background
Since 2011, the MSU U.S. EDA University Center for Regional Economic Innovation (REI) has supported over 150 innovative economic development projects in Michigan, spurring high-growth entrepreneurship, job creation, and economic innovation. REI partners have achieved remarkable success; with over $60 million in public and private investments generated by nearly 80 Student-Led, Faculty-Guided projects; over 60 Co-Learning Plans; and 14 Co-Implementation projects (Innovation Fellowships). Partners of REI leverage higher education, businesses, local governments, Economic Development Districts (EDDs), non-profits, economic developers, and others who create, identify, and develop new economic development strategies and practices, and perform technical assistance for communities in Michigan.

Call for Authors
In this next phase of the REI cycle, the Center is "calling" for authors and experts to research and develop Co-Learning Plans on economic development tools, models, policies, programs and practices based on several areas of interest. **Co-Learning Plans should fall within one of four categorial areas, including: 1) resiliency planning, 2) financial resiliency, 3) 21st century communications, and 4) circular economies.** The findings and recommendations in these Co-Learning Plans, funded through this request, will serve as a source for current and practical information for local and state economic development practitioners and policymakers as they consider important decisions that affect development efforts for Michigan communities and regions.

Topical Areas
REI is committed to a process of engagement that will identify and create new ways to approach economic development to support high-growth entrepreneurship and job creation in distressed regions across Michigan. Throughout 2022, the REI Network (nearly 3,000 Michigan economic development practitioners, business leaders and scholars) submitted innovative economic development ideas and/or topics of interest. Through a competitive process, working with the REI Consultative Panel of experts across the state, the following topics were determined to be timely and effective areas that could help bring critical new knowledge to bear on the challenges faced in community and economic development. The topical areas are listed below.

Topics

The REI University Center has identified the following topical areas for possible Co-Learning Plans of 2023. These include: 1) Clean Energy Economies of Michigan, 2) Defining Equitable Economic Development in Your Region or the State, 3) Circular Economies of Michigan, 4) Blight and Deconstruction within Michigan, 5) Michigan Planning Organizations Leveraging the Planning Process Together for Greater Impacts, and 6) Other. Further description of each is

shared below. These topical areas **within one of the above mentioned four categories** were weighed by the REI Consultative Panel with consideration to likelihood of creating or retaining jobs and/or businesses in economically distressed regions of Michigan. Additional description is provided below.

1) Clean Energy Economies: how can cities or rural areas of Michigan make this happen?
2) Equitable Economic Development Defined: examining new or prior models and/or effective practices in Michigan with discussion of racial policy and practice impacts.
3) Circular Economies (open topic): what is a circular economy and how might it be catalyzed, incentivized, or accelerated? Are there specific business sectors in Michigan that are strategic for advancing circularity, if yes what can economic developers do to assist in this economic transformation?
4) Blight and Deconstruction: What can economic developers do to minimize structural blight and abandonment and support the growth and development of a structural material deconstruction economy in their region?
5) Michigan Planning Organizations Leveraging the Planning Process for Greater Impact: What tools, models, policies and programs can be adopted to advance regional planning in Michigan? How can the planning process be leveraged, including by working together, to help build capacity for overstretched communities?

 Application Instructions
Each Co-Learning Plan proposal package should include:

Author(s)/Investigator(s) Information
Please provide a summary for each author or investigator(s) that emphasizes their capacities and prior experiences relevant to effective engagement with the primary intended audience of local and state economic developers (one page). *Experience in writing, handbooks, guides and publishable quality papers and the ability to present these materials to a diverse audience is also required*. Additionally, please share the author/investigator(s) thoughts on defining the importance of diversity, equity and inclusion within this project proposal.

Proposed Co-Learning Plan
Please provide a detailed narrative (not exceeding three pages) that describes the proposed scope of work. This narrative should be double-spaced, have three-quarter-inch margins and 12-point font. Please include a 100 word abstract at the beginning of the proposal. Should your application be selected, please note it is ok if this original abstract is updated as you progress.

The proposal should have clearly identified sections and include the following:

1. Description of population served or researched through the project idea (ALICE, Asset-Limited/Income Constrained Employed) supporting socially and economically distressed regions;

2. Identified Economic Development Districts, Redevelopment Ready Communities and/or concentration of opportunity zone tracts, (this may also be statewide);
3. Foci area of one or more: resiliency planning, financial resiliency, 21st century communications or circular economies;
4. Discussion of the significance and implications of one or multiple topical areas for Michigan communities and regions, specifically those communities in the most distressed regions;
5. A detailed plan of work for conducting the analysis (e.g., scope, scale, and sequence of the proposed investigation, sources and methods of gathering information, analytical approaches and techniques to be employed, etc.);
6. Identification of any special needs that must be accommodated for successful completion of proposed analysis (e.g., access to specific individuals or information), and discussion of proposed methods to accommodate such needs (if any);
7. Description and anticipated benefit of any intended deliverable outcomes of the project, beyond those required by this request (if any);
8. A brief dissemination plan, which describes how the project will be publicized and shared with the community, including Who/What/Where/How (social media, video, press release, presentation, etc.) and When (timeline with benchmarks);
9. Brief description and justification of requested budget;
10. Description of how the project leaders will work directly with the REI University Center team to revise the Co-Learning Plan until final Co-Learning Plan is agreed upon;
11. A predicted number and description of jobs that may be created or retained, if applicable;
12. A predicted number of businesses created or retained, if applicable;
13. Discussion of diversity, equity and/or inclusion objectives intended for incorporation into the project strategy and their development;
14. Describe briefly how you plan to make your final report ADA compliant/ accessible, and;
15. Share how you will continue to explore diversity, equity and inclusion in your project throughout its duration and beyond August 2023.

Budget
The narrative proposal must include a brief summary of the budget. The proposal budget should include personnel, travel, supplies, 'other' and a total; including costs associated with presentation at the 2023 annual *Innovate Michigan!* Summit. **Total costs should not exceed $8,000.**

Writing Samples
Two writing samples of 3-5 pages should be submitted for consideration. These can be hyperlinked to materials on a website or electronic versions. Please send them with the full application package to jondyjen@msu.edu.

Deadlines and Delivery
Applications must be received by **5:00 pm EST Monday December 12, 2022.**
1. *Online submissions* may be completed via electronic form at reicenter.org

2. *Email submissions* may be submitted as file attachments to jondyjen@msu.edu. Please enter your Co-Learning Plan title, the date, and your last name in the subject as: "Co-Learning Plan title, date, author's last name." Submissions will be acknowledged by an e-mail message to the lead author named on the application.

<u>Selection Criteria</u>

Funding selection will be based on how the proposed work plan meets the following criteria and additional author qualifications considered.

1. A clear focus and understanding of the topic, experience, and knowledge of project area.
2. Demonstrated capability to meet standards of due diligence in conducting the proposed scope of work.
3. Demonstrated capacity to communicate effectively to economic development practitioners, policymakers and others.
4. The workplan submitted should be a new idea or strategy for local and state economic development solutions in Michigan.
5. The workplan emphasizes actionable knowledge on the practical implications of empirical research into economic development topic(s).
6. A dissemination plan demonstrating the author(s) capacity to effectively share information.
7. Author(s) has the capacity to meet project deadlines.
8. Project budget is appropriate for the scope of work proposed and competitive with other applications received.
9. Demonstration of seeking diverse ideas, community partners and stakeholders.
10. Discussion of project impacts on wider community.

Preference will be given to initiatives and projects that include commitments for cost-sharing of funding (e.g., cash, credit, financing commitment); leveraging of in-kind assets, especially from for-profit business enterprises; building on and/or extending related government or non-profit initiatives; engaging EDA stakeholders such as the State's federally identified Economic Development Districts, Tribal Governments and representatives as well as other partners; and benefiting distressed economies. Additionally, discussion of impacts on existing systemic exclusion or racism as applicable will be considered.

Final selection of Co-Learning Plan author(s) is reserved to REI in accordance with the overall project objectives.

<u>Eligibility</u>
Economic development practitioners, entrepreneurs, community leaders, educators, policymakers, university faculty, staff and students affiliated with any postsecondary educational institution in Michigan are invited to submit proposals under this request.

<u>Funding</u>
This is a competitive process. Up to four Co-Learning Plans are expected to be funded. Plans selected for funding will receive financial support not exceeding $8,000 for the scope of work. If your application is selected, REI will contact you to finalize the scope of work and financial arrangement. **Be prepared to keep and submit all receipts of costs** associated with the creation of your Co-Learning Plan in case of an audit.

<u>Deliverables</u>
The lead Co-Learning Plan author is expected to facilitate the following activities and produce the below deliverables:

1. Submit a **20-page Co-Learning Plan** of publishable quality (references may exceed 20 pages).
2. Submit a **two-page Executive Summary.**
3. Deliver a **webinar or video** on findings and recommendations, if requested.
4. If any work is done on the project after the completion of the Co-Learning Plan, an **Addendum** (maximum 5 pages) should be prepared documenting additional work or changes to the project that occurred before the annual REI event.
5. Present the Co-Learning Plan at the **2023 annual REI event**.
6. Participate in a **post-project survey** evaluating the outcomes of your project.

<u>Key Dates</u>
- **December 12, 2022**: Deadline application submission
- **January, 2023:** Notice of Awards
- **February 17, 2023:** Co-Learning Plan project should be underway
- **April 3, 2023**: First draft due
- **May 5, 2023**: Second draft due
- **June 2, 2023**: Third draft due
- **July 7, 2023:** Fourth draft due
- **August 4, 2023:** Slide deck for *Innovate Michigan!* Summit due
- **August 17, 2023:** *Innovate Michigan!* Summit presentation
- **August 25, 2023:** Final Co-Learning Plan paper due
- **August 31, 2023:** Any additional addendum items due

<u>Questions</u>
Please contact Jenan Jondy at <u>jondyjen@msu.edu</u> or 517-353-9555.

Application

Title of proposed Co-Learning Plan:

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Author(s)/Investigator(s) Name(s):
_____

Organization: _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____

Other Authors, Experts, or Partners (please include contact information):

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Qualifications: Please describe your knowledge and work experience relevant to the topic.
What makes you an expert or the best author for this topic?

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Other Notes:

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☐ In submitting this proposal, I agree to meet the timeline and deliverables specified in this call for Co-Learning Plan Authors.

☐ I would be interested in being considered to serve as an Innovation Fellow on this topic, as well.

☐ I know of a specific community that I would like to work with as an Innovation Fellow.

Community: _____

Signature _____   Date_____