

online at <https://www.usda.gov/ocfo/federal-financial-assistance-policy/USDABuyAmericaWaiver>.

### N. Equal Opportunity and Non-Discrimination Requirements

In accordance with federal civil rights law and USDA civil rights regulations and policies, USDA, its Mission Areas, agencies, staff offices, employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident.

Program information may be made available in languages other than English. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication to obtain program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotope, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible Mission Area, agency, staff office; or the 711 Relay Service. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program discrimination complaint, a complainant should complete Form AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, which can be obtained online at <https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/ad-3027.pdf>, from any USDA office, by calling (866) 632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant's name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation.

The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to USDA by:

(1) *Mail:* United States Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410;

(2) *Fax:* (202) 690-7442; or

(3) *Email at:* [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov).

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

**Joaquin Altoro,**

*Administrator, Rural Housing Service.*

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**BILLING CODE 3410-XV-P**

## DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

### Economic Development Administration

#### Agency Information Collection Activities; Submission to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for Review and Approval; Comment Request; Regional Economic Development Data Collection Instrument

**AGENCY:** Economic Development Administration, Department of Commerce.

**ACTION:** Notice of information collection, request for comment.

**SUMMARY:** The Department of Commerce, in accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (PRA), invites the general public and other Federal agencies to comment on proposed, and continuing information collections, which helps us assess the impact of our information collection requirements and minimize the public's reporting burden. The purpose of this notice is to allow for 60 days of public comment preceding submission of the collection to OMB.

**DATES:** To ensure consideration, comments regarding this proposed information collection must be received on or before June 18, 2024.

**ADDRESSES:** Interested persons are invited to submit written comments via email to Hallie Davis, Program and Management Analyst, Economic Development Administration (EDA), at [HDavis1@eda.gov](mailto:HDavis1@eda.gov) or [PRAcomments@doc.gov](mailto:PRAcomments@doc.gov). Do not submit Confidential Business Information or otherwise sensitive or protected information.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Requests for additional information or specific questions related to collection activities should be directed to Hallie Davis, Program and Management Analyst, EDA, at [HDavis1@eda.gov](mailto:HDavis1@eda.gov).

#### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

##### I. Abstract

EDA leads the Federal economic development agenda by promoting innovation and competitiveness and preparing American regions for growth and success in the worldwide economy. Guided by the basic principle that sustainable economic development

should be driven locally, EDA works directly with communities and regions to help them build the capacity for economic development based on local business conditions and needs. Section 28 of the Stevenson-Wydler Technology Innovation Act of 1980 (Regional Technology and Innovation Hub Program (15 U.S.C. 3722a) is the legal authority under which EDA awards financial assistance and designee status under the Fiscal Year (FY) 23 Regional Technology and Innovation Hub Program ("Tech Hubs"). Under Tech Hubs, EDA seeks to strengthen U.S. economic and national security through place-based investments in regions with the assets, resources, capacity, and potential to become globally competitive, within approximately ten years, in the technologies and industries of the future—and for those industries, companies, and the good jobs they create to start, grow, and remain in the U.S. in order to support the growth and modernization of U.S. manufacturing, improve commercialization of the domestic production of innovative research, and strengthen U.S. economic and national security. Tech Hubs is a two-phase program: in Phase 1, EDA funded Strategy Development grants and designated 31 regions as Tech Hubs. In Phase 2, designated Tech Hubs are eligible to compete for funding for implementation projects. Further information on Tech Hubs can be found at [www.eda.gov](http://www.eda.gov).

The purpose of this notice is to seek comments from the public and other Federal agencies on a request for a new information collection for designated Tech Hubs to help ensure that Tech Hub investments are evidence-based, data-driven, and accountable to participants and the public.

Lead consortium members of the 31 designated Tech Hubs will submit identified program metrics and qualitative information to help assess specific program objectives. A one-time questionnaire will be sent to each of the Tech Hubs consortium leads which will gather the relevant data and stories for each of the 31 Tech Hubs designee consortia, resulting in consortia regional impact evaluation, resources, and tools for regional economic development decision-makers. The 31 designated Tech Hubs will provide information on the following objectives:

(1) Accelerating technology innovation, commercialization, demonstration, and deployment, which may include information on the number of patents filed, licensing agreements, approximate levels of research and development expenditures, adoption of

new technologies, and acceleration of current technologies.

(2) Enabling infrastructure and advancing manufacturing, which may include information on specific facility information.

(3) Integrating an agile workforce system, which may include information on skills needed by employers, available training, hard-to-fill vacancies, policies and strategies for worker retention, and strategies for engagement with underserved workers.

(4) Increasing business and entrepreneurial capacity, which may include assessing employer competitiveness, relationships with federal, state, and local entities, current partnerships, and information about sources of capital to start and grow businesses and to adopt innovative approaches and technologies.

(5) Strengthening national security, which may include information on procurement processes, critical inputs, sourcing, supply chains, and strategic implications of technologies and their use cases.

Tech Hubs designees must submit this data one time to provide a baseline status of the Tech Hub and to help assess the results of designee status as well as potential future federal investments.

EDA is particularly interested in public comment on how the proposed data collection will support the assessment of job quality, including in ways that rely on pairing this information administrative data for

analysis and other ways to minimize burden, or if alternative information should be considered.

**II. Method of Collection**

Data will be collected electronically.

**III. Data**

*OMB Control Number:* None: new information collection.

*Form Number(s):* None: new information collection.

*Type of Review:* Regular submission: new information collection.

*Affected Public:* Tech Hubs designees, which may include a (n): Institution of higher education, including Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Tribal Colleges or Universities, and Minority-Serving Institutions; State, territorial, local or Tribal governments or other political subdivisions of a State, including State and local agencies, or a consortium thereof; Industry groups or firms in relevant technology, innovation, or manufacturing sectors; Economic development organizations or similar entities that are focused primarily on improving science, technology, innovation, entrepreneurship, or access to capital; Labor organizations or workforce training organizations, which may include State and local workforce development boards; Economic development entities with relevant expertise, including a district organization; Organizations that contribute to increasing the participation of underserved

populations in science, technology, innovation, and entrepreneurship; Venture development organizations; Organizations that promote local economic stability, high wage domestic jobs, and broad-based economic opportunities, such as employee ownership membership associations and State or local employee ownerships and cooperative development centers, financial institutions and investment funds, including community development financial institutions and minority depository institutions; Elementary schools and secondary schools, including area career and technical education schools; National laboratories; Federal laboratories; Manufacturing extension centers; Manufacturing U.S.A. Institutes; Transportation planning organizations; A cooperative extension services; Organizations that represent the perspectives of underserved communities in economic development initiatives; and Institutions receiving an award under the National Science Foundation’s (NSF) Regional Innovation Engines Program.

*Estimated Number of Respondents:* Consortium Lead Members/Tech Hubs Designee Consortia: 31 respondents, responding once.

*Estimated Time per Response:* Consortium Lead Members/Tech Hubs Designee Consortia: 3 hours.

*Estimated Total Annual Burden Hours:* 93 hours.

Type of respondent (one time)	Number of respondents	Hours per response (hours)	Number of responses per year	Total estimated time (hours)
Lead Consortium Members/Tech Hubs Designee Consortia .....	31	3	1 (Once) .....	93
Total .....	31	3	1 .....	93

*Estimated Total Annual Cost to Public:* \$5,769.72 (cost assumes application of U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics second quarter 2022 mean hourly employer costs for employee compensation for professional and related occupations of \$62.04).

*Respondent’s Obligation:* Mandatory for Consortium Lead Members.

*Legal Authority:* Stevenson Wylder Technology Innovation Act of 1980, section 28 (15 U.S.C. 3722a).

**IV. Request for Comments**

We are soliciting public comments to permit the Department/Bureau to: (a) Evaluate whether the proposed information collection is necessary for the proper functions of the Department,

including whether the information will have practical utility; (b) Evaluate the accuracy of our estimate of the time and cost burden for this proposed collection, including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used; (c) Evaluate ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (d) Minimize the reporting burden on those who are to respond, including the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

Comments that you submit in response to this notice are a matter of public record. We will include or summarize each comment in our request to OMB to approve this ICR. Before including your address, phone number,

email address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, you should be aware that your entire comment—including your personal identifying information—may be made publicly available at any time. While you may ask us in your comment to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

**Sheleen Dumas,**

*Department PRA Clearance Officer, Office of the Under Secretary of Economic Affairs, Commerce Department.*

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