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Comprehensive Economic Recovery Initiative (CERI)
https://reicenter.org/projects/ceri

Call for Technical Assistance Projects

Full-Application

Revised 11-23-21

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Background

With support from the U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration (EDA), and to advance Michigan's long-term economic recovery from COVID-19, the Michigan State University Comprehensive Economic Recovery Initiative (CERI), funded through the CARES Act, will provide the EDA University Center for Regional Economic Innovation (REI) [1] supplemental funding to develop education, training, and other technical assistance and research in partnership with hard hit communities in Michigan through June 2022. During this unprecedented public health and social justice crisis, we are committed to creating, applying, and disseminating valued knowledge through responsive engagement, strategic partnerships, and collaborative learning. To accomplish this mission, we are devising innovative ways to create sustainable prosperity and an equitable economy in Michigan. We will continue to seek experts through our networks to identify, create and implement innovative and effective strategies to break down barriers of inequity. We will support **projects that set a course to intentionally build a more inclusive and just state and work to end racism and the inequities in Michigan in four focal areas:**

• **Resiliency Planning** – Projects should facilitate a process towards comprehensive planning that will speed recovery after experiencing natural or manmade shocks such as the novel coronavirus pandemic.

• **Financial Resiliency** - Collaborate with community capital experts, state planning agencies, local governments, community anchor institutions, Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC), private financial institutions, and others to increase and expand the capacity of community financial institutions and individuals to invest in local businesses. The initiative should support strategic initiatives to build Michigan's capacity to make community capital investing more available and normalized in Michigan, mitigating the vicissitudes of other less accessible and viable capital markets for small businesses and main street.

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[1] Since 2011, the MSU EDA University Center for Regional Economic Innovation (REI) has supported over 140 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 72 Student-Led, Faculty-Guided projects; 52 Co-Learning Plans; and 9 Co- Implementation projects. Partners of REI leverage higher education, businesses, local governments, 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. REI is committed to a process of engagement to create the best and brightest community and economic developers in the world.

• **Circular Economies** - Projects should provide technical assistance to accelerate the growth of circular economy businesses. Initiatives will need to identify economic recovery efforts and other strategic resources to assist individuals, businesses, and communities to navigate coronavirus-related resources, support feasibility studies, market research, economic impact surveys, and other analysis that will support the development of sustainable and circular economy businesses and services that maximize the efficient use of local/regional supply chains.

• **21stCenturyCommunicationsInfrastructure**– Projectsshouldworkwithkeypartnerstodevelopand support activities that increase access to broadband in rural and low-income urban communities to build the capacity of communities to use online platforms for civic engagement, commerce, healthcare and education.

Technical Assistance
Please identify the type of technical assistance that you propose to provide to a community, region, organization or for a particular set of stakeholders.
- Student-Led, Faculty-Guided Project
- Live Webinar Series
- Recorded Training videos
- Grant proposal development
- Other

Application Instructions
Technical Assistance applicants must collaborate with the community and/or organization they seek to work with in order to achieve the project goals. Applicants are expected to work with a community and/or an organization for the entire contract.

CERI intends to fund 8 to 16 projects per year for a two-year period. Applicants must provide a detailed narrative, **not to exceed five pages**, that describes the proposed scope of work. It should be double-spaced, have three-quarter-inch margins and 12-point font. It should clearly identify sections containing the following:

1. Cover page, including name, email address, phone number, and affiliation, and the project title.
2. A brief summary of the problem and how the proposed project will it be sustainable and address the economic development challenge in one or more of the four focal areas or opportunity.
3. The purpose in taking on this project, noting any special contributions it may make toward economic development efforts in Michigan.
4. Is the project new to the community you wish to work with and how?
5. A list of who you plan to work with or who your partners are assisting in the implementation of this project. Have you already made contact with these individuals/organizations?

6. A basic timeline of the proposed project, along with updates will be submitted including tasks for individuals on the team.
7. Resources (besides financial support) CERI could provide, that you might find useful for the project? Please be specific.
8. Your skills, qualifications, and/or connections unique to guide this community or organization in this project.
9. A description of how your project might generate living-wage jobs, public/private investments, and transform a community to be **more inclusive and equitable**.
10. A Dissemination Plan listing Who/What/Where/How (social media, video, press release, presentation, etc.) and When (timeline with benchmarks).
11. A letter of endorsement from partnering organizations or from the intended community.
12. One to three paragraphs describing how you as the applicant fulfill the qualifications listed below.
    - Strong knowledge in the topic of interest.
    - Formal training in facilitating or providing successful technical assistance.
13. Describe any anticipated impacts.
14. Detailed budget, including any matching support (cash or in-kind) and the source of the match.

Funding
Up to $5,000 per project for a two- year period. No expenditures can be made after May 1, 2022.

Deliverables
1. Updates must be submitted on a 60-day basis, as specified in the project award.
2. Updates must be 1-2 pages in length, and indicate major steps taken to accomplish goals, barriers, and successes/outcomes.
3. Final reports will be due no later than 30 days after the project has completed. Any deviations from this schedule need prior approval. The report should be 15-20 pages in length and must describe the major steps taken, lessons learned, and any outcomes or successes achieved (including any measurable, such as jobs, investments, etc.).

Submission
Invited pre-applicants must submit a full application within two weeks after the pre-app was submitted.

Email submissions may be submitted as file attachments and sent to hooperna@msu.edu (you must enter the project title, the date, and your last name in the subject as: "project title, date, last name".

Questions
Please contact Mr. Nat Hooper at hooperna@msu.edu or 517-353-9555