

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

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2025 REI Co-Learning Plan Awards Announced

Lansing, MI - Funded by the U.S. Department of Commerce - Economic Development Administration (EDA), Co-Learning Plans (CLP) focus on spurring economic growth and development in economically challenged communities. The MSU EDA University Center for Regional Economic Innovation, with the counsel of the Consultative Panelists, is excited to announce awardees for the 2025 Co-Learning Plans. This year, REI will support five innovative CLP projects, each addressing critical challenges and opportunities in Michigan's economic and community development landscape. These projects demonstrate a commitment to advancing equitable, sustainable, and regionally impactful solutions.



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Partnerships for Infrastructure Expansion & Economic Development: Analysis of Michigan Act 425 Agreements, will evaluate the effectiveness of Michigan's Act 425 agreements as tools for addressing housing and infrastructure needs in rural areas.

Another CLP, *Buy Flint Initiative: Connecting Local Businesses to Corporate Procurement Opportunities*, focuses on revitalizing Flint's local economy by connecting small businesses and microenterprises with procurement opportunities. This initiative focuses on identifying and supporting local businesses through capacity-building programs, resource alignment, and a new BuyFlint directory.

In Detroit's Zone 8, *Future-Proofing Detroit: Bringing AI Upskilling to the Neighborhoods* will equip residents with AI literacy and skills to enhance job prospects and economic stability. Practical, neighborhood-based training on AI tools will be offered in collaboration with local partners. The initiative also includes plans for an "AI Upskilling Toolkit" to ensure scalability and knowledge sharing with other communities.

Addressing Agricultural Workforce and Infrastructure Shortages through Innovation Centers proposes to address agricultural labor shortages and infrastructure challenges in Michigan by proposing the development of agricultural innovation centers. These centers would coordinate existing resources, such as private sector expertise, university research, and career and technical education, to provide training and support for a well-prepared domestic workforce.

Changing the Paradigm: Mobilizing Community Investment Funds, is being funded as an innovative event on March 7, 2025, in East Lansing, Michigan. The event dives deep into the world of community investment funds, offering a unique opportunity to learn from leaders driving the community capital movement.

Congratulations to the 2025 Co-Learning Plan awardees! We are excited to support these projects and look forward to their contributions to Michigan's economic and community development goals. To learn more about these and other projects, visit: <https://reicenter.org/projects/current-projects>

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