WELCOME TO THE 2027 PROJECT YEAR

BACKGROUND

Since 2011, the MSU U.S. EDA University Center for Regional Economic Innovation (REI) has supported over 200 innovative economic development projects in Michigan, spurring high-growth entrepreneurship, job creation, and economic innovation. REI partners have achieved remarkable success with over $68 million in public and private investments generated by 111 Student-Led, Faculty-Guided (SLFG) projects; 75 Co-Learning Plans (CLP); and 19 Innovation Fellowships (IF).

Partners of REI leverage higher education, businesses, local governments, economic development districts (EDD), 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

REI is calling for authors and experts to research and develop SLFG projects, CLPs, and IFs on economic development tools, models, policies, programs, and practices based on several areas of interest identified by the REI Network.

Findings and recommendations from projects 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.

Through close collaboration with the REI Consultative Panel of experts statewide, the following topics were determined to be timely and effective areas for bringing critical new knowledge to bear on the challenges currently faced in community and economic development.

REI PRIORITY AREAS FOR 2027

1. Building Regional Capacity for Energy-Secure Economic Development
2. Building Public Trust in Economic Development: A Community-Centered Approach
3. Generational Wealth and Community Prosperity
4. Supporting Michigan Manufacturing in the AI Economy
5. Autonomous Systems Supply Chain
6. Rural Health Capacity as Economic Infrastructure
7. NDAs in Publicly Funded Economic Development Projects
8. Other

To learn more and apply, please visit https://reicenter.org/projects/2027-overview-of-projects.

The deadline for applications is December 11, 2026.