STEM TALENT CHALLENGE

Informational Webinar

September 9, 2020

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U.S. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION

Eda.gov/oie/stem

TOPICS TO BE COVERED

- Welcome and Intros
- OIE Mission
- Challenge Origins and Design
- Planning and Implementation
- Desired Outputs and Outcomes
- Application Basics
- Frequently Asked Questions

MEET THE TEAM

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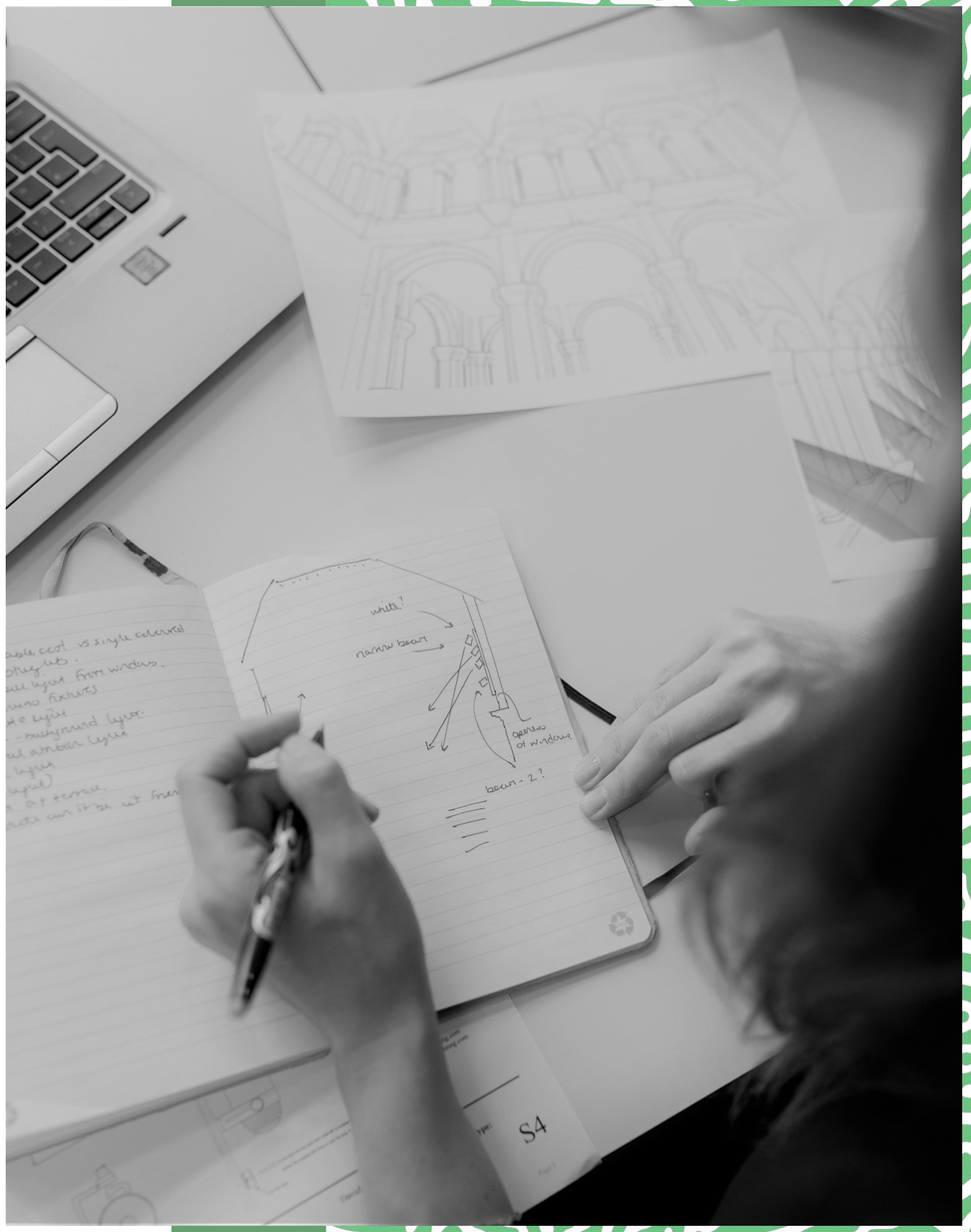
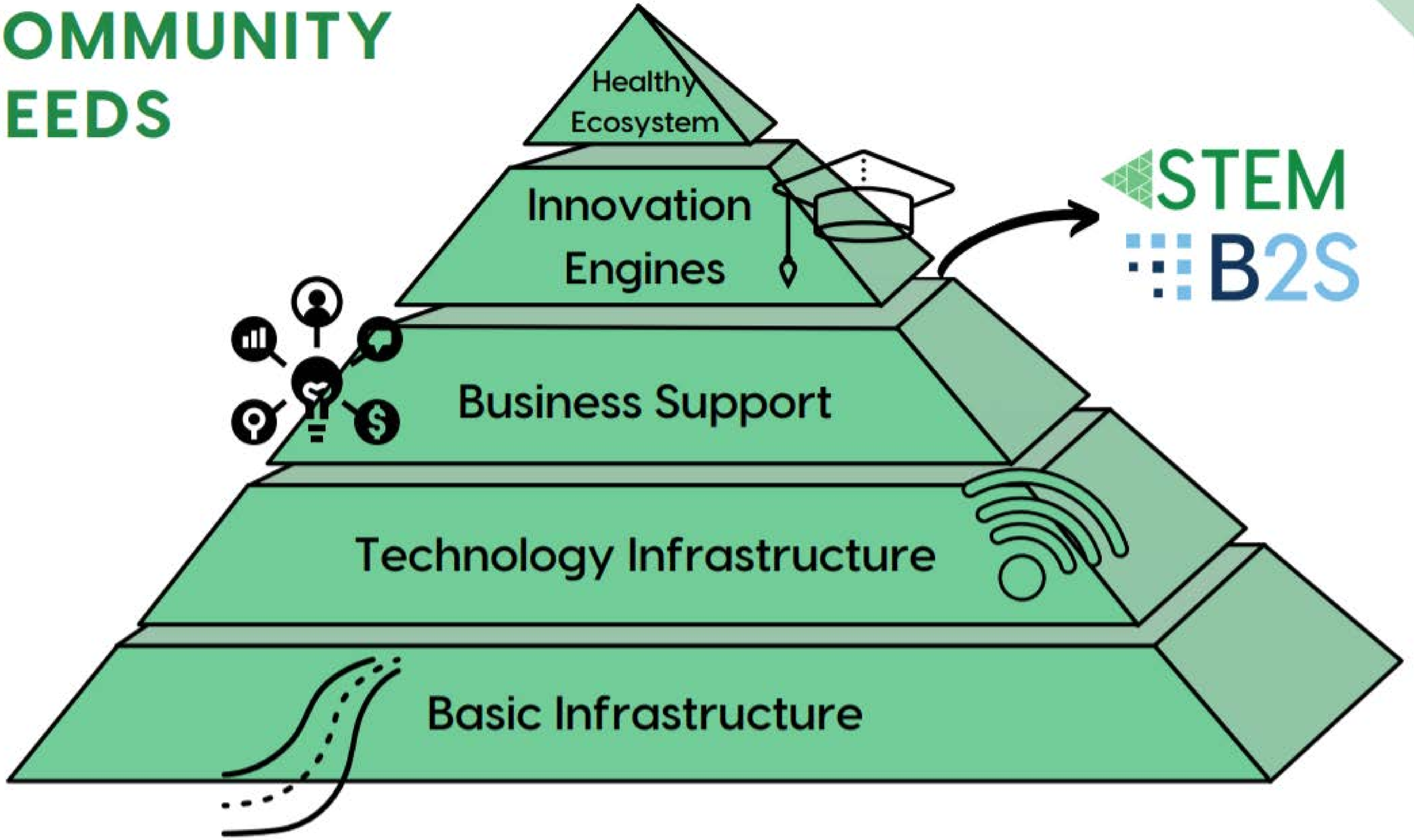
OIE Mission

The Office of Innovation and Entrepreneurship (OIE) aims to empower communities so that entrepreneurs can launch companies, scale technologies and create the jobs of tomorrow.

OIE was established by the America COMPETES Act of 2010 and is housed within the U.S. Economic Development Administration.



COMMUNITY NEEDS



STEM B2S

Build to Scale

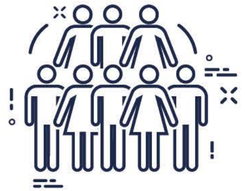
224 grants totaling **$100M**

$120M in community match leveraged

6,200 startups engaged

$1.6B+ capital raised by startups engaged

9,000 new products launched

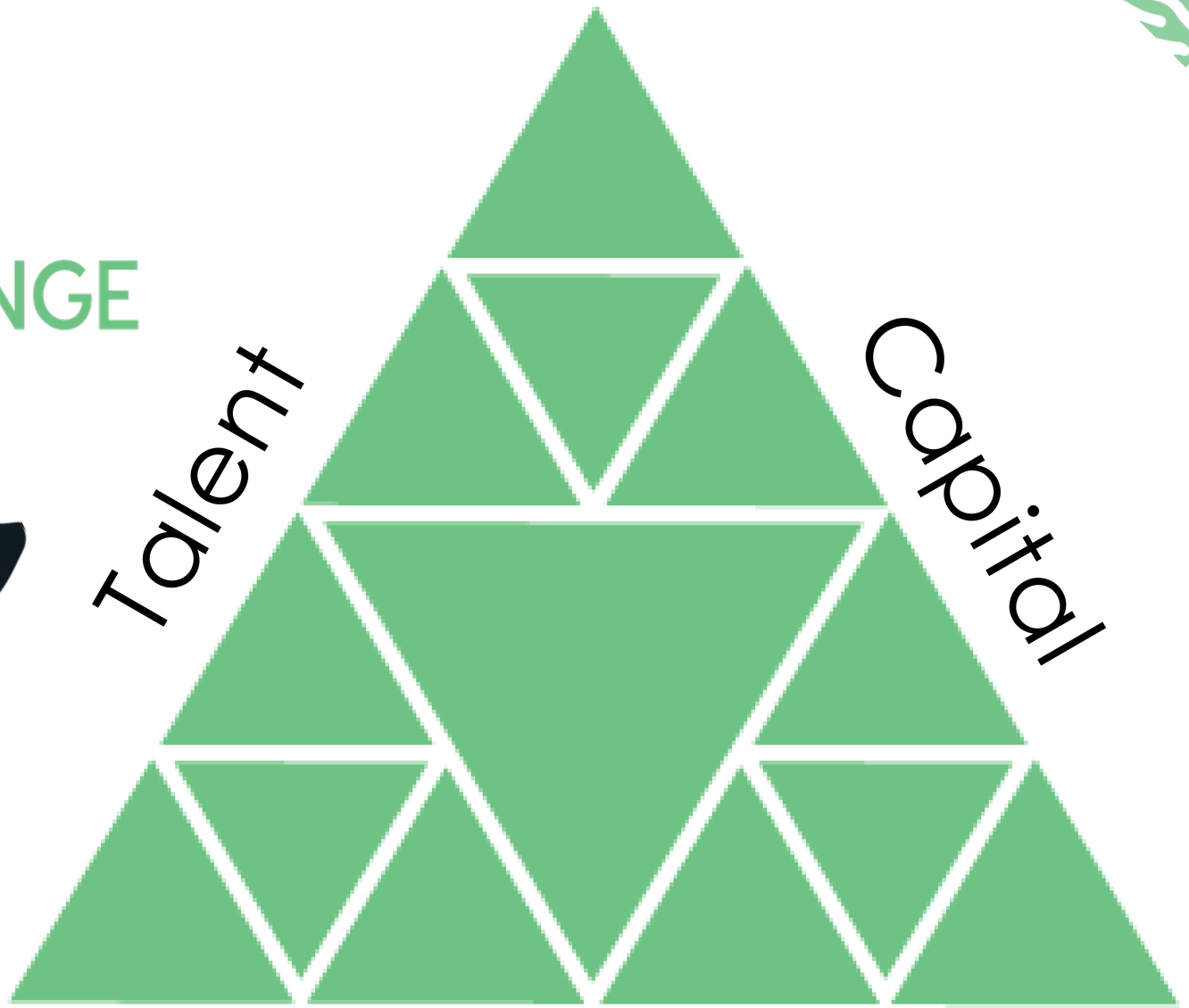


14,200+ jobs created

STEM Talent Challenge

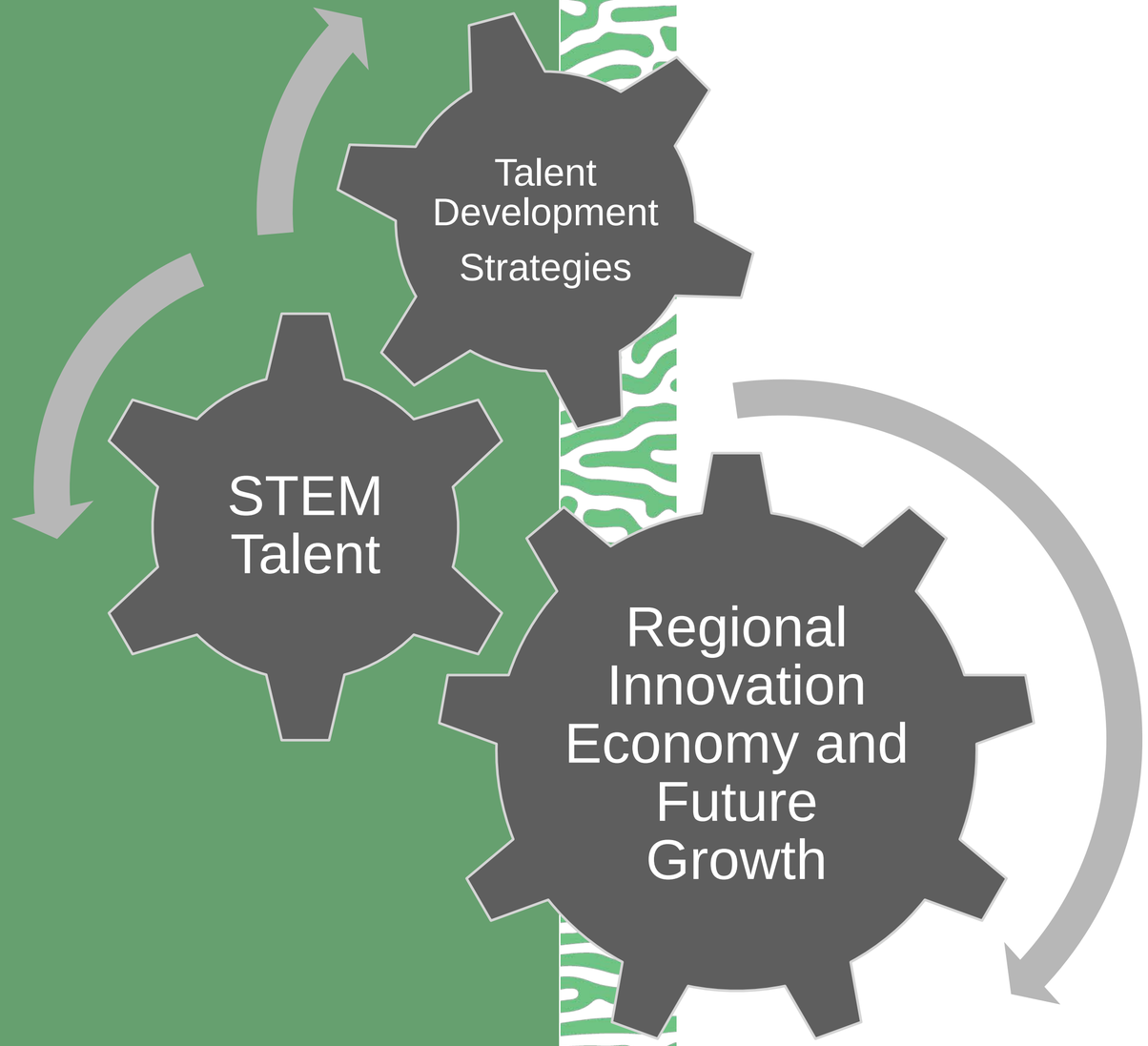
Origins and Design

STEM
TALENT
CHALLENGE



Building STEM Talent to Strengthen Regional Innovation Economies

APPLICATIONS DUE OCTOBER 14, 2020 at 11:59 PM EST



This competition seeks applications from *eligible applicants* that are creating and implementing STEM talent development strategies that complement their region's innovation economy

Authorized by Section 28 of the Stevenson-Wydler Technology Act to:

Assess & Identify

Conduct needs assessment and identify the need for skilled STEM workers to drive the regional innovation economy

Implement Programs

Implement programs designed to build STEM talent where plans and strategies exist.

Develop Infrastructure

Develop infrastructure to expand STEM work-and-learn models

Eligibility and Funding

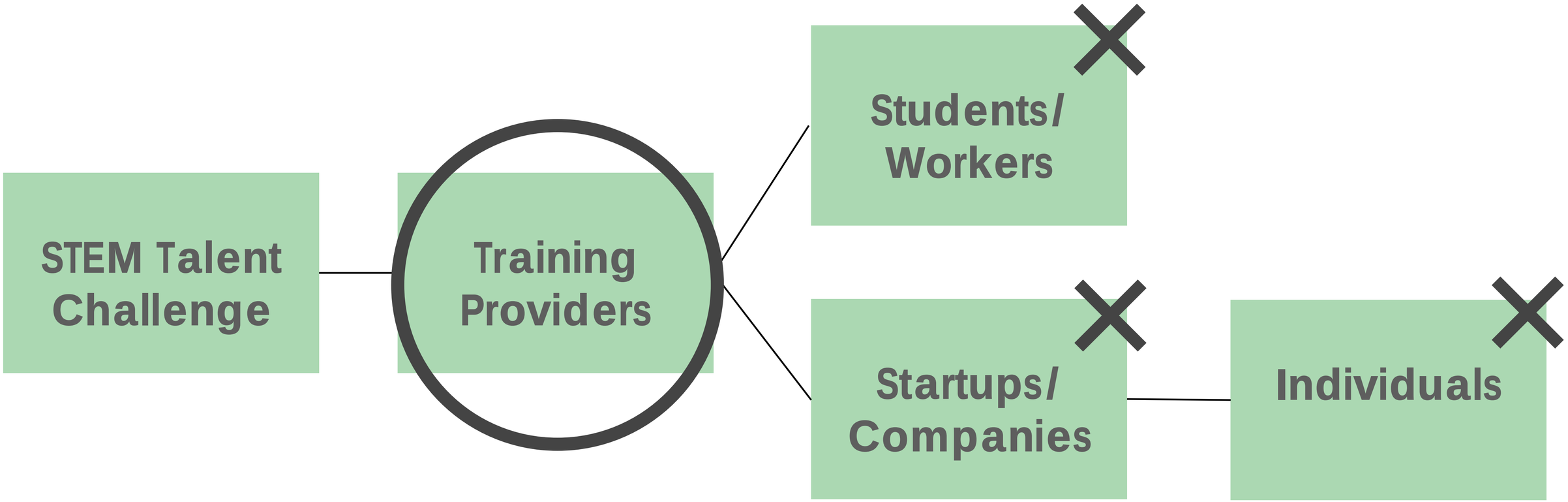
What type of entity is eligible for this challenge, and how much funding is available?

Eligible Entities

1. A **State**;
2. An **Indian tribe**;
3. A **city** or **other political subdivision of a State**;
4. An entity that—
   a. is a **nonprofit organization**, an **institution of higher education**, a **public-private partnership**, a **science or research park**, a **Federal laboratory**, or an **economic development organization**; **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]

Individuals are **NOT** *eligible for funding.*

Who does the STEM Talent Challenge fund?

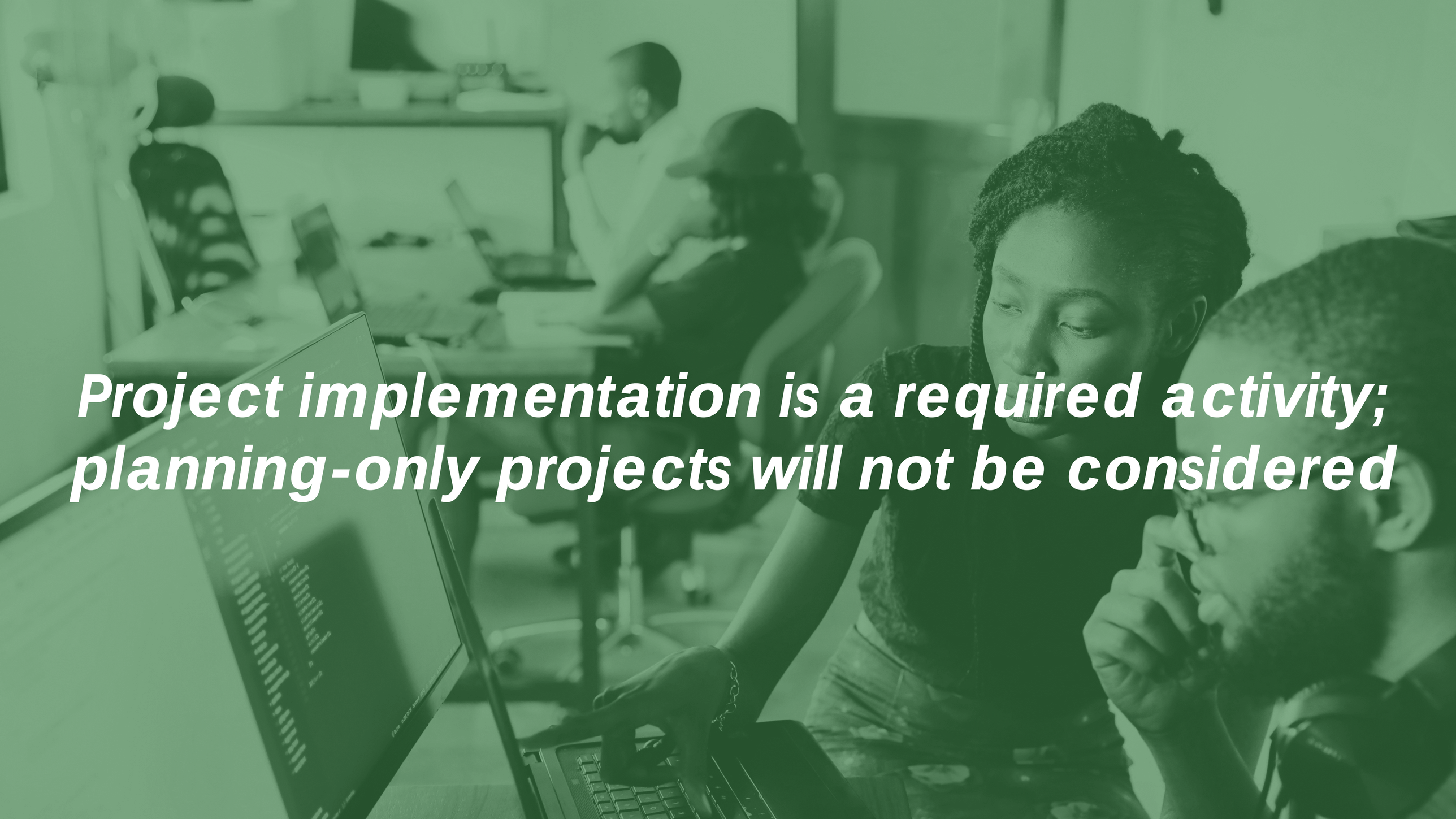


The STEM Talent Challenge is designed to help communities with two activities – planning and development, and program implementation

Funding Specifics

A total of $2 million has been appropriated for this program

- **Applicants may request up to $300,000**
- Up to $50,000 of the total request can be used for planning *or* the full amount requested can be used for implementation
- Implementation is the goal; requests for funding for planning activities only will be rejected



Project implementation is a required activity; planning-only projects will not be considered

Planning and Implementation

Sample planning and implementation activities

The Basics of Planning and Development

Develop implementation strategy

Applicants should plan and develop an implementation strategy to address the unmet needs and existing barriers for regional STEM-capable workforces through work-and-learn models

Conduct Needs Analysis

Applicants may conduct a rigorous needs analysis, if one does not exist, to clearly articulate labor market challenges; proposed projects should be tied to a regional economy's unique strengths and shared infrastructure

Planning is Optional

Planning and development activities are encouraged if no such plans or assessment currently exists, but are an optional component

What should program implementation look like?

Implement or Expand

Implement or expand an existing STEM competency-based work-and-learn model; may result in recognized credentials

Industries of the Future

Training should prioritize STEM skills tied to emerging sectors and the needs of future industries

Experimentation is encouraged

Training should include on-the-job training at an employer in addition to classroom, remote, online, or blended learning, but can include any new or existing work-and-learn model

Partners in Innovation

Applicants should leverage partnerships with local and regional innovation leaders

Desired Outputs and Outcomes

Proposed projects may aim for *some or all of* the following outputs.

So, what should the short and long-term goals of your project look like?

STEM Work-Based Learning and Training

- Projects should focus on an interdisciplinary approach and utilize training models that provide workers with the experiences they need to succeed on the job

- These models may include innovative, industry-driven apprenticeships, fellowships, internships, and other cooperative employer-educator partnerships, but are not limited to existing industry definitions.

Experimentation and innovation are encouraged.

Increase Regional Innovation Capacity

- Projects should focus on connecting regional innovation stakeholders and employers with the workforce and talent development leaders and training providers

- Projects should be driven by the talent needs of those employers at the forefront of innovation

Organizations that are driving regional innovation through worker training are strongly encouraged to apply

Increase Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in STEM

- Projects should focus on providing equitable access to the innovation economy for all members of the community

- Projects should build and maintain relationships that will lead to this goal

Build Computational Expertise for the Digital Economy

- Projects should focus on producing a talent pool with computational literacy and the ability to work in the virtual and remote world

Application Basics

Timeline for the selection process, application content and format

Challenge Timeline

NOFO Released
August 27, 2020

Application window is open for 48 days

Applications Due
October 14, 2020

Full Applications are due by 11:59 PM EST on October 14, 2020

Application Review

Applications will be reviewed and scored by multiple reviewers

Award Notification
Winter 20 / 21

Successful applicants should expect to receive award notification 90-120 days from the due date

Applications will be evaluated and scored. A **10-page project narrative, 4-page budget narrative**, a **series of standard forms,** and **additional supporting documents** are required.

See NOFO for complete Full Application Requirements.

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Project Narrative Format

10-single sided, 8.5x11-inch pages, with a minimum 12-point font and 1-inch margins

Executive Summary	Includes Name of Project & Applicant, Type of Applicant and Project Summary (250 words or less)
Description of Location and Region	Includes primary service area and description of regions served
Description of Proposed Project	Including clear statement of purpose, key personnel, partners, and outreach and engagement plan
Scope of Work	Includes key milestones and deliverables (1 page or less)
Project Timeline	Includes start date, projected dates for key milestones, and estimated project completion date
Anticipated Impact	Includes outputs and outcomes, metrics, and tracking mechanisms
Sustainability Plan	Including anticipated challenges, barriers, and post-award period operations

Required Application Components

PROJECT DESIGN AND SUBSTANCE

Project Narrative

Budget Narrative and Staffing Plan

Matching Share Commitment Letters

State/Local Government Support (if applicable)

FORMS AND SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION*

SF-424, SF-424A, SF-424B

CD-511, SF-LLL

SPOC, Organizational Docs, Indirect Cost Rate (if applicable)

See NOFO for more information on these components.

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Application Review Criteria

Project Support & Connectivity

Is the organization connected to the STEM industry leaders of the region? Does the project have the support of the industry leaders?

Engagement and Diversity

Will this project solicit participation from external stakeholders? Do these stakeholders represent a diversity of socioeconomic and geographic connections?

Economic & Innovation Impacts

Does this project involve or encourage experimentation with current talent development models? Does the project support industries of the future?

Application Review Criteria

Assets & Infrastructure

Does this project's regional innovation economy have the infrastructure to support this project? Does it have the assets to support this project?

Project Sustainability & Adaptability

Will this project be sustainable once grant funding runs out? Can this program be adapted as necessary to gain future financial or programmatic support?

Project Feasibility

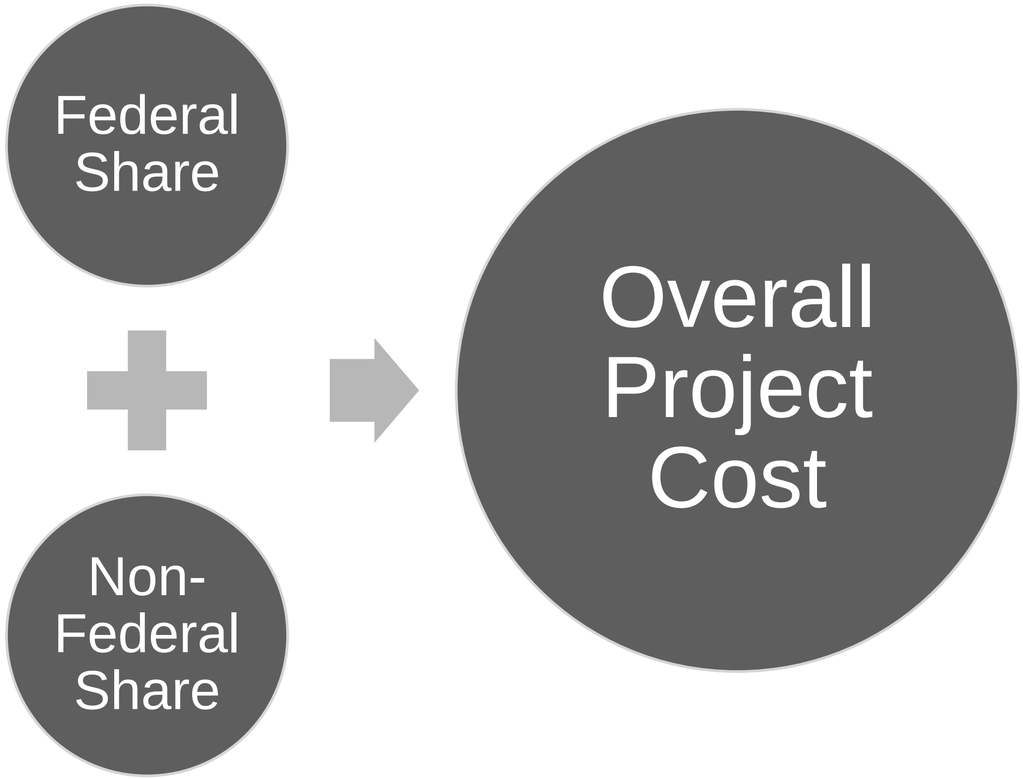
Does the application show that the project will be executed successfully? Is the budget realistic? Will the project be able to be executed in accordance with the budget narrative?

Match Requirements

1:1 Funding Match is required

- Applicants must demonstrate **at the time of application** a matching non-Federal share of at least 50% of the total project cost

- This match can be in-kind contributions, but they must directly relate to the project and its outcomes



Match Requirements

At the time that the application is submitted, matching shares (whether cash or in-kind) must:

- **Be Committed** to the project for the period of performance
- **Be Available** as needed, and
- **Not be conditioned or encumbered** in any way that may preclude its use consistent with the requirements of EDA investment assistance

Applications should include signed Commitment Letters for all matching funds from **ALL SOURCES** (i.e. applicant, co-applicants, or third-party organizations)

Budget Details

- **Budgets** and **Budget Narratives** should be thought of holistically – this includes match and how it is discussed within your application
- Example: If you are applying for $300,000 in STEM funds, you would be running a (minimum) $600,000 initiative – and budget. The budget should flow seamlessly with your application – with the costs in your budget easily traceable to program activities.

A budget template is included on the STEM Talent Challenge website

Innovation and entrepreneurship rely on STEM-capable talent to advance. This challenge seeks to develop that talent, but leaves the “how” up to you. Experimentation is encouraged.

Frequently Asked Questions

Some of the most commonly asked questions about the STEM Talent Challenge

Am I allowed to apply for funds for planning activities only?

- Program implementation is required. Planning is optional. **Applications for planning activities only will be deemed ineligible**.
- No more than $50,000 of this funding can be used for planning and development.

Can existing programs apply for this funding or is it for new projects only?

- Projects may implement new or expand an existing STEM competency-based work-and-learn models; however, activities and outcomes should closely align with the goals of the STEM Talent Challenge.

- **Iterative, innovative, and unproven models are highly encouraged to apply.**

Should projects follow the standards of current industry-recognized apprenticeships?

- Traditional apprenticeship standards can be followed by projects applying for this challenge, but this is **not** a requirement.

- This challenge does not have strict rules governing work-and-learn models, allowing applicants to be creative in their approach.

What types of projects are you looking for from successful applicants?

Some examples could include (but are not limited to):

- EDO works in partnership with workforce development org to launch inaugural year-long “First to Flight” UAV manufacturing apprenticeship
- Life science incubator creates a lab apprenticeship for university students to ultimately launch careers in fast-growing biotech and/or life science startups
- Rural community college partners with software development education company to learn software development skills
- Three robotics startups struggling to find qualified hires, partner with the workforce development team to design an innovative work-and-learn training model for community members recently laid off due to COVID-19’s impacts

Is the STEM Talent Challenge funded by the CARES Act?

- No, the STEM Talent Challenge is not funded by the CARES Act. It is authorized by Section 28 of Stevenson-Wydler and is funded through its own appropriation.

Can this funding be used to directly support program participants, such as through apprentice wages or stipends?

- No. This program cannot pay for apprentice wages, stipends, or other resources directly to the student or worker.

- The STEM Talent Challenge funds are for planning, program management, and operations only.

Additional Questions?

- Reach out to us via email at oie@eda.gov or visit the website for more resources:

eda.gov/oie/stem