2015
Regional Innovation Strategies Competition

Lessons Learned Webinar

March 10, 2016

INNOVATION. REGIONAL COLLABORATION. JOB CREATION.

Welcoming Remarks

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EDA National Conference

EDA's National Conference
Date: April 7-8, 2016
Location: Washington, D.C.
Click HERE Register

For questions or more information, please contact **registration@useda2016.org**

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1. Program Overview
   1. i6 Challenge
   2. Seed Fund Support
2. Application Review Process
   1. Application Submission
   2. Technical Reviews
   3. Merit Reviews & Selection
3. Common Mistakes
4. Strong Proposals
5. Top Recommendations
6. Next Steps: Future Funding Opportunities
7. Questions

What is the i6 Challenge?

It's a national initiative designed to support the creation of programs for innovation and entrepreneurship that increase the commercialization of innovations, ideas, intellectual property, and research into viable companies. These programs:

1. Support the creation or expansion of innovative Proof of Concept Centers or Commercialization programs
2. Focus on building capacity to consistently and regularly create high-growth entrepreneurial ventures that contribute to economic growth
3. Leverage regional strengths, capabilities, and competitive advantages.
4. Programs must bring or significantly enhance a culture of innovation and high-growth entrepreneurship to their region.

What is the Seed Fund Support grant?

This initiative provides funding for technical assistance, feasibility studies, operations, or marketing related to the creation and launch of equity-based seed capital funds or related programs that:

1. Provide early stage capital support for new businesses (generally less than three years old)
2. Have a sustainability plan
3. Include ecosystem and downstream support
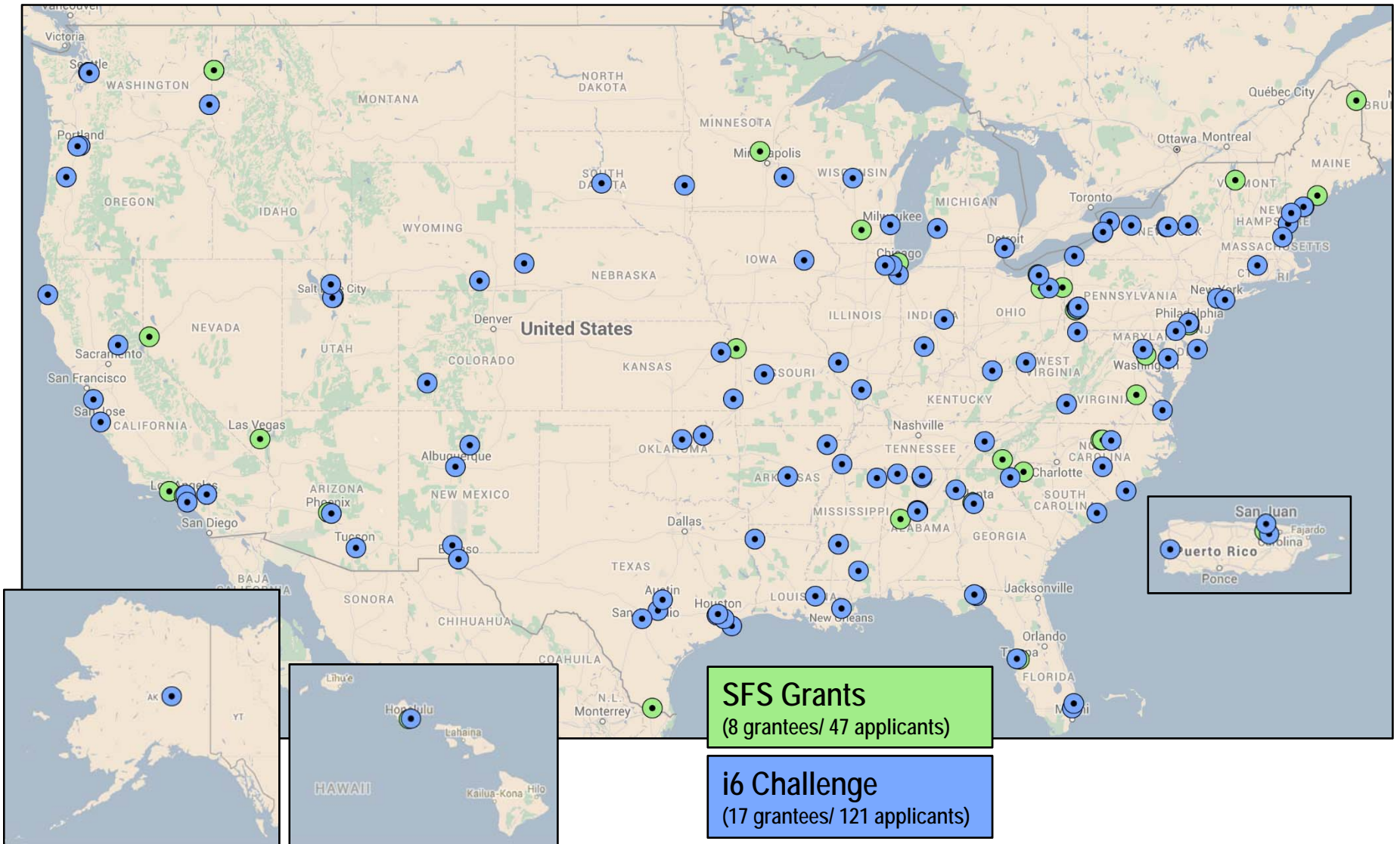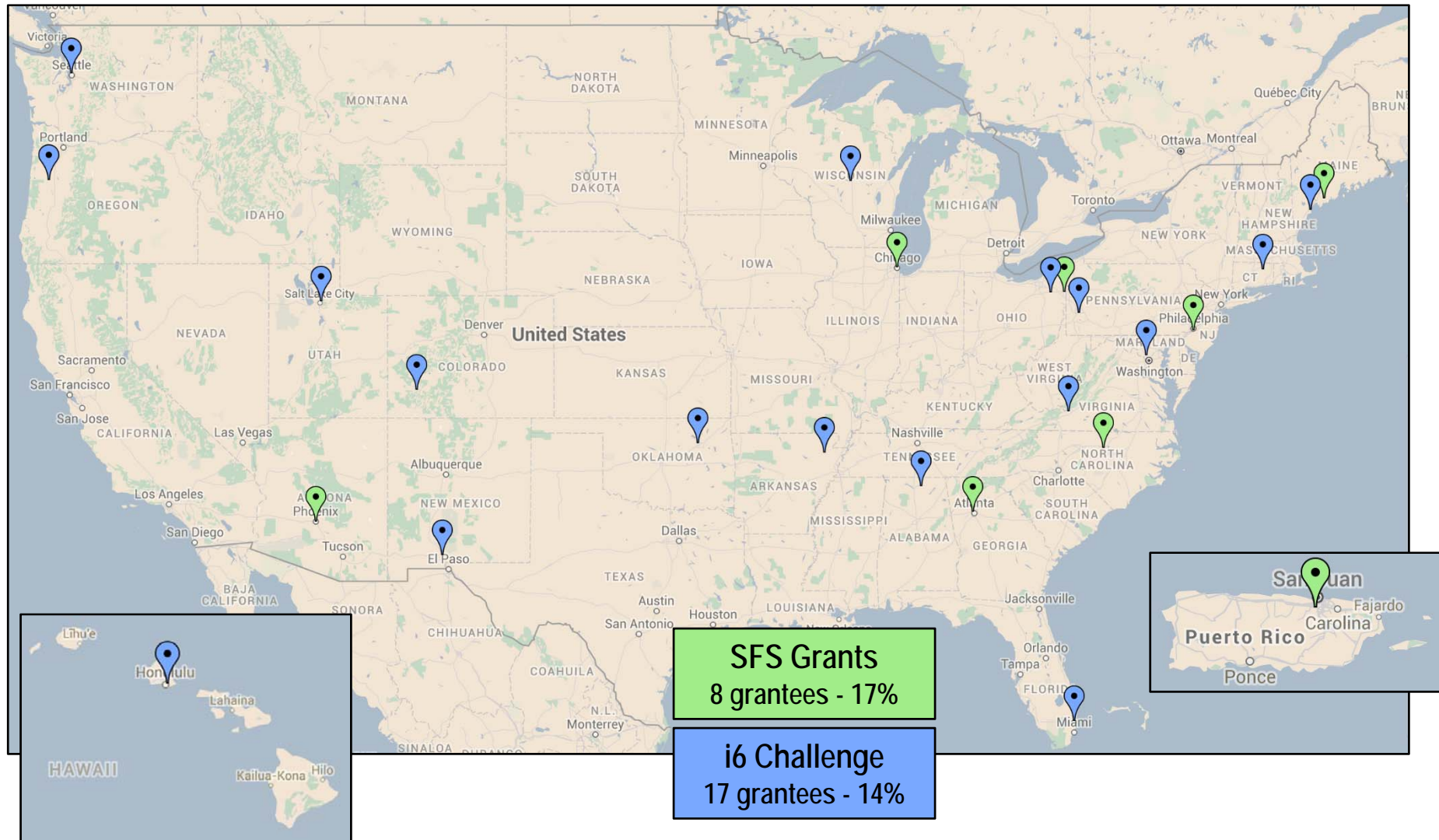
Link to the Application Package
http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/view-opportunity.html?oppId=278198

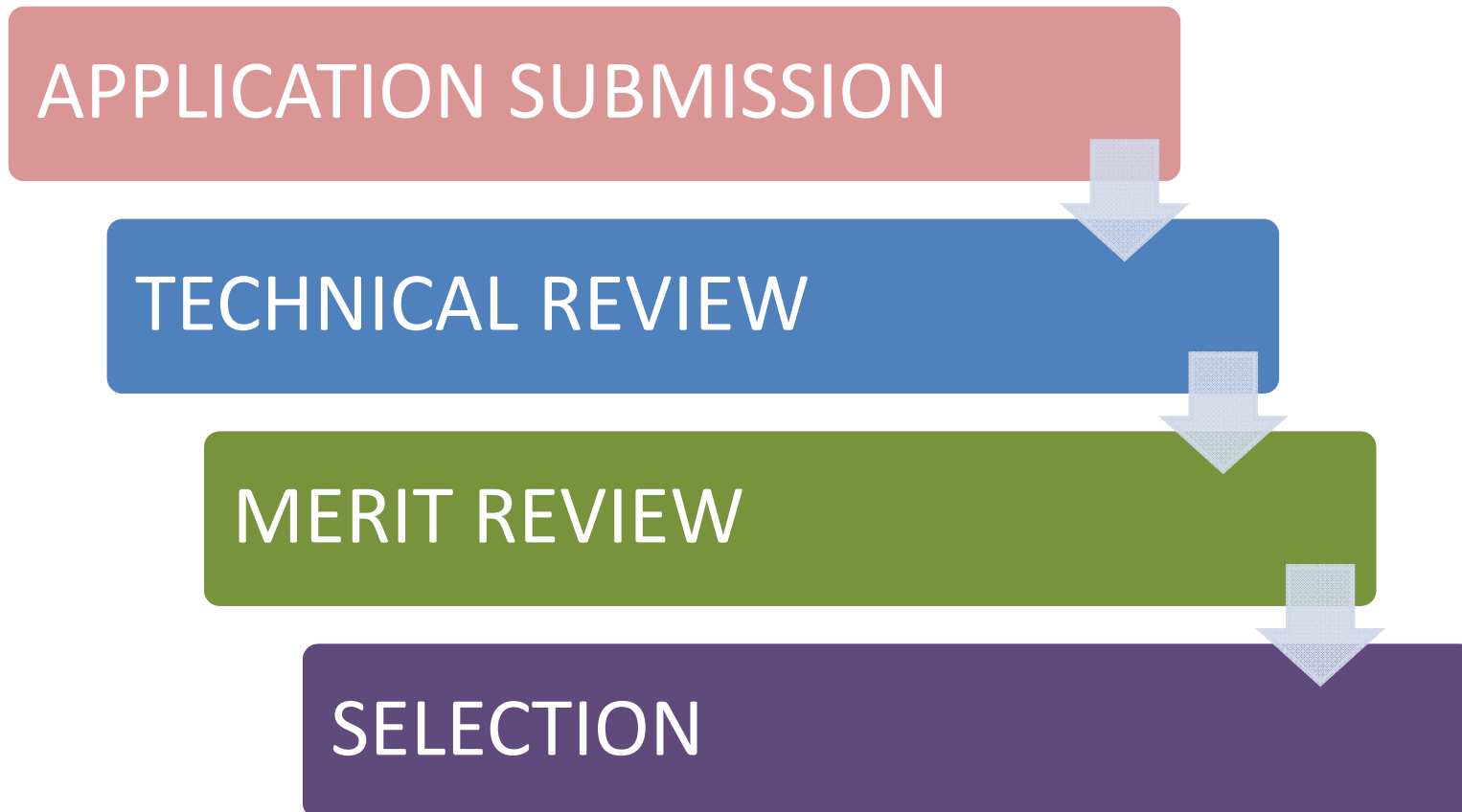## Grants.gov Funding Opportunity Number
EDA-HDQ-OIE-2015-2004566

Questions – Applications

1. How many applications were received for the i6 challenge? And Seed Fund Support?

2. How are RIS awards distributed among EDA's regions and throughout the U.S.?

3. How can applicants position their application to be most competitive (i.e., to have the best chance of being funded)?

2015 Applicants

SFS Grants
(8 grantees/ 47 applicants)

i6 Challenge
(17 grantees/ 121 applicants)

2015 Grantees

SFS Grants
8 grantees - 17%

i6 Challenge
17 grantees - 14%

APPLICATION SUBMISSION

TECHNICAL REVIEW

MERIT REVIEW

SELECTION

Application Submission

1. To submit next year, applicants need:
   a. DUNS Number (i.e., Unique Entity Identifier)
   b. SAM (System for Award Management) Registration
      i. Register multiple users in organization profile in case the registering individual leaves organization
   c. CAGE Code & TIN Verification – system verification after SAM registration, _**applicants should watch email to verify this occurs**_
   d. Create grants.gov account & submit application

2. Keys to success: start early and leave time for corrections if CAGE/TIN are not validated

3. Allow a minimum of three weeks for steps above

START NOW

Submission Process

Obtain a *DUNS Number*
- 1-2 Business Days
- http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform

Obtain an *EIN*
- 10 Business Days

Register with *SAM*
- 7-10 Business Days
- https://www.sam.gov/

Create a *Grants.gov* Username and Password
- Same Day

Authorize the *AOR*
- Same Day (depending on your organization's EBiz POC)

Track *AOR Status*
- Same Day

Eligible Applicants

1. A State;
2. An Indian tribe;
3. A city or other political subdivision of a State;
4. An entity that—

   a. is a (i) nonprofit organization, (ii) an institution of higher education, (iii) a public-private partnership, (iv) a science or research park, (v) a Federal laboratory, or (vi) an economic development organization or similar entity; **and**

   b. has an application that is supported by a State or a political subdivision of a State; or
5. A consortium of any of the entities described in subparagraphs (1) through (4).

1. Required Forms – SF-424, SF-424A, SF-424B, CD-511, SF-LLL

2. Project Narrative – 10 page limit

3. Budget Narrative – 2 page limit

4. Nonprofit, institute of higher education, etc. (Item 4(a), previous slide)
   a. Certificate of Good Standing;
   b. Articles of Incorporation;
   c. Bylaws; **and**
   d. Support Letter from general purpose subdivision of State government, acknowledging the non-profit is acting in cooperation w/ officials and subdivision plans

5. Comments from State Clearinghouse if applicable
   a. "SPOC Requirements"
   b. https://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants_spoc

6. Minimum Match Requirements
   a. Clearly indicate in commitment letters that match is **unencumbered**, **unrestricted**, and **committed**

7. Approved Indirect Cost Rate (if applicable)

Review Panels

    a.   Comprised of a minimum of three Federal employees

        i.   National competition; panels included members with diversity across regions, Federal agencies/bureaus, and expertise

        ii.   Each panelist submitted individual scores

        iii.   Panel scores were normalized, and applications were ranked

Final Awards

    a.   EDA Grants Officer made final award decisions based on scores in light of the selection criteria in FFO

1. How do the Merit Review Panels assess applications comparatively?

2. How were feasibility studies scored against planning studies?

3. How do the Merit Review Panels assess proposals from different types of entities?

1. Unclear milestones and timeline too broad
2. Lack of diverse support from across ecosystem (insufficient private sector support)
3. Misalignment with program goals or regulations
   a. i6 project funds to be invested in businesses (not allowed)
   b. SFS grant proposals funding RLFs (must be equity-based)
4. Unrealistic outputs or outcomes ; lack of supporting evidence
5. No clear statement of the problem/need/challenge in the region
6. Inappropriate resources for work described
   a. Personnel: unclear qualifications and roles, no staffing plan
7. Issues with the project narrative
   a. Repurposed marketing document; too much jargon; disjointed
8. Unrealistic or unclear budget

1. Narrative that clearly identifies
   a. the problem,
   b. the solution,
   c. the team,
   d. the resources and community, and
   e. the "ask" —how and why you need EDA.
2. Strong correlation between documented problem and proposed solution
3. Clear, concise, and informative plan (timeline & milestones) that followed guidelines from the FFO
4. Narrative provided compelling and **relevant** information
5. Strong, complimentary partner organizations aligned around a clearly identified purpose (respected regional experts)

6. Metrics (outputs and outcomes) and self-evaluation integrated into the plan

    a. Compelling successes in previous projects are helpful, not required

7. Milestones spread throughout project lifecycle

8. Evidence-based approach

    a. Model / predictions explained and reasonable

9. Immediate implementation of work apparent

10. Clearly addresses every applicable evaluation criteria

1. Become very familiar with the FFO.

2. Articulate the proposed project clearly.

3. Diversify your supporting organizations.

4. Get outside stakeholders to review application.

5. Start early and submit early.

FY 2016 RIS FUNDING

The Regional Innovation Strategies program was appropriated $15 million for Fiscal Year 2016. OIE plans to announce the funding opportunity in late Spring/early Summer.

Sign up for email alerts on www.grants.gov for notification about future solicitations, and sign up for EDA's monthly newsletter to ensure you receive notification about this and other EDA programs.

Questions?