

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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November 12, 2025

MSU's Regional Economic Innovation Invites 2026 Project Proposals to Strengthen Michigan's Under Resourced Communities

Lansing, MI - The MSU Center for Community and Economic Development Regional Economic Innovation (REI) funds several types of projects: Co-Learning Plans, which invite authors to research and develop innovative economic development tools, models, policies, programs, and practices that serve as essential resources for local and state economic development practitioners and policymakers, providing guidance as they make decisions that affect Michigan's distressed communities and regions; Co-Implementation Plans, led by Innovation Fellows who serve as boots on the ground to put these tools into action; and Student-Led, Faculty-Guided Technical Assistance projects, researched and written by student teams at Michigan universities and colleges, focused on providing assistance to Michigan communities in completing local and regional economic development initiatives.



University Outreach and Engagement

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REI is seeking authors, researchers, and experts to contribute to the next annual cycle of work through new Student-led Faculty-guided projects, Co-Learning Plans, and Innovation Fellows. REI and partners have identified six priority topics for 2026 proposals: Leveraging Higher Education as Anchors for Community Investment; Ecosystem Over Ownership: Advancing Collaborative Economic Models in Distressed Communities; Donor Advised Funds and Family Wealth: Unlocking Capital for Community; Exploring Job Creation Potential Through Extended Producer Responsibility and Waste Reduction Policies in Michigan; Finding the "Sweet Spot" in Housing Development Permitting: Aligning Government Processes with Developer Expectations; Advancing Community Benefit Agreements in Publicly Funded Economic Development; and Other.

REI also welcomes proposals on other relevant topics within its four focal areas: resiliency planning, financial resiliency, 21st-century communications, and circular economies. The findings and recommendations from these plans will help drive job creation and business retention in economically distressed regions across Michigan.

Submission guidelines and deadlines are available on the REI website at <https://reicenter.org/projects/25-26-project-overviews>. Submit an application at <https://reicenter.org/projects/25-26-project-applications>.

For further inquiries, please contact Jenan Jondy at jondyjen@msu.edu. Please share these opportunities with your network.

About the MSU Center for Community and Economic Development (CCED)

The Michigan State University Center for Community and Economic Development (CCED) is dedicated to sustainable economic growth across Michigan. As part of University Outreach and Engagement, CCED leverages academic resources with community-driven initiatives, focusing on applied research, capacity building, and innovative partnerships that address complex economic and social challenges. Through programs like Regional Economic Innovation (REI), CCED has supported leaders and organizations in strengthening economic resilience, fostering development, and driving community-led transformation. Learn more at <https://ced.msu.edu>.

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