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Economic Development Administration: An Overview of Programs and Appropriations (FY2012-FY2026)

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Economic Development Administration: An Overview of Programs and Appropriations (FY2012-FY2026)

The Economic Development Administration (EDA), a bureau of the U.S. Department of Commerce (DOC), is the only federal agency with economic development as its sole mission. The agency was established pursuant to the enactment of the Public Works and Economic Development Act (PWEDA) of 1965 (42 U.S.C. §§3121 et seq.) to assist state and local stakeholders with developing the conditions and amenities to grow businesses, create jobs, and expand investment in economically distressed areas. Changing industry dynamics, global competition, technological developments, and other events, conditions, and priorities have shifted EDA's programs and priorities over time. During the agency's first 30 years, its programs focused on industrial growth and emphasized public works, roads, and infrastructure. Since then, Congress has supported an expanded portfolio of EDA programs to also advance existing and emerging industry clusters, develop human capital, strengthen supply chains, expand access to capital, build new types of infrastructure, and implement regional innovation and technology strategies. Additionally, EDA has also taken on new roles in developing state and local capacity, resiliency, disaster and economic recovery, as well as economic development integration across federal agencies.

EDA generally administers multiple programs that fund a range of construction and non-construction activities in both urban and rural areas—primarily through competitive processes that solicit community-directed proposals aligned with the agency's investment priorities. EDA administers both flexible and targeted programs focused on innovation, technical assistance, and support for long-term, regional economic development planning. In 2025 and 2026 (to date), EDA has open funding notifications for a subset of its typical programs.

Congress approves annual appropriations for EDA programs as well as administration expenses, and occasionally approves supplemental appropriations for economic recovery purposes. Between FY2012 and FY2026, EDA's annual appropriations (not including supplemental appropriations) averaged approximately \$337 million. Annual appropriations decreased between FY2012 and FY2013, and then increased each year between FY2014 and FY2023. In FY2024, the agency received \$468 million in annual appropriations—a decrease of \$30 million (or 6%) from the annual appropriations provided in FY2023 (excluding supplemental appropriations). EDA funding remained flat in FY2025 at \$468 million and decreased slightly to \$466 million in FY2026. The Trump Administration proposed to eliminate the EDA in its FY2026 and FY2027 discretionary funding requests.

In January 2025, the Economic Development Reauthorization Act (EDRA) of 2024 (P.L. 118-272) reauthorized the EDA. EDRA revised existing authorities, codified new and existing roles, expanded criteria for existing programs, and changed program and administrative requirements. Although EDRA implementation may not be complete as of the date of publication, EDA has initiated activities associated with several new programs authorized by the legislation. Prior to 2025, Congress last amended and extended EDA authorities in 2004.

Congress may consider policies to change, expand, or focus the distribution of the agency's funding and related program requirements. Congress may also seek to adjust the overall role and authority of EDA and its programs in the context of changing economic conditions, specific industry trends, innovation, and disaster economic recovery and resiliency funding. Congress may consider the role of broad-based and/or targeted approaches to the allocation of economic development resources. For instance, Congress has approved appropriations to address coal-impacted and nuclear closure communities as well as demands for a STEM-capable workforce and innovation-ready regions. Congress may consider reviewing the implementation, interagency coordination, and outcomes of new programs as well as the staffing resources required for such programs. For instance, in FY2023 Congress authorized two new regional programs, which received over \$600 million in their first round of appropriations (i.e., the Recompete Pilot and the Tech Hubs programs), and Congress may conduct oversight on how those programs as well as a new Artificial Intelligence workforce program are implemented. Congress may also seek to conduct oversight on the implementation of reauthorization legislation as well as plans for administering new programs.

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Introduction

The Economic Development Administration (EDA), a bureau of the U.S. Department of Commerce (DOC), provides financial and technical assistance to support locally driven, regionally oriented economic development strategies. The definitions of economic development and the local scope of practice have changed in response to shifts in regional and global economies, advances in technology, and other conditions and circumstances. EDA's

EDA's Definition of Economic Development

The EDA defines economic development as creating "the conditions for economic growth and improved quality of life by expanding the capacity of individuals, firms, and communities to maximize the use of their talents and skills to support innovation, lower transaction costs, and responsibly produce and trade valuable goods and services."¹

programs, roles, and investment priorities have also shifted since the agency was created over 60 years ago. EDA's programs continue to include support for infrastructure, public works, and distressed areas, but now also include strategies focused on entrepreneurship, innovation, disaster recovery, and facilitating state and local economic development capacity.² In addition to administering and monitoring grant programs, EDA's roles have expanded to include research, technical assistance, and economic development integration across agencies, among others.

Congress approves appropriations for EDA annually and directs the agency to allocate funding to most EDA programs. Congress occasionally approves supplemental funding as well (see **Figure 6**). Supplemental funding in recent years has supported select innovation and economic recovery assistance programs following selected natural disasters and the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic. Supplemental appropriations are generally administered through one of the agency's most flexible programs, the Economic Adjustment Assistance (EAA) program.

In addition to providing appropriations, Congress performs oversight and conducts hearings on EDA programs and administration. Recent hearings regarding the EDA have addressed agency capacity, grant allocations, grant requirements, disaster recovery, coordination with federal regional commissions and authorities, and reauthorization of appropriations for programs established by the Public Works and Economic Development Act (PWEDA) of 1965 (42 U.S.C. §§3121 et seq.), among other matters (see **Table C-2** for a list of hearings in the 117th -119th Congresses).

This report provides a broad overview of the EDA with a focus on its programs and appropriations history since FY2012. Following an abbreviated history of the agency, the report discusses investment priorities, structure, and performance metrics, and outlines the programs that assist with state and local activities. The report includes an analysis of recent appropriations (see **Figure 3**), including disaster and economic recovery assistance (see **Figure 6**), and concludes with considerations for policymakers. For more information on the statutory history of the

¹ EDA, "Key Definitions," <https://www.eda.gov/performance/key-definitions/>. See also e.g., Karl F Seidman, *Economic Development Finance* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2005), p. 5; International Economic Development Council (IEDC), "What Economic Development Does for a Community," https://www.iedconline.org/clientuploads/Downloads/IEDC_Why_and_Impact_Economic_Development.pdf; and Emil E. Malizia and Edward Feser, *Understanding Local Economic Development* (New Brunswick, NJ: Center for Urban Policy Research, Rutgers, 1999), pp. 12-13.

² Testimony by Mr. Dennis Alvord, Acting Assistant Secretary of Commerce for EDA, U.S. House of Representatives, Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, Subcommittee on Economic Development, Public Buildings and Emergency Management, *Investing in America: Reauthorization of the Economic Development Administration*, 117th Cong., 1st sess., April 28, 2021, <https://www.congress.gov/117/meeting/house/112512/witnesses/HHRG-117-PW13-Wstate-AlvordD-20210428.pdf>.

agency, see CRS Report R41241, *Economic Development Administration: A Review of Elements of Its Statutory History*, by Julie M. Lawhorn. The EDA's Trade Adjustment Assistance for Firms (TAAF) program is outside the scope of this report. For more information on TAAF, see CRS In Focus IF12430, *Trade Adjustment Assistance for Firms*, by Kyla H. Kitamura.

Agency Overview

EDA programs support the development of capacity for communities to address the conditions, circumstances, and opportunities that are unique to their region. Some EDA programs (e.g., Public Works, EAA, and Reconnect, among others) prioritize areas experiencing economic distress. The programs are generally flexible and support economic adjustment, economic resiliency, infrastructure, workforce, disaster economic recovery, innovation, planning, technical assistance, and related activities. In allocating most of its economic development assistance program funds, EDA solicits competitive proposals to align with the agency's program goals and its five investment priorities (see "Investment Priorities, FY2012-Present" below).

EDA Mission and Origins

The EDA's mission is to "lead the federal economic development agenda by promoting innovation and competitiveness, preparing American regions for growth and success in the worldwide economy."³ It is the only federal agency with economic development as its exclusive mission.⁴ The EDA was created by the Public Works and Economic Development Act (PWEDA) of 1965 (P.L. 89-136, 42 U.S.C. §§3121 et seq.) to support job creation, job retention, and investment in economically distressed areas.⁵ The findings section of PWEDA reflect the origins of the agency's approach to locally driven economic development:

while economic development is an inherently local process, the Federal Government should work in partnership with public and private State, regional, tribal, and local organizations to maximize the impact of existing resources and enable regions, communities, and citizens to participate more fully in the American dream and national prosperity.⁶

The agency continues to describe its approach as working "directly with local economic development officials to support their bottom-up, regionally owned economic development initiatives"⁷ and helping communities "build capacity for economic development based on local business conditions and needs."⁸ For instance, EDA programs generally do not require applicants

³ EDA, "Overview," <https://eda.gov/about>.

⁴ EDA, "EDA Informational Brochure," <https://www.eda.gov/archives/2021/files/programs/disaster-recovery/EDA-Disaster-Brochure.pdf>.

⁵ For information on the agency's statutory history, see CRS Report R41241, *Economic Development Administration: A Review of Elements of Its Statutory History*, by Julie M. Lawhorn. See also EDA, "History of EDA," <https://www.eda.gov/archives/2016/50/history>; and Robert W. Lake et al., "EDA and U.S. Economic Distress 1965–2000," EDA Research Report, 99-07-13812, July 2004.

⁶ 42 U.S.C. §3121(a)(4). See also, Maryann Feldman et al., "The Logic of Economic Development: A Definition and Model for Investment," *Environment and Planning C: Government and Policy*, vol. 34, no. 1 (2016), pp. 5-21; also available at <https://www.eda.gov/grant-resources/reports/research-reports>. The report defines economic development as "the development of capacities that expand economic actors' capabilities."

⁷ EDA, *FY2024 Congressional Budget Justification*, p. 153, <https://www.commerce.gov/sites/default/files/2023-03/EDA-FY2024-Congressional-Budget-Submission.pdf>.

⁸ EDA, "Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act Frequently Asked Questions," <https://www.eda.gov/funding/programs/cares/faq>.

to specialize in specific industries or strategies, and instead assist with locally developed projects to advance industries or strategies based on a region's particular assets and challenges.

Precursors to PWEDA and EDA Programs Since 1965

EDA programs focused on investments in infrastructure, public works, and basic services in the agency's first thirty years, along with support for planning and technical assistance.⁹ The following milestones highlight precursors to current EDA programs as well as program and investment directions since the 1960s:

- In 1961, prior to the enactment of PWEDA, Congress approved appropriations for a set of loans and public works grants through the Area Redevelopment Act (P.L. 87-27), which established the EDA's predecessor agency, the Area Redevelopment Administration (ARA).¹⁰ ARA programs were smaller in scope and scale compared to later EDA programs, and expired just prior to the enactment of PWEDA. Economic development assistance programs during this time focused on commercial and industrial growth (often through investment in infrastructure and public works, business loans, and planning grants) at the state and local levels.¹¹
- In August 1965, PWEDA (P.L. 89-136) was enacted. PWEDA authorized grant and loan programs that continued support for industrial and commercial growth in economically depressed areas. Prior to PWEDA amendments in the late 1960s, EDA programs focused assistance on rural areas experiencing economic distress. Eligibility criteria for economic distress were later changed by statutory and administrative changes through the 1970s.¹²

⁹ Robert W. Lake et al., "EDA and U.S. Economic Distress 1965–2000," EDA Research Report, 99-07-13812, July 2004, p. 5.

¹⁰ Peter K. Eisinger, *The Rise of the Entrepreneurial State: State and Local Economic Development Policy in the United States*, Robert M. La Follette Institute of Public Affairs (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1988), pp. 100-101. See also CRS Report R41241, *Economic Development Administration: A Review of Elements of Its Statutory History*, by Julie M. Lawhorn.

¹¹ ARA focused assistance on economically distressed areas impacted by chronic unemployment. In addition to ARA, the two other laws considered precursors to PWEDA were the Public Works Acceleration Act of 1963 (PWAA; P.L. 87-658) and the Appalachian Regional Development Act of 1965 (ARDA; P.L. 89-4). The PWAA authorized an appropriation of \$900 million for federal public works programs to address the 1960-1961 recession and support areas with high unemployment. ARDA authorized \$1.1 billion for assistance to the Appalachian region. See CRS Report R41241, *Economic Development Administration: A Review of Elements of Its Statutory History*, by Julie M. Lawhorn; and Robert W. Lake et al., "EDA and U.S. Economic Distress 1965–2000," EDA Research Report, 99-07-13812, July 2004.

¹² For additional context, see CRS Report R41241, *Economic Development Administration: A Review of Elements of Its Statutory History*, by Julie M. Lawhorn; and Peter K. Eisinger, *The Rise of the Entrepreneurial State: State and Local Economic Development Policy in the United States*, Robert M. La Follette Institute of Public Affairs (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1988), pp. 100-101, 123-124.

- In the 1970s, Congress authorized the EAA and Trade Adjustment Assistance programs.¹³ Congress also began providing appropriations for defense adjustment¹⁴ and disaster recovery through the EAA program.¹⁵
- In the 1980s and 1990s, EDA initiated—and later expanded—the University Center program. The agency also expanded its work on industry or regional clusters,¹⁶ Economic Development Districts (EDDs), and efforts to assist communities with regional economic development plans.¹⁷
- The EDA’s disaster economic recovery roles and activities have expanded since the early 1990s when EDA began receiving supplemental appropriations for disaster economic recovery.¹⁸ Since FY2011, Congress has approved \$3.4 billion in supplemental funding for economic recovery in response to natural disasters.¹⁹ EDA continues to facilitate economic resilience in advance of disasters, as well as to support communities during the long-term recovery and redevelopment phases, which can take years or decades. During this time, Congress also has supported multiple rounds of disaster recovery and COVID-19 economic recovery assistance. EDA also continues to lead select economic development integration efforts at federal, regional, and local levels and has done so since the U.S. Office of Management and Budget (OMB) identified this role for EDA in the mid-2000s.²⁰
- Since the 2000s, Congress has supported various types of policies to promote innovation and to prepare regions for expanded innovation- and technology-based development. Among other innovation-related policies, Congress has authorized programs to promote regional competitive advantages through innovation clusters and similar programs administered by the EDA and other agencies.

¹³ EDA, “History of EDA,” <https://www.eda.gov/archives/2016/50/history>.

¹⁴ Defense adjustment refers to activities that assist communities affected by base closures, reductions in defense contracts, or reductions in Department of Energy defense-related funding. See Robert W. Lake et al., “EDA and U.S. Economic Distress 1965–2000,” EDA Research Report, 99-07-13812, July 2004, pp. 118-121.

¹⁵ Robert W. Lake et al., “EDA and U.S. Economic Distress 1965–2000,” EDA Research Report, 99-07-13812, July 2004, p. 5.

¹⁶ EDA defines regional clusters as

geographic concentrations of firms, workers and industries that do business with each other and have common needs for talent, technology, and infrastructure. Regional clusters are essentially networks of similar, synergistic, or complementary entities that are engaged in or with a particular industry sector; have active channels for business transactions and communication; share specialized infrastructure, labor markets, and services; and leverage the region’s unique competitive strengths to stimulate innovation and create jobs. Regional clusters may cross municipal, county, and other jurisdictional boundaries.

See EDA, “Key Definitions,” <https://eda.gov/performance/key-definitions>.

¹⁷ EDA, “History of EDA,” <https://www.eda.gov/archives/2016/50/history>.

¹⁸ EDA, “Leading Economic Recovery Efforts in Disaster-Impacted Communities,” https://www.eda.gov/sites/default/files/2023-03/EDA_Disaster_Brochure_2022_PRINT.pdf.

¹⁹ Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2012 (P.L. 112-55), Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018 (P.L. 115-123), Supplemental Appropriations for Disaster Relief Act, 2019 (P.L. 116-20), Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2023 (P.L. 117-328), and the American Relief Act, 2025 (P.L. 118-158).

²⁰ EDA, “A Brief History of EDI,” <https://www.eda.gov/strategic-initiatives/economic-development-integration/history>.

As noted in subsequent sections, EDA programs continue to support investments in infrastructure and public works and to assist communities experiencing economic distress.²¹ EDA's activities have shifted to also include programs that address changing industry dynamics, global competition, technological developments, and other events, conditions, and priorities. Programs are available to both urban and rural areas.²²

EDA Structure

EDA locations include a headquarters office in Washington, DC, and six regional offices. EDA's organizational structure includes offices for chief counsel, finance management, and external affairs and communications and features offices that administer programs at the headquarters and regional levels. Other EDA offices include

- The **Office of Innovation and Entrepreneurship (OIE)**, which administers EDA programs authorized Stevenson-Wydler Technology Innovation Act of 1980, as amended (15 U.S.C. §3720(c)) (e.g., Build to Scale (B2S), Tech Hubs, Recompete).²³
- The **Office of Regional Operations**, which oversees (1) the **Regional Offices** that administer the programs authorized by PWEDA, (2) the **Office of Tribal Economic Development**, and (3) the **Office of Disaster Recovery and Resilience**.²⁴

EDA Regional Offices

EDA's regional offices review and process grant applications for economic development assistance; monitor approved projects; and provide outreach and technical assistance services.

Figure 1 illustrates the six regions and locations of the regional offices.

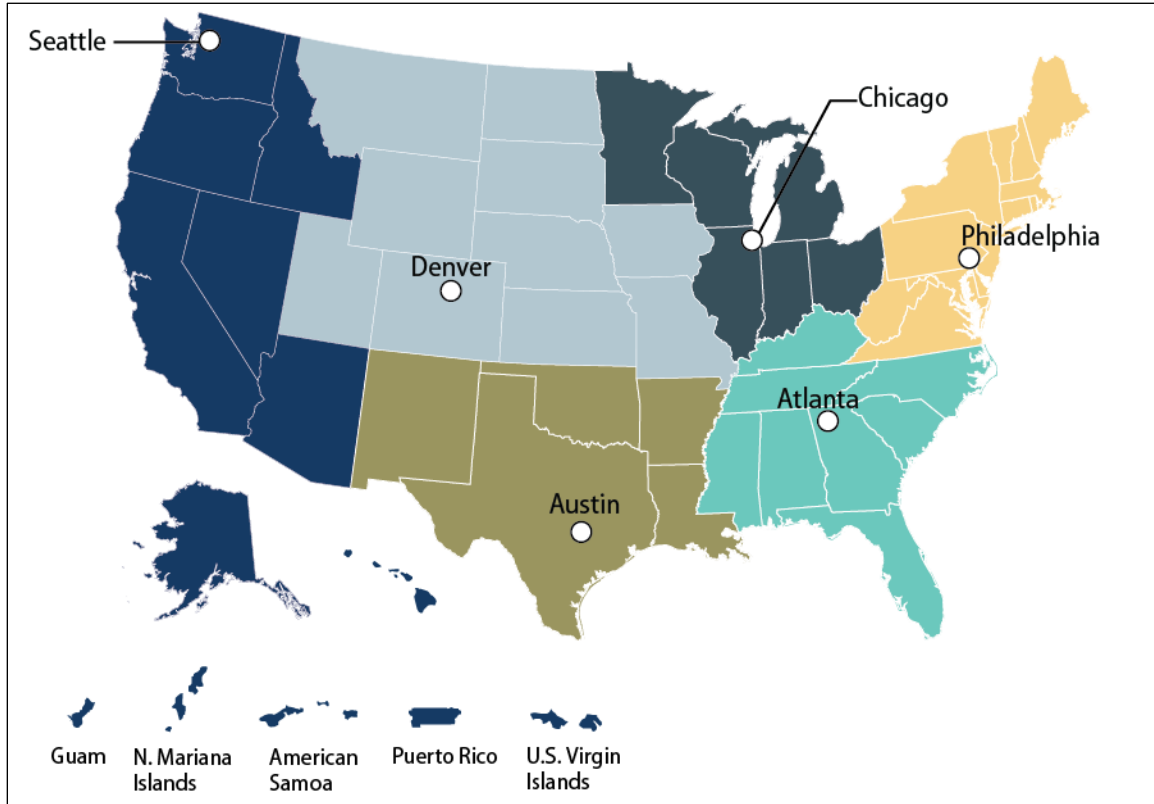
²¹ For additional analysis on infrastructure and the economy, see CRS Report R46826, *Infrastructure and the Economy*, by Lida R. Weinstock.

²² EDA's *Informational Brochure* (published 2017) noted that funds are awarded to both rural and urban communities with approximately two-thirds of assistance awarded to rural communities. See EDA, "EDA Informational Brochure," <https://www.eda.gov/sites/default/files/filebase/archives/2021/pdf/about/EDA-TriFold-2017.pdf>.

²³ The America COMPETES Reauthorization Act of 2010 (P.L. 111-358) established the EDA's Office of Innovation and Entrepreneurship (OIE).

²⁴ As of January 2026, Congress had approved EDA's reorganization plan to establish the Office of Disaster Recovery and Resilience and the Office of Tribal Economic Development. See Testimony of Mr. Ben Page, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Economic Development, in U.S. Congress, House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure (T&I), Subcommittee on Economic Development, Public Buildings, and Emergency Management, *Smarter Spending, Stronger Results: Reducing Duplication and Ensuring Effectiveness Through Economic Development Reforms*, 119th Cong., 2nd sess. January 22, 2026, <https://www.congress.gov/119/meeting/house/118896/witnesses/HHRG-119-PW13-Wstate-PageB-20260122.pdf>; and EDA, "EDA Update on Operational Modernization," April 2, 2026, <https://www.eda.gov/news/blog/2026/04/02/eda-update-operational-modernization>.

Figure I. EDA Regional Offices



Source: CRS using information from EDA, "Overview," <https://www.eda.gov/about>.

EDA Staff Levels

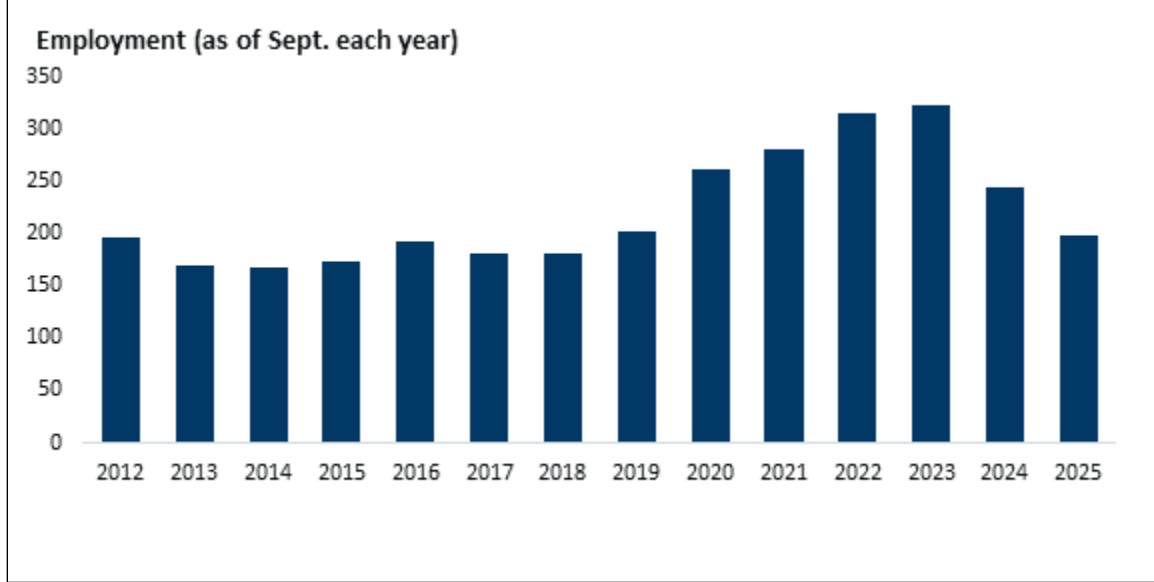
EDA staff levels fluctuated between 2012 and 2025. The number of on-board employees was at the lowest level of 167 in 2014 and increased to a high of 323 in 2023. In September 2025, EDA had approximately 198 on-board employees.²⁵ **Figure 2** presents the number of on-board employees for 2012 to 2025. **Table C-1** in the Appendix provides additional on-board employment data since 2011. EDA staffing levels for 2026 are unknown as of the date of publication.

EDA may continue to adjust staffing levels as it implements recent supplemental recovery appropriations and manage related oversight and technical assistance activities.

Supplemental appropriations to EDA in fiscal years 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2023, and 2025 provided a certain percentage (usually 2% or 3%) for the agency's salaries and expenses account. See **Figure 4** and **Figure 6**.

²⁵ Office of Personnel Management (OPM), Employment cubes, see FedScope, <http://www.fedscope.opm.gov>.

Figure 2. EDA On-Board Employees, 2012-2025



Source: Data for 2011-2024 were drawn from the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) Employment cubes, see FedScope, <http://www.fedscope.opm.gov>. The employment figure for 2025 was drawn from the U.S. Office of Personnel Management Federal Workforce Data website, <https://data.opm.gov/>.

Note: Each total provides the number of on-board employees as of September each year.

Economic Development Districts (EDDs)

EDDs are multi-jurisdictional entities designated by the EDA that engage with the agency and local partners across multiple EDA programs and activity areas. EDDs generally lead, coordinate, and convene partners for the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) process; assist with project development; and provide outreach, technical assistance, and grant support to applicants and grantees.²⁶ To be designated as an EDD, the entity must have a CEDS and cover “at least one geographical area within the designated service boundaries that meets EDA’s regional distress criteria.”²⁷ According to the EDA, there are approximately 400 EDDs; some regions of the United States are not served by an EDA-designated EDD.²⁸ Most EDD regions do not align with standard, federally defined regions, such as metropolitan statistical areas, and some EDDs cover regions that cross state borders.²⁹ EDDs may receive financial assistance through Partnership Planning and other programs, and may implement or manage projects. Through the

²⁶ See <https://www.eda.gov/grant-resources/economic-development-directory> for EDA’s directory of EDDs and other resources. For an analysis of EDDs in the context of regional development organizations, see CRS In Focus IF11511, *The Role of Regional Development Organizations (RDOs) in Economic Development*, by Julie M. Lawhorn.

²⁷ EDA, “Economic Development Districts,” <https://www.eda.gov/edd>. See also 42 U.S.C. §3171.

²⁸ EDA, “Celebrating 400 Blueprints for a Modern Economy,” March 2, 2023, <https://www.eda.gov/news/blog/2023/03/02/blog-celebrating-400-blueprints-modern-economy>. Through an award from the EDA, the National Association of Development Organizations (NADO) Research Foundation created an interactive map of EDDs, which is available at <https://www.nado.org/edmap/>.

²⁹ EDA, “CEDS Content,” <https://www.eda.gov/grant-resources/comprehensive-economic-development-strategy/content/summary>. Also, EDA supports the CEDS Resource Library at [StatsAmerica.org](https://statsamerica.org) where applicants can determine whether their region is served by an EDD and locate the most recent CEDS. See <http://www.statsamerica.org/ceds/Default.aspx>.

Partnership Planning program, for instance, the median award to EDDs has been approximately \$70,000.³⁰

Investment Priorities, FY2012-Present

EDA encourages grant applicants to align their proposals with its investment priorities.³¹ In 2025, EDRA established EDA investment priorities in statute. In doing so, a Member of Congress remarked that, “Congress is giving EDA clear direction about our priorities.”³² Prior to EDRA, the sitting Administration established EDA’s investment priorities.

Table 1 lists the investment priorities, as well as the EDA’s priorities since FY2012.

Table I. Comparison of EDA Investment Priorities

FY2012-FY2016 (Administration priorities)	FY2017-April 2021 (Administration priorities)	April 2021-December 2024 (Administration priorities)	January 2025-present (Statutory priorities)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborative regional innovation • Public private partnerships • National strategic priorities • Global competitiveness • Environmentally sustainable development • Economically distressed and underserved communities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recovery and resilience • Critical infrastructure • Workforce development and manufacturing • Exports and foreign direct investment (FDI) • Opportunity zones 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equity • Recovery and resilience • Workforce development • Manufacturing • Technology-based economic development • Environmentally sustainable development • Exports and FDI 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Critical infrastructure • Workforce • Innovation and entrepreneurship • Economic recovery resilience • Manufacturing

Source: EDA, “Investment Priorities,” <https://www.eda.gov/funding/investment-priorities>; *FY2014 Congressional Budget Justification*, https://www.commerce.gov/sites/default/files/2024-02/EDA_FY2014_CJ.pdf; and P.L. 118-272.

³⁰ EDA, “FY 2021–FY 2023 EDA Planning and Local Technical Assistance Programs Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO),” p. 7, <https://www.eda.gov/funding/funding-opportunities/fiscal-year-2021-2023-eda-planning-and-local-technical-assistance>.

³¹ EDA, “Investment Priorities,” <https://www.eda.gov/funding/investment-priorities>.

³² *Congressional Record*, vol. 170, no. 182 (December 9, 2024), p. H6525, <https://www.congress.gov/118/crec/2024/12/09/170/182/CREC-2024-12-09.pdf#page=81>.

Recovery and Resiliency

EDA programs support state and local activities that facilitate long-term strategies to drive economic diversification, promote sector and cluster development, or otherwise build a region's capacity for economic recovery and resilience. According to the EDA, "in the context of economic development, economic resilience aims to better prepare regions to anticipate, withstand, and bounce back from any type of shock, disruption, or stress it may experience."³³ Shocks may include national or global economic downturns; regional industry downturns; or external events, such as a natural or man-made disaster. For example, EDA projects may support resiliency goals by assisting with business continuity and preparedness efforts or by facilitating long-term recovery from natural disasters and other economic shocks.³⁴

Economic Development Integration (EDI) Role

Following a 2011 U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) report on fragmentation and overlap of economic development programs, OMB selected the EDA's proposal for an economic development integration role.³⁵ EDA now leads integration activities across federal economic development programs in an effort to enhance collaboration, increase access to resources, and to reduce administrative burdens. The agency's EDI activities occur at various levels—federal, state, regional, and local—and through various types of partnership and coordination efforts. For instance

- EDA's regional offices work with EDDs to facilitate connections among local, state, and federal contacts and programs—often convening for planning purposes or post-disaster recovery initiatives.³⁶ Regional offices have staff identified as regional integrators as well.³⁷
- EDA headquarters staff and operations support EDI goals through interagency planning and efforts to align administrative requirements.³⁸
- Eligible EDA grant recipients are allowed to combine funding from other agencies and nonfederal sources to facilitate economic development goals because state and local economic development practices are often implemented in connection with other programs.³⁹

³³ EDA, "CEDS Guidelines—Economic Resilience," <https://www.eda.gov/grant-resources/comprehensive-economic-development-strategy/content/economic-resilience>.

³⁴ EDA, "Investment Priorities," <https://www.eda.gov/funding/investment-priorities>.

³⁵ EDA, "A Brief History of Economic Development Integration," <https://eda.gov/integration/>; and GAO, "Efficiency and Effectiveness of Fragmented Economic Development Programs Are Unclear," May 19, 2011, GAO-11-477R, <https://www.gao.gov/products/gao-11-477r>.

³⁶ EDA, "Economic Development Integration," <https://www.eda.gov/strategic-initiatives/economic-development-integration/history>. For a description of economic development integration in disaster resiliency planning, see U.S. House of Representatives, Select Climate Crisis Committee, "Creating a Climate Resilient America: Smart Finance for Strong Communities," Serial No. 116–16, December 11, 2019, <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CHRG-116hhrg41272/pdf/CHRG-116hhrg41272.pdf>.

³⁷ EDA, "Regional Integrator Contacts," <https://eda.gov/integration/contact>. As of date of publication, EDA has Regional Economic Development Integrators at three of the EDA's six regional offices. Regional integrators may help stakeholders by convening meetings, building coalitions, identifying resources, and other activities to facilitate coordinated responses to state and local economic development issues. For an example, see EDA, "EDA's Economic Integrator Catalyzes Interagency Investments in San Diego," <https://www.eda.gov/impact/success-stories/economic-development-integration/edas-economic-integrator-catalyzes>.

³⁸ EDA, "Economic Development Integration," <https://eda.gov/integration>.

³⁹ Limitations may apply to the total amount of federal project funding, depending on the program, type of applicant, and determination of special need. See 42 U.S.C. §3144. The FY2025 Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for the (continued...)

- EDA partners with other federal agencies that administer economic development programs, including the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the Department of Labor (DOL), and the Small Business Administration (SBA), among others.⁴⁰

In July 2021, GAO analyzed opportunities for further collaboration among EDA, HUD, and USDA. In its final report, GAO recommended that, in collaboration with HUD, EDA should (1) update its written interagency agreement with HUD on community and economic development planning and (2) monitor its progress toward outcomes of its interagency agreement. At the time of this report the EDA implemented the recommendations. GAO also recommended that USDA review options to expand collaboration between EDA, HUD, and USDA, and this recommendation was also considered fully addressed at the time of this report.⁴¹ GAO noted existing interagency efforts to integrate federal economic development activities, include the Thriving Communities Network and the Rural Partners Network, among other federal interagency initiatives, in its update on the status of report recommendations.⁴²

In FY2026, EDA met with the federal regional commissions and authorities to discuss agency coordination of efforts to address economic development in distressed regions.⁴³

Disaster Economic Recovery Role⁴⁴

EDA is the lead agency in the “Economic Recovery Support Function (ERSF)” under the National Disaster Recovery Framework (NDRF).⁴⁵ According to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), “The NDRF identifies Recovery Support Functions that provide a structure to facilitate problem solving, improve access to resources, and foster coordination among state and federal agencies, tribes, territories, nongovernmental partners and stakeholders.”⁴⁶ Within the NDRF, EDA’s role is to “facilitate the delivery of federal economic development assistance to support long-term economic recovery planning and project implementation in communities across the nation.”⁴⁷ As a convener, EDA may bring together federal, state, and local stakeholders for post-disaster regional resource exchange events. In some

Public Works and Economic Adjustment Assistance programs noted that, “Funds from other federal financial assistance awards may be considered matching share funds only if authorized by statute, which may be determined by EDA’s reasonable interpretation of the statute.” See EDA, “FY 2025 Public Works and Economic Adjustment Assistance Notice of Funding Opportunity,” pp. 9-10, <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/view-opportunity.html?oppld=346815>, and 13 C.F.R. §300.3 and 2 C.F.R. §200.306.

⁴⁰ EDA, “Economic Development Integration (EDI),” <https://eda.gov/integration> and “EDI Networking and Collaboration,” <https://www.eda.gov/strategic-initiatives/economic-development-integration/networking-collaboration>. For an overview of federal resources for state and local economic development, see CRS Report R46683, *Federal Resources for State and Local Economic Development*, by Julie M. Lawhorn.

⁴¹ GAO, *Economic Development: Opportunities Exist for Further Collaboration Among EDA, HUD, and USDA*, GAO-21-579, July 2021, <https://www.gao.gov/products/gao-21-579>.

⁴² GAO, “Recommendations,” https://www.gao.gov/products/gao-21-579#summary_recommend.

⁴³ Page, Testimony in *Smarter Spending, Stronger Results: Reducing Duplication and Ensuring Effectiveness Through Economic Development Reforms*.

⁴⁴ For additional information, see CRS In Focus IF12576, *EDA’s Disaster Economic Recovery and Resiliency Roles*, by Julie M. Lawhorn and CRS Infographic IG10045, *Economic Development Administration (EDA) Disaster Recovery Funding*, by Julie M. Lawhorn.

⁴⁵ EDA, “EDA and Disaster Recovery,” <https://eda.gov/disaster-recovery>.

⁴⁶ FEMA, “National Disaster Recovery Framework,” <https://www.fema.gov/emergency-managers/national-preparedness/frameworks/recovery>.

⁴⁷ EDA, “Spotlight: EDA Investments Advance Economic Recovery in American Communities Impacted by Natural Disasters,” <https://www.eda.gov/archives/2021/news/blogs/2020/09/01/spotlight.htm>.

post-disaster scenarios, EDA supports or leads efforts to assess regional assets and challenges to facilitate long-term recovery.⁴⁸ For instance

- Following Hurricane Harvey in August 2017, EDA’s Austin Regional Office collaborated with EDDs, federal agencies (e.g., FEMA, SBA, USDA, Federal Reserve, Department of Transportation), and state and local stakeholders to develop a Recovery Support Strategy (RSS). EDA also led regional workshops in Texas and provided recovery grants to impacted communities.⁴⁹
- Through its ERSF, EDA deployed to Puerto Rico following Hurricanes Maria and Irma in September 2017 to provide support, coordination, and additional capacity to economic recovery efforts.⁵⁰
- EDA coordinated a “Federal Interagency Resource Exchange” following Hurricane Laura in August 2021.⁵¹

As a grant-making agency, the EDA also administers program funds for state and local entities to plan and implement disaster economic recovery efforts through its EAA program.⁵² For example, between 2017 and 2021, EDA invested over \$111 million in 34 grants to Puerto Rico following hurricanes Maria and Irma.⁵³ After flooding in 2019, EDA provided a grant to the City of Moberly, MO, to improve water and wastewater infrastructure and prevent future damage to downtown businesses.⁵⁴

EDA’s Notices of Funding Opportunity (NOFOs) outline the review and selection processes for funding requests, which are competitively assessed. EDA’s distribution and allocation strategy for supplemental appropriations may vary by each event or situation. In recent years, EDA evaluated several factors—including measures of impact and economic distress—to determine supplemental funding allocations for its six regional offices.⁵⁵ In the FY2025 disaster recovery NOFO, EDA introduced three funding “pathways” for different types of projects. Applicants may apply for grants for multiple individual projects using more than one pathway, but EDA guidance discourages applicants from seeking funding from multiple pathways for the same

⁴⁸ EDA, “Recovering from Harvey: EDA Leads the Coordination of Federal Resources,” January 12, 2021, <https://www.eda.gov/impact/success-stories/disaster-recovery/recovering-harvey-eda-leads-coordination-federal-resources>.

⁴⁹ EDA, “EDA Investments in Disaster Recovery and Resiliency Programs for Regions Impacted by Hurricane Harvey,” <https://www.eda.gov/impact/success-stories/disaster-recovery/eda-investments-disaster-recovery-and-resiliency-programs>; and “Recovering from Harvey: EDA Leads Coordination of Federal Resources,” January 12, 2021, <https://www.eda.gov/impact/success-stories/disaster-recovery/recovering-harvey-eda-leads-coordination-federal-resources>.

⁵⁰ EDA, “EDA Continues to Support the Caribbean Following the Devastating 2017 Hurricane Season,” September 20, 2021, <https://www.eda.gov/news/blog/2021/09/20/eda-continues-support-caribbean-following-devastating-2017-hurricane-season>.

⁵¹ See EDA, “Where We Work,” <https://www.eda.gov/strategic-initiatives/disaster-recovery/where-we-work>.

⁵² See **Figure 6** for a summary of supplemental disaster appropriations during the FY2011-FY2025 time period. See also, EDA, “Disaster Supplemental Funding,” <https://www.eda.gov/strategic-initiatives/disaster-recovery/supplemental>.

⁵³ EDA, “EDA Continues to Support the Caribbean Following the Devastating 2017 Hurricane Season,” September 20, 2021, <https://www.eda.gov/news/blog/2021/09/20/eda-continues-support-caribbean-following-devastating-2017-hurricane-season>.

⁵⁴ EDA “After Reoccurring Flooding, Moberly, Missouri, Business Owners to See Relief,” May 12, 2021, <https://eda.gov/success-stories/disaster/stories/moberly-mo.htm>.

⁵⁵ See, for example, EDA, “FY 2023 Disaster Supplemental NOFO,” <https://grants.gov/search-results-detail/347414>.

project. EDA did not include allocations to its regional offices in its FY2025 disaster recovery NOFO, which had previously been included.⁵⁶

Office of Disaster Recovery and Resilience (ODRR)

EDRA established the Office of Disaster Recovery and Resilience (ODRR) in 2025 and authorized it to direct and implement the EDA’s post-disaster economic recovery responsibilities.⁵⁷ As noted above, as of January 2026, Congress had approved EDA’s reorganization plan to establish the Office of Disaster Recovery and Resilience.⁵⁸ EDRA also directed the EDA to continue its existing National Disaster Recovery Framework (NDRF) roles and establish a Disaster Team to be composed of ODORR and non-EDA staff.⁵⁹ EDRA allowed EDA to hire temporary personnel for ODORR responsibilities and to convert them to EDA competitive service positions under certain circumstances. The expanded hiring authorities expire on September 30, 2029. The ODORR helped design the FY2025 disaster recovery NOFO.⁶⁰

EDA Performance Metrics

EDA collects and measures performance according to two Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) goals. The first goal is connected to infrastructure investments and the second goal is connected to non-infrastructure investments.⁶¹ By example, Public Works is an infrastructure program, and B2S is generally classified as a non-infrastructure program. The agency’s goals and associated metrics are detailed in.

Table 2. EDA Performance Goals and Metrics

Performance Goal	Examples of Metrics
Infrastructure investments that promote private enterprise and job creation in economically distressed communities and regions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Private sector dollars invested in economically distressed regions as a result of EDA’s investments. Jobs created or retained in economically distressed regions as a result of EDA’s investments.
Non-infrastructure investments that build community capacity to achieve and sustain regional competitiveness and economic growth.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New technologies marketed due to EDA support. Funding secured by entrepreneurs due to EDA support. New customer and business relationships developed due to EDA support. Grantees leveraging EDA-supported CEDS for decisionmaking EDA-sponsored capacity building events.

⁵⁶ For additional information about the FY2025 disaster recovery NOFO, see CRS Insight IN12633, *Economic Development Administration Disaster Economic Recovery Funding (P.L. 118-158)*, by Julie M. Lawhorn.

⁵⁷ P.L. 118-272, §2228. Prior to the enactment of P.L. 118-272, EDA administered a national program focused on Disaster Recovery and Economic Integration since FY2021, though an agency office had not yet been formally established in statute.

⁵⁸ Page, Testimony in *Smarter Spending, Stronger Results: Reducing Duplication and Ensuring Effectiveness Through Economic Development Reforms*.

⁵⁹ P.L. 118-272, §2228. For additional information, see CRS Report R46696, *National Preparedness: A Summary and Select Issues*; and FEMA, “National Disaster Recovery Framework,” <https://www.fema.gov/emergency-managers/national-preparedness/frameworks/recovery>.

⁶⁰ Page, Testimony in *Smarter Spending, Stronger Results: Reducing Duplication and Ensuring Effectiveness Through Economic Development Reforms*.

⁶¹ EDA, “EDA Performance Measurement and Program Evaluation,” <https://www.eda.gov/performance>.

Source: EDA, “EDA Performance Measurement and Program Evaluation,” <https://www.eda.gov/performance>.

Note: For more information, see “Performance Data Collection Instruments and Processes,” <https://eda.gov/performance/gpra>.

EDA Grant Programs

EDA grant programs, which are generally flexible, locally based, and regionally oriented, are designed to increase the capacity for state and local economic development.⁶² According to EDA, between FY2012 and FY2021, the agency invested over \$5.3 billion in 7,921 projects.⁶³ The agency’s grant programs and investment priorities broadly support local initiatives that “leverage economic assets in facilitating regional economic prosperity and resiliency as well as conditions for business success.”⁶⁴ Activities funded by EDA grant programs include infrastructure, planning, workforce development, disaster economic recovery, and funding for business assistance programs such as revolving loan funds, business technical assistance, innovation, entrepreneurship, and business incubator programs,⁶⁵ among others. Grant programs may also support regional economic development goals by facilitating existing and emerging industry clusters, developing human capital, strengthening supply chains, expanding access to capital, and building innovation and technology strategies.⁶⁶ With the exception of the Recomplete Pilot and Regional Technology and Innovation Hubs (Tech Hubs) programs, no minimum or maximum project amount is specified in law.⁶⁷

In January 2025, EDRA reauthorized the EDA. EDRA also authorized several new EDA grant programs, including programs for renewable energy on brownfields sites (42 U.S.C. §3154d), workforce training (42 U.S.C. §3154e), high-speed broadband deployment (42 U.S.C. §3154g), and critical supply chain site development (42 U.S.C. §3154h). As of the date of publication, EDA has published guidance for some of the new programs.⁶⁸ **Table 3** provides a summary of EDA grant programs. For detailed program information, including information about recently discontinued programs, see **Appendix A**.⁶⁹

⁶² Capacity is a central component of EDA’s definition of economic development. EDA defines economic development as creating “the conditions for economic growth and improved quality of life by expanding the capacity of individuals, firms, and communities to maximize the use of their talents and skills to support innovation, lower transaction costs, and responsibly produce and trade valuable goods and services.” EDA further defines economic development capacity building as “developing or improving community assets that businesses need to succeed.” See EDA, “Key Definitions,” <https://eda.gov/performance/key-definitions>.

⁶³ EDA, “EDA Performance Measurement and Program Evaluation,” <https://www.eda.gov/performance>.

⁶⁴ EDA, “Investment Priorities,” <https://www.eda.gov/funding/investment-priorities>.

⁶⁵ EDA defines incubators as

A program, often sponsored by a university or nonprofit organization, that provides support and guidance to start-up companies during the embryonic phases of their development to support job creation and retention. Support can include technical assistance, facility access, financing, mentorship, and networking opportunities.

See EDA, “Economic Development Glossary,” <https://www.eda.gov/about/economic-development-glossary>.

⁶⁶ DOC, EDA, *FY2024 Congressional Budget Justification*, p. 154, <https://www.commerce.gov/sites/default/files/2023-03/EDA-FY2024-Congressional-Budget-Submission.pdf>.

⁶⁷ 42 U.S.C. §§3121 et seq.

⁶⁸ See, for example, EDA, “AI Upskill Accelerator Pilot Program,” <https://www.eda.gov/ai-upskill>. EDA’s website (“Find Open Funding”) lists open funding opportunities. See <https://www.eda.gov/funding/funding-opportunities/>.

⁶⁹ This report does not analyze EDA’s grant awards by program. For an analysis of EDA funding awarded by program and other analysis, see Brett Theodos et al., “The Economic Development Administration’s Programs and Projects Types—EDA Program Evaluation,” The Urban Institute, October 2021, p. 6, <https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/...> (continued...)

Table 3. Summary of Recent Major EDA Programs

Program Name (CFDA No.)	Description	Project Examples
Public Works (11.300)	The Public Works program is designed to fund physical infrastructure projects such as water and sewer systems improvements, industrial parks, business incubator facilities, expansion of port and harbor facilities, skill-training facilities, and brownfields redevelopment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construction of a workforce training center. • Water and wastewater improvements in connection with the development of an industrial park.
Economic Adjustment Assistance (EAA) (11.307)	The EAA program assists communities and regions affected by natural disasters, natural resource depletion, mass layoffs, and other severe economic shocks caused by structural impacts to regional economies. Revolving Loan Funds (RLFs) are capitalized by EAA grants. See CRS In Focus IFI 1449, <i>Economic Development Revolving Loan Funds (ED-RLFs)</i> , by Julie M. Lawhorn.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capitalization of a Revolving Loan Fund for underserved regional businesses. • A study to evaluate how to develop, sustain, and promote businesses including retail, restaurants, services, and others in a downtown area. • Construction of a healthcare simulation lab and telemedicine space at a community college. • Funding for a regional disaster recovery coordinator.
AI Upskill Accelerator Pilot Program (11.307)	<p>The AI Upskill Accelerator Program is a workforce grant initiative that uses a sectoral partnership approach to address AI workforce needs.</p> <p>The funding is available through an addendum to the FY2025 Public Works and Economic Adjustment Assistance (PWEAA) NOFO under the agency’s recently-established authority for workforce training grants (42 U.S.C. § 3154e).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding for a sectoral partnership’s plan to develop a regional workforce system focused on AI skills, as well as funding to design curricula and implement training programs.
EAA—Assistance to Coal Communities (ACC), Assistance to Nuclear Closure Communities (NCC) initiatives, and Disaster Economic Recovery programs (11.307)	The ACC and NCC initiatives support communities and regions that have been negatively impacted by changes in the coal economy or by nuclear plant closures, respectively. In addition to ongoing annual appropriations for the discretionary EAA grant program, Congress has authorized supplemental appropriations for EAA ACC and NCC initiatives as well as for post-disaster economic recovery and COVID-19 economic recovery efforts. EDA makes ACC and NCC funding available through the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for the Public Works and EAA programs, usually on an annual basis.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A broadband mapping project to address current business access, an assessment of future needs, and regulatory matters for a coal-impacted community. • Development of a post-disaster roadmap to improve regional economic resiliency. • Storm water upgrades to minimize flooding hazards in a commercially zoned area in order to support job creation and economic resiliency goals.

publication/105006/economic-development-administration-programs-and-project-types_1_0.pdf; and “The Location of Economic Development Administration Grants—EDA Program Evaluation,” The Urban Institute, July 20, 2023, <https://www.urban.org/research/publication/location-economic-development-administration-grants>.

Program Name (CFDA No.)	Description	Project Examples
Partnership Planning (11.302)	The Partnership Planning program supports a national network of EDA-designated Economic Development Districts (EDDs) as well as local organizations (Indian Tribes and other eligible recipients) with long-term strategic economic development planning efforts, and helps communities undertake focused, project-specific planning activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funds to support the development and implementation of the CEDS planning process.
Local Technical Assistance (11.303)	The Local Technical Assistance program provides grants for management and technical services, including feasibility studies or impact analyses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A feasibility study for a proposed, regional entrepreneurship center.
Research and National Technical Assistance (RNTA) (11.312 and 11.303)	The RNTA program funds research, evaluation, and national technical assistance projects that promote competitiveness and innovation in distressed rural and urban regions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A program evaluation of infrastructure and non-infrastructure EDA grants. • A grant to national organizations to provide technical assistance and disseminate promising strategies among coal-impacted and nuclear closure communities.
Build to Scale (Section 27) (11.020)	<p>The Build to Scale (B2S) program funds efforts to facilitate innovation and entrepreneurship and increase access to risk capital. B2S is composed of the Venture Challenge and the Capital Challenge. The Venture Challenge supports entrepreneurship support programs and other models to accelerate high-growth entrepreneurship activities. The Capital Challenge provides operational support to help organizations and regions expand access to risk capital.</p> <p>EDA’s OIE administers the B2S program, which is authorized under Section 27 of the Stevenson-Wydler Technology Act of 1980 (15 U.S.C. §3722).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementing regional strategies that support entrepreneurship, technology development, commercialization, and increased access to capital for biomedical products, agricultural technologies, advanced manufacturing, and other technology- and innovation-based industries. • Operational support for a Prototype-to-Production Hardware Accelerator program to help entrepreneurs scale their business and manufacture their products.
Recompete Pilot (Section 29) (11.306)	The Recompete Pilot program was established by the CHIPS and Science Act (P.L. 117-167, enacted August 8, 2022; 15 U.S.C. §3722b). The program provides grants and cooperative agreements to persistently distressed areas. EDA administers two types of Recompete awards: (1) strategy development grants and (2) strategy implementation grants.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding for multiple projects to provide resources and training to residents impacted by the decline of coal mining. • Funding for multiple projects to connect residents from distressed neighborhoods to good-paying jobs.
Regional Technology and Innovation Hubs (Tech Hubs) (Section 28) (11.036)	The Tech Hubs program was established by the CHIPS and Science Act (P.L. 117-167, enacted August 8, 2022; 15 U.S.C. §3722a). The focus of the program is to support technology development, job creation, and expanding U.S. innovation capacity. The program also seeks to develop hubs in areas that are not “leading technology centers.” EDA administers two types of	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding for multiple projects to facilitate a region’s capacity for biotechnology and biomanufacturing, including construction of a training and demonstration facility, assistance for early-stage innovators, and

Program Name (CFDA No.)	Description	Project Examples
	Tech Hubs awards: (1) strategy development grants and (2) strategy implementation grants.	curricula and workforce training activities.

Sources: EDA, “Programs,” <https://www.eda.gov/funding/programs>; “Annual Reports,” <https://eda.gov/annual-reports>; “Funding Opportunities,” <https://www.eda.gov/funding/funding-opportunities>; “Press Releases” <https://www.eda.gov/news>; “Regional Technology and Innovation Hubs (Tech Hubs),” <https://www.eda.gov/funding/programs/regional-technology-and-innovation-hubs>, and “EDA Support for the Administration’s AI Action Plan,” <https://www.eda.gov/news/blog/2025/12/22/eda-support-administrations-ai-action-plan>.

Notes: CFDA No. refers to the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance, a searchable database of federal domestic assistance programs (<https://sam.gov>). Each program is identified by name and a five-digit number. Programs are authorized by PWEDA, except where otherwise noted. Project examples are for illustrative purposes only and do not represent all potential uses of funds. Table does not include all programs authorized by EDRA (P.L. 118-272) in FY2025. Not all programs may be active or accepting applications. See EDA’s website (“Find Open Funding”) for open funding opportunities. See <https://www.eda.gov/funding/funding-opportunities/all-opportunities>.

How to Apply

Application guidance for EDA’s competitive grant programs is outlined in the agency’s NOFOs, which are explanations of available grant funding and procedures.⁷⁰ Applicants may also contact EDDs or EDA state and regional representatives for assistance. EDA maintains an online directory, organized by state, of EDDs and other resources and agency contacts.⁷¹

Select Grant Requirements

In order to receive EDA grant assistance, applicants must meet program criteria related to types of eligible applicants, cost sharing, and other requirements.⁷² Requirements vary by program, authorizing statute, and agency regulations.⁷³

Eligible Recipients

For an entity to be eligible for EDA assistance for programs authorized by PWEDA (42 U.S.C. §§3121 et seq.), the recipient must be

- an EDD;
- an Indian tribe or a consortium of Indian tribes and for-profit entities that is wholly owned by and established for the benefit of a tribe;⁷⁴

⁷⁰ Information on EDA grant competitions is available at <https://www.eda.gov/funding/funding-opportunities> and <http://www.grants.gov>.

⁷¹ EDA, “Economic Development Directory,” <https://www.eda.gov/economic-development-directory>.

⁷² Recipients of EDA awards follow the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (Uniform Guidance) as set forth in 2 C.F.R. Part 200, <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CFR-2016-title2-vol11/pdf/CFR-2016-title2-vol11-part200.pdf>; DOC Terms and Conditions; and other requirements.

⁷³ Detailed program requirements are outlined in Notice of Funding Opportunities (NOFOs) (see <https://www.eda.gov/funding/funding-opportunities>) and in agency regulations (see 13 C.F.R. Part 300).

⁷⁴ The term *Indian tribe* means an entity on the list of recognized tribes published pursuant to the Federally Recognized Indian Tribe List Act of 1994, as amended (P.L. 103-454) (25 U.S.C. §§479a et seq.), and any Alaska Native Village or Regional Corporation (as defined in or established under the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (43 U.S.C. §§1601 et seq.). This term includes the governing body of an Indian tribe, Indian corporation (restricted to Indians), Indian (continued...)

- a state;⁷⁵
- a city or other political subdivision of a state, including a special purpose unit of a state or local government, engaged in economic or infrastructure development activities, or a consortium of political subdivisions;
- an institution of higher education or a consortium of institutions of higher education;
- a public or private nonprofit organization or association acting in cooperation with officials of a political subdivision of a state;⁷⁶
- an economic development organization; or
- a public-private partnership for public infrastructure.⁷⁷

Businesses are not eligible for most grants authorized by PWEDA, but may be eligible for Training, Research, and Technical Assistance grants and Tech Hubs grants.⁷⁸

The types of applicants eligible for the B2S and the now-inactive STEM Talent Challenge programs, which are authorized by the Stevenson-Wydler Technology Innovation Act of 1980 as amended (15 U.S.C. §§3722 and 3723) rather than PWEDA, include

- a state;
- an Indian tribe;
- a city or other political subdivision of a state;
- an entity that is—
 - a nonprofit organization,
 - an institution of higher education,
 - a public-private partnership,

authority, or other nonprofit Indian tribal organization or entity; provided that the Indian tribal organization, corporation, or entity is wholly owned by, and established for the benefit of, the Indian tribe or Alaska Native Village. 13 C.F.R. §300.3. A rule published in the *Federal Register* on September 24, 2021, extended EDA tribal eligibility to include for-profit entities that are wholly owned by and established for the benefit of a tribe. See EDA, U.S. Department of Commerce, “Permitting Additional Eligible Tribal Entities,” 86 *Federal Register* 52957-52959, September 24, 2021, <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2021/09/24/2021-20633/permitting-additional-eligible-tribal-entities>.

⁷⁵ A *state* means a state, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, and the Republic of Palau. 42 U.S.C. §3122.

⁷⁶ The Economic Development Administration Reauthorization Act of 2004 (P.L. 108-373) authorized select nonprofits as eligible recipients.

⁷⁷ The Economic Development Reauthorization Act (EDRA) of 2024 (P.L. 118-272) authorized economic development organizations and public private partnerships as eligible recipients.

⁷⁸ 42 U.S.C. §3122(6)(B) and 13 C.F.R. §300.3. Training, Research, and Technical Assistance Investment grants are authorized under 42 U.S.C. §3147 and EDA, “FY2023 Regional Technology and Innovation Hub Program Phase 1 NOFO (Tech Hubs Phase 1 NOFO),” https://www.eda.gov/sites/default/files/2023-05/Tech_Hubs_NOFO.pdf.

Businesses may receive EDA-supported loans and technical assistance to support expansion and entrepreneurial activities. For instance, qualifying businesses may receive a loan from an intermediary operating an EDA-supported Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) and the loan must be repaid with interest. There are approximately 400 organizations administering EDA-funded RLFs. See EDA, “Revolving Loan Fund Program,” <https://www.eda.gov/rlf>. For more information, see CRS In Focus IF11449, *Economic Development Revolving Loan Funds (ED-RLFs)*, by Julie M. Lawhorn; and CRS Insight IN11419, *COVID-19: Selected Federal Resources for Businesses Seeking to Assist with Research and Manufacturing Efforts*, by Maria Kreiser. Businesses may also receive direct *technical assistance* through projects funded by EDA grants, University Center, or Trade Adjustment Assistance Center partners.

- a science or research park,
- a federal laboratory, or
- an economic development organization or similar; and
- a consortium of any of the immediately aforementioned entities.

Additionally, a venture development organization may be an eligible applicant for the B2S program. According to the EDA, select entities may be required to demonstrate that the application is supported by a state or a political subdivision of a state for the B2S program.⁷⁹

For the Tech Hubs program, which is authorized by the Stevenson-Wydler Technology Innovation Act of 1980 (15 U.S.C. §3722a), EDA awards grants to eligible consortia. In addition to other entities, an eligible consortium must include one or more representatives from

- institutions of higher education;
- state, territorial, local, or tribal governments or other political subdivisions of a state;
- industry groups or firms in relevant technology, innovation, or manufacturing sectors;
- economic development organizations or similar entities; and
- labor or workforce training organizations.

The Tech Hubs NOFO encourages the participation of at least two private firms in an eligible consortium, and notes that other entities may be part of the consortium. One of the consortium members will be the lead applicant.⁸⁰

For the Recompete Pilot program, which is also authorized by the Stevenson-Wydler Technology Innovation Act of 1980 (15 U.S.C. §3722b), eligible applicants include

- political subdivisions of a state;
- tribal governments;
- U.S. territories;
- the District of Columbia;
- nonprofit organizations working in cooperation with a political subdivision of a state;
- EDDs; and
- a coalition of any of the entities listed above.⁸¹

⁷⁹ EDA, “2024 Build to Scale Program NOFO,” <https://grants.gov/search-results-detail/356368>, and “2023 STEM Talent Challenge Program NOFO,” <https://www.eda.gov/sites/default/files/2023-04/FY%2023%20STEM%20Talent%20Challenge%20NOFO.pdf>.

⁸⁰ EDA, “FY2023 Regional Technology and Innovation Hub Program Phase 1 NOFO (Tech Hubs Phase 1 NOFO),” https://www.eda.gov/sites/default/files/2023-05/Tech_Hubs_NOFO.pdf.

⁸¹ EDA, “FY2023 Recompete Pilot Phase 1 NOFO,” https://www.eda.gov/sites/default/files/2023-06/Recompete_Pilot_Program_NOFO_phase_1_vF.pdf.

Cost Sharing Requirements

Cost sharing is required for most EDA grant programs although some exceptions may apply.⁸² Generally, EDA investment funds 60% of total project costs. Requirements may vary based on the program, a determination of special need, type of applicant, and other factors. The Secretary may increase the federal share for a grant to Indian tribes; when certain applicants have exhausted their effective taxing and borrowing capacity or for other circumstances; or for a grant to small communities, provided that they meet other eligibility criteria.⁸³ The Secretary may also increase the federal share up to 100% for RNTA and Planning grants. Agency regulations describe the conditions in which “projects subject to a Special Need” may receive a higher investment rate. This includes, but is not limited to, post-disaster economic recovery projects and, as noted, projects by Indian tribes, among other circumstances and conditions.⁸⁴

EDRA updated EDA’s economic distress eligibility criteria for certain programs.⁸⁵ In January 2026, EDA indicated that implementing these changes will take another year and involve stakeholder input.⁸⁶

Select Grant Requirements—Public Works and Economic Adjustment Assistance Programs

The following select grant program requirements apply to two of the EDA’s economic development assistance programs, the Public Works and Economic Adjustment Assistance (PWEAA) programs.⁸⁷

Economic Distress Criteria

For a project to be eligible for assistance under the PWEAA programs,

The project shall be located in an area that, on the date of submission of the application, meets one or more of the following criteria:

- Per capita income that is, for the most recent period for which data are available, 80% or less of the national average per capita income;
- An unemployment rate that is, for the most recent 24-month period for which data are available, at least one percentage point greater than the national average unemployment rate;
- Median household income that is 80% or less of the national average;

⁸² For example, for the Recompete Pilot program in FY2023, there was no match requirement for Phase 1 or Phase 2 awards; matching is to be a competitive factor in Phase 2. See EDA, “FY 2023 Distressed Area Recompete Pilot Program Phase 1,” https://www.eda.gov/sites/default/files/2023-06/Recompete_Pilot_Program_NOFO_phase_1_vF.pdf.

⁸³ 42 U.S.C. §3144.

⁸⁴ 13 C.F.R. §301.4, Subpart D—Investment Rates and Matching Share Requirements.

⁸⁵ For additional information about EDA’s economic distress criteria, see CRS In Focus IF12074, *Areas of Economic Distress for EDA Activities and Programs*, by Julie M. Lawhorn.

⁸⁶ Page, Testimony in *Smarter Spending, Stronger Results: Reducing Duplication and Ensuring Effectiveness Through Economic Development Reforms*, p.4.

⁸⁷ See agency regulations (13 C.F.R. Chapter III) for detailed program requirements. See also EDA, “EDA Informational Brochure,” <https://www.eda.gov/sites/default/files/filebase/archives/2021/pdf/about/EDA-TriFold-2017.pdf>.

- A workforce participation rate that is 90% or less of the national average or a prime age employment gap of five% or more;
- Expected economic dislocation and distress from energy industry transitions; or
- A special need arising from unemployment, underemployment, or economic adjustment problems.⁸⁸

These criteria are also used for the EDD designation. An EDD must “contain at least one geographic area that fulfills the economic distress criteria” among other requirements.⁸⁹ For additional information about area eligibility and measures of economic distress in PWEDA, see CRS In Focus IF12074, *Areas of Economic Distress for EDA Activities and Programs*, by Julie M. Lawhorn.

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategies (CEDS)

The CEDS is a locally developed, long-term regional economic development plan. Projects must serve an area that has a CEDS or equivalent strategy in order to be eligible for PWEAA funding.⁹⁰ However, the CEDS requirement may be waived in some instances.⁹¹ The EDA provides funding to EDDs to carry out and implement the CEDS under its Partnership Planning program.⁹²

CEDS involves both a planning process and the development of a regional framework for selecting and prioritizing economic development strategies—generally developed with an asset-based approach. To complete the CEDS, regional stakeholders engage local leaders, private sector firms, individuals, organizations, institutions of learning, and other participants. An organization must have a CEDS in order to receive EDA’s EDD designation.⁹³ The EDA requires a CEDS update every five years.⁹⁴ EDA regulations require that CEDS include elements outlined in **Table 4**. According to the EDA, CEDS should also include “resilience-building goals.”⁹⁵

⁸⁸ 42 U.S.C. §§3121 et seq. EDA’s regulations describe the economic distress criteria at 13 C.F.R. §301, Subpart C—Economic Distress Criteria.

⁸⁹ 42 U.S.C. §3171. The EDA also encourages University Centers (42 U.S.C. §3147(a)(2)(D)) to provide services that benefit distressed areas in their region (13 C.F.R. §306.5(a)).

⁹⁰ EDA, “Comprehensive Economic Development Strategies,” <https://eda.gov/ceds>. According to EDA, “EDA supports the CEDS Resource Library at <http://www.statsamerica.org/ceds/Default.aspx> where applicants can determine whether their region is served by an EDD and locate the most recent CEDS”—see <http://www.statsamerica.org/ceds>.

⁹¹ 42 U.S.C. §3149(b)(2); 42 U.S.C. §3162; 13 C.F.R. §307.5.

⁹² EDA, “Planning Program,” <https://www.eda.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/about/Planning-Program-1-Pager.pdf>.

⁹³ 13 C.F.R. §304.1.

⁹⁴ 13 C.F.R. §303.6.

⁹⁵ EDA regulations specify that each regional CEDS must promote resiliency. Economic resilience in the context of the CEDS is related to “economic resilience aims to better prepare regions to anticipate, withstand, and bounce back from any type of shock, disruption, or stress it may experience.” See 13 C.F.R. §303.7; EDA, “Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Content Guidelines: Recommendations for Creating an Impactful CEDS,” pp. 18, 20, <https://www.eda.gov/sites/default/files/2025-01/2025-CEDS-Content-Guidelines-Full-Report.pdf>; and “Comprehensive Economic Development Strategies,” <https://eda.gov/ceds>. According to EDA, the CEDS economic resilience framework may include considerations such as (1) planning for and implementing resilience, (2) establishing information networks, (3) pre-disaster recovery planning, and/or (4) measuring resilience. See EDA, “Economic Resilience,” <https://www.eda.gov/resources/comprehensive-economic-development-strategy/content/economic-resilience>.

Table 4. Core Elements of a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)

CEDS Element	Description
<i>Summary Background</i>	A summary of the economic conditions of the region.
<i>SWOT Analysis</i>	An in-depth analysis of regional strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.
<i>Strategic Direction/Action Plan</i>	The strategic direction and action plan should build on findings from the SWOT analysis and incorporate elements from other regional plans (e.g., land use and transportation, workforce development, etc.) where appropriate, as determined by the EDD or community/region engaged in development of the CEDS. The action plan should also identify the stakeholder(s) responsible for implementation, timetables, and opportunities for the integrated use of other local, state, and federal funds.
<i>Evaluation Framework/Performance Measures</i>	The strategic direction and action plan should build on findings from the SWOT analysis and incorporate/integrate elements from other regional plans (e.g., land use and transportation, workforce development, etc.) where appropriate, as determined by the EDD or community/region engaged in development of the CEDS. The action plan should also identify the stakeholder(s) responsible for implementation, timetables, and opportunities for the integrated use of other local, state, and federal funds.

Sources: 13 C.F.R. §303.7 and EDA, “Comprehensive Economic Development Strategies,” <https://eda.gov/ceds>.

Notes: EDA provides “Content Guidelines” with additional resources for CEDS development and suggestions for CEDS content (see <https://www.eda.gov/sites/default/files/2025-01/2025-CEDS-Content-Guidelines-Full-Report.pdf>). However, beyond the four required sections and recommended economic resilience component, the CEDS content and CEDS development process is managed by local and regional stakeholders.

Persistent Poverty and Distressed, Small, Rural and Underserved Areas—Funding and Technical Assistance

In reports accompanying the FY2020 through FY2024 and FY2026 appropriations bills, Congress has signaled an interest in prioritizing EDA funding for persistent poverty counties and in understanding the level of funding and technical assistance provided to distressed, small, rural, and underserved areas.⁹⁶ In terms of persistent poverty counties, Congress has directed a portion of EDA assistance to areas that have experienced high unemployment or high poverty levels for a certain period of time through the “10-20-30” provision in recent appropriations bills.⁹⁷ The provision directs 10% of federal funds for specific programs to counties with 20% poverty rates or more for the past 30 years.⁹⁸ EDA applies the 10-20-30 provision to the Public Works and B2S programs.⁹⁹

⁹⁶ See, for example, Senator Patty Murray, “Explanatory Statement Submitted by Ms. Murray, Chair of the Senate Committee on Appropriations, Regarding H.R. 4366, Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2024,” Senate, *Congressional Record*, vol. 170, no. 39 (March 5, 2024), p. S1146, <https://www.congress.gov/118/crec/2024/03/05/170/39/CREC-2024-03-05.pdf>.

⁹⁷ By example, see annual appropriations bills: P.L. 115-31 (FY2017), P.L. 115-141 (FY2018), P.L. 116-6 (FY2019), P.L. 116-93 (FY2020), and P.L. 116-260 (FY2021), among others. The 10-20-30 provision has also been applied to USDA Rural Development programs and was applied in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA, P.L. 111-5).

⁹⁸ For more information, see CRS Report R45100, *The 10-20-30 Provision: Defining Persistent Poverty Counties*, by Joseph Dalaker.

⁹⁹ GAO, “Areas with High Poverty—Changing How the 10-20-30 Funding Formula Is Applied Could Increase Impact in Persistent Poverty Counties,” GAO-21-470, May 27, 2021, <https://www.gao.gov/assets/gao-21-470.pdf>. For EDA’s list of Persistent Poverty Counties, see <https://eda.gov/performance/tools>.

In regards to distressed, small, rural, and underserved areas, Congress requires EDA to report on activities related to program outcomes, and has directed the agency to provide technical assistance to these areas. Congress and EDA have indicated their interests in these areas in the following ways:

- PWEDA requires EDA to include information in its annual report about private sector leveraging goals set for investments awarded to rural and urban economically distressed areas and to highly distressed areas.¹⁰⁰
- In FY2021, Congress directed EDA to support technical assistance for distressed small, rural, and underserved communities for “pre-development activities associated with accessing EDA programs and services.”¹⁰¹
- In FY2021, GAO analyzed how federal agencies, including EDA, used the 10-20-30 formula. The analysis covered agency budget and administrative data for fiscal years 2017-2020 and found that federal agencies use different approaches to designating PPCs and that is no uniform list used across agencies. The report also noted that, for EDA, “at least 10 percent of designated funds to persistent-poverty counties in fiscal years 2017–2020, but generally had done so before 2017. Most of their programs subject to the formula already were required to target funds to economically distressed areas.”¹⁰²
- In FY2021, EDA made a Research and National Technical Assistance (RNTA) award for the “Advancing Economic Development in Persistently Poor Communities” project. According to EDA, the project “will identify and analyze areas of persistent poverty in the United States, develop a typology of persistently poor places based on their needs to better inform future policy approaches, and assess how effective past EDA investments have been in alleviating deprivation in areas suffering from persistent poverty.”¹⁰³
- In FY2023, as in prior years, Congress directed EDA “to consider geographic equity in making all award decisions and to ensure that rural projects are adequately represented among those selected for funding.”¹⁰⁴
- In FY2025, EDRA allowed EDA to waive cost share requirements for certain small communities (e.g., economically distressed areas with a population under 10,000).¹⁰⁵ EDRA directed EDA to consider the benefit to rural and/or tribal communities in evaluating projects for the Public Works program and for the new

¹⁰⁰ 42 U.S.C. §3213. For an example of such reports and data, see EDA, *FY2019 Annual Report*, pp. 8-10, <https://www.eda.gov/sites/default/files/2022-02/FY2019-Approved-EDA-Annual-Report.pdf>.

¹⁰¹ Representative Nita Lowey, “Explanatory Statement Submitted by Mrs. Lowey, Chairwoman of the House Committee on Appropriations Regarding H.R. 133, Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021 (Division B—Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies),” *Congressional Record*, vol. 166, No. 218-Book III (December 21, 2020), pp. H7922-7923, <https://www.congress.gov/congressional-record/2020/12/21/house-section/article/H7879-2>.

¹⁰² GAO, “Areas with High Poverty,” May 27, 2021, GAO-21-470, <https://www.gao.gov/assets/gao-21-470.pdf>.

¹⁰³ EDA, “Tackling Persistent Poverty Is Goal of New EEDA-Economic Innovation Group Initiative,” July 19, 2021, <https://www.eda.gov/news/blog/2021/07/19/tackling-persistent-poverty-goal-new-eda-economic-innovation-group-initiative>; and August Benzow, et al., “Advancing Economic Development in Persistent-Poverty Communities,” Economic Innovation Group, <https://eig.org/persistent-poverty-in-communities/>.

¹⁰⁴ Senator Patrick Leahy, “Explanatory Statement Submitted by Mr. Leahy, Chair of the Senate Committee on Appropriations, Regarding H.R. 2617, Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2023,” *Congressional Record*, vol. 168, no. 198 (December 20, 2022), S7898-7899, <https://www.congress.gov/congressional-record/volume-168/issue-198/senate-section/article/S7819-2>.

¹⁰⁵ P.L. 118-272, §2215.

supply chain site development program.¹⁰⁶ EDRA also directed EDA to expand or maintain dedicated staff for economic development roles and/or outreach activities with rural and energy transition communities by directing EDA to provide new Technical Assistance Liaisons to assist eligible recipients that are in under-resourced communities,¹⁰⁷ and directing EDA to promote access to its programs through Economic Development Representatives (EDRs), particularly with coal communities.¹⁰⁸

Tribal Economic Development

In recent years, EDA has assisted tribal and indigenous communities in several ways.¹⁰⁹ In addition to being eligible recipients of EDA grant assistance (see “Eligible Recipients” above), grants may be up to 100% of the cost of the project for tribes and consortiums of tribes.¹¹⁰ As noted previously, in October 2021, EDA implemented a rule to allow for-profit tribal entities that are wholly owned by and established for the benefit of the tribe to be eligible for EDA assistance.¹¹¹

Additionally, in FY2021, EDA allocated \$100 million in ARP Act funding to the EDA’s Indigenous Communities program. Tribes, consortiums of tribes, and other entities that serve indigenous communities were eligible recipients.¹¹² The Indigenous Communities program was EDA’s first program developed specifically for Indigenous communities.¹¹³ In FY2024 and FY2026, Congress directed EDA to allocate \$5 million of annual appropriations to Assistance to Indigenous Communities.¹¹⁴

¹⁰⁶ P.L. 118-272, §§2213 and 2224.

¹⁰⁷ P.L. 118-272, §2229.

¹⁰⁸ P.L. 118-272, §2231. In EDRA, coal communities are associated with areas impacted by the “coal economy,” which is defined as “the complete supply chain of coal-reliant industries, including (i) coal mining; (ii) coal-fired power plants; (iii) transportation or logistics; and (iv) manufacturing” (see P.L. 118-272, Division B, Title II). For additional information about the term “coal community,” see “Identifying Coal Communities” in CRS Report R47831, *Federal Economic Assistance for Coal Communities*, by Julie M. Lawhorn et al.

¹⁰⁹ EDA defines indigenous communities in the following way:

Ethnic groups descended from the first known inhabitants of a geographic area. For purposes of grants administration, the Economic Development Administration defines indigenous communities to include federally recognized American Indian or Alaskan Native tribal entities (including American Indian tribes and Alaskan Native villages). It also includes public or private non-profit organizations or associations serving Native Hawaiians; or, public or private non-profit organizations or associations serving Native Pacific Islanders of Guam, American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, or the Republic of Palau.

EDA, “Economic Development Glossary,” <https://www.eda.gov/about/economic-development-glossary>.

¹¹⁰ 42 U.S.C. §3144.

¹¹¹ See EDA, U.S. Department of Commerce, “Permitting Additional Eligible Tribal Entities,” 86 *Federal Register* 52957-52959, September 24, 2021, <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2021/09/24/2021-20633/permitting-additional-eligible-tribal-entities>.

¹¹² EDA, “Indigenous Communities,” <https://eda.gov/arpa/indigenous>.

¹¹³ EDA, “EDA Updates Regulations to Make Grants More Accessible to Native American Communities,” September 24, 2021, <https://www.eda.gov/news/blog/2021/09/24/eda-updates-regulations-make-grants-more-accessible-native-american>.

¹¹⁴ See Senator Patty Murray, “Explanatory Statement Submitted by Ms. Murray, Chair of the Senate Committee on Appropriations, Regarding H.R. 4366, Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2024,” Senate, *Congressional Record*, vol. (continued...)

Office of Tribal Economic Development (OTED)

In 2025, EDRA (P.L. 118-272) authorized a new Office of Tribal Economic Development (OTED) and directed EDA to coordinate and expand the agency's existing activities with tribal entities.¹¹⁵ EDRA directed OTED to assist tribal communities with accessing economic development assistance, maintain an active role in coordination with other federal agencies, and participate in rulemaking and consultations that may impact tribal communities. EDRA also required EDA to publish a comprehensive online directory of economic development programs for tribal communities and maintain sufficient staff to carry out OTED outreach activities. EDA is to complete a strategic plan for tribal economic development, to be informed by a tribal consultation process, by January 4, 2026 (and every three years thereafter). EDA held a tribal consultation on September 25, 2025, as required in the reauthorization.¹¹⁶

Regional Innovation Programs¹¹⁷

In recent years, Congress has authorized EDA to administer place-based programs that fund regional efforts to expand economic growth by developing the entrepreneurial and innovation ecosystem in a specified region. Certain programs are designed to enhance national competitiveness as well. The Tech Hubs program, for instance, was designed to build regional innovation capacity. However, the program is also part of a broader set of initiatives authorized by the CHIPS and Science Act (P.L. 117-167) that focus on bolstering the U.S. global technology and economic competitiveness position, particularly in relation to China.¹¹⁸

Since 2015, EDA has administered the B2S program, which was established in Section 603 of the America COMPETES Reauthorization Act of 2010 (P.L. 111-358).¹¹⁹ In July 2021, the EDA allocated \$1 billion of supplemental ARP Act funding for economic recovery activities to the Build Back Better Regional Challenge (BBBRC), a new grant initiative to support new or existing regional industry clusters.¹²⁰ In FY2023, the CHIPS and Science Act (P.L. 117-167

170, no. 39 (March 5, 2024), p. S1399, <https://www.congress.gov/118/crec/2024/03/05/170/39/CREC-2024-03-05.pdf>; and Representative Tom Cole, "Explanatory Statement Submitted by Mr. Cole, Chair of the House Committee on Appropriations, Regarding H.R. 6938, Commerce, Justice, Science; Energy and Water Development; and Interior and Environment Appropriations Act, 2026," *Congressional Record*, House, vol. 172, no. 5 (January 8, 2026), p. H256, <https://www.congress.gov/119/crec/2026/01/08/172/5/CREC-2026-01-08-bk3.pdf#page=2>.

¹¹⁵ EDA, "Tribal Economic Development Resources," <https://www.eda.gov/resources/tribal-economic-development-resources>.

¹¹⁶ EDA, "Tribal Community Support," <https://www.eda.gov/resources/resources-for-tribes-and-tribal-governments>. EDA's website indicates that EDA has carried out similar consultations since 2021.

¹¹⁷ See also CRS Report R47495, *Regional Innovation: Federal Programs and Issues for Consideration*, by Julie M. Lawhorn et al.

¹¹⁸ Sintia Radu, "The U.S. Is (Again) Among the World's Top Innovators," *U.S. News and World Report*, August 8, 2019. See also Robert Hassink, "Advancing Place-Based Regional Innovation Policies" (2019); F. Hu, "Study on the Roles and Responsibilities of Government in the Regional Innovation System," in *Frontiers in Enterprise Integration* (CRC Press, 2008), pp. 381-384, <https://www.taylorfrancis.com/chapters/edit/10.1201/9781003061090-58/study-roles-responsibilities-government-regional-innovation-system-hu>; and Karen G. Mills et al., *Clusters and Competitiveness: A New Federal Role for Stimulating Regional Economies*, The Brookings Institution, April 2008, <https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/Clusters-Brief.pdf>.

¹¹⁹ 15 U.S.C. §3722. See also EDA, "Build to Scale," <https://www.eda.gov/funding/programs/build-to-scale>.

¹²⁰ For more information about the EDA's allocation of supplemental appropriations approved in the American Rescue Plan Act (P.L. 117-2), see CRS Insight IN11712, *The Economic Development Administration's American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act Grant Programs*, by Julie M. Lawhorn.

§10621) authorized two new programs: (1) the Regional Technology and Innovation Hubs (Hub) program¹²¹ and (2) the Recompete Pilot program.

- **The Tech Hubs program.** The focus of the Tech Hubs program is to support technology development, job creation, and expanding U.S. innovation capacity. The program also seeks to develop hubs in areas that are not “leading technology centers.”¹²² The Tech Hubs program is one of several programs authorized by P.L. 117-167 designed to improve the development and commercialization of certain technology areas. Through the Tech Hubs program, however, EDA makes place-based economic development grants to help regions address barriers to entrepreneurship and expand their capacity to become globally competitive in critical technologies and industries. Only eligible consortia may apply for the program, and each consortium has certain required and optional entity types.¹²³ In FY2024, the initial 12 implementation awards ranged from \$19 million to \$51 million per award.¹²⁴ P.L. 117-167 authorized \$10 billion over five years (FY2023 through FY2027) to be appropriated for the program.¹²⁵ In January 2025, EDA announced six additional implementation awards totaling approximately \$210 million.¹²⁶ In May 2025, the Secretary of Commerce announced that EDA would not move forward with the six awards announced in January 2025, and that January 2025 Tech Hub awardees would be able to re-submit applications under a revised NOFO.¹²⁷ In September 2025, EDA released the new NOFO, which was open to the 19 designated Tech Hubs that did not receive implementation awards. EDA noted that it expects to award up to \$220 million in Tech Hub implementation awards in spring 2026.¹²⁸

¹²¹ P.L. 117-167 directed EDA to administer the Tech Hubs program in coordination with another Commerce agency, the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST).

¹²² U.S. Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, “CHIPS and Science Act Section-by-Section Summary,” <https://www.commerce.senate.gov/services/files/1201E1CA-73CB-44BB-ADEB-E69634DA9BB9>.

¹²³ EDA, “Tech Hubs Program Launch Fact Sheet,” https://www.eda.gov/sites/default/files/2023-04/EDA_TECH_HUBS_Fact_Sheet.pdf.

¹²⁴ The size of these awards is different from EDA’s existing programs. For comparison, the FY2025 NOFO for the Public Works and Economic Adjustment Assistance (EAA) program noted that the average size of a Public Works investment has been approximately \$1.4 million, and investments generally range from \$600,000 to \$5 million. The average size of an EAA investment has been approximately \$650,000, and EDA expected to make awards ranging from \$150,000 to \$2.5 million in FY2025. See the Public Works and EAA NOFO at <https://grants.gov/search-results-detail/346815>, and CRS Insight IN12413, *Facts and Figures: EDA Awards Phase 2 Grants Under Tech Hubs and Recompete Programs*, by Julie M. Lawhorn. See also EDA, “Biden-Harris Administration Announces Next Funding Round of \$504 Million for 12 Tech Hubs Across America,” press release, July 2, 2024, <https://www.eda.gov/news/press-release/2024/07/02/biden-harris-administration-announces-next-funding-round-504-million>.

¹²⁵ Division B, Title VI—Miscellaneous Science and Technology Provisions, Subtitle C, Section 10621. See also EDA, “Regional Technology and Innovation Hubs (Tech Hubs),” <https://www.eda.gov/funding/programs/regional-technology-and-innovation-hubs>; and CRS Insight IN12170, *Economic Development Administration Announces Phase 1 of New Tech Hubs Program*, by Julie M. Lawhorn and Marcy E. Gallo.

¹²⁶ EDA, “Biden-Harris Administration Awards Additional \$210 Million Tech Hub Grants,” press release, January 14, 2025, <https://www.commerce.gov/news/press-releases/2025/01/biden-harris-administration-awards-additional-210-million-tech-hub>. The press release also noted that, “The six latest Hubs selected for implementation grants are among the 31 Tech Hubs designated in October 2023.”

¹²⁷ U.S. Department of Commerce (DOC), “Statement from U.S. Secretary of Commerce Howard Lutnick on the Tech Hubs Program,” May 16, 2025, <https://www.commerce.gov/news/press-releases/2025/05/statement-us-secretary-commerce-howard-lutnick-tech-hubs-program>; and DOC, “Tech Hubs Program Fact Sheet” <https://www.commerce.gov/news/fact-sheets/2025/05/tech-hubs-program-fact-sheet>.

¹²⁸ EDA, “Regional Technology and Innovation Hubs (Tech Hubs),” <https://www.eda.gov/funding/programs/regional-technology-and-innovation-hubs>.

- **The Recompete Pilot program.** The Recompete Pilot program does not explicitly require economic development activities to focus on technology or innovation, but instead provides long-term, place-based assistance in amounts that are larger than most existing EDA program awards. The minimum grant award amount is \$20 million.¹²⁹ In FY2024, the initial implementation awards ranged from \$20 million to \$40 million per award.¹³⁰ P.L. 117-167 authorized \$1 billion over five years (FY2022 through FY2026) to be appropriated for the Recompete Pilot program.¹³¹

EDA Appropriations, FY2012-FY2026

For the FY2012-FY2026 period, annual appropriations for EDA programs and administration expenses averaged \$337 million (not adjusted for inflation) excluding disaster, COVID-19, and other supplemental appropriations.¹³²

Figure 3 provides the amounts allocated to major EDA programs between FY2012 and FY2026, excluding disaster, COVID-19, and other supplemental appropriations. Congress generally directs EDA to allocate the largest share of its annual appropriations to the Public Works program. Each fiscal year between 2012 and 2020, the second largest share of annual appropriations was directed to the EAA program. However, beginning in FY2021, the allocation for the B2S program exceeded the allocation for the EAA program. Congress has increased the amount provided to other programs in recent years as well. For instance, in each fiscal year between 2022 and 2024 and in 2026, Congress directed EDA to allocate a larger amount of funding to the Assistance to Coal Communities (ACC) initiative than to the base EAA program. Congress directed EDA to set aside funding for coal-impacted communities beginning in FY2014 (i.e., through the ACC initiative and its precursors). In FY2024, the amount of funding that Congress directed EDA to provide to the Public Works program decreased from its prior year's level for the first time since FY2013—see **Figure 3**.

¹²⁹ 15 U.S.C. §3722b(f)(2).

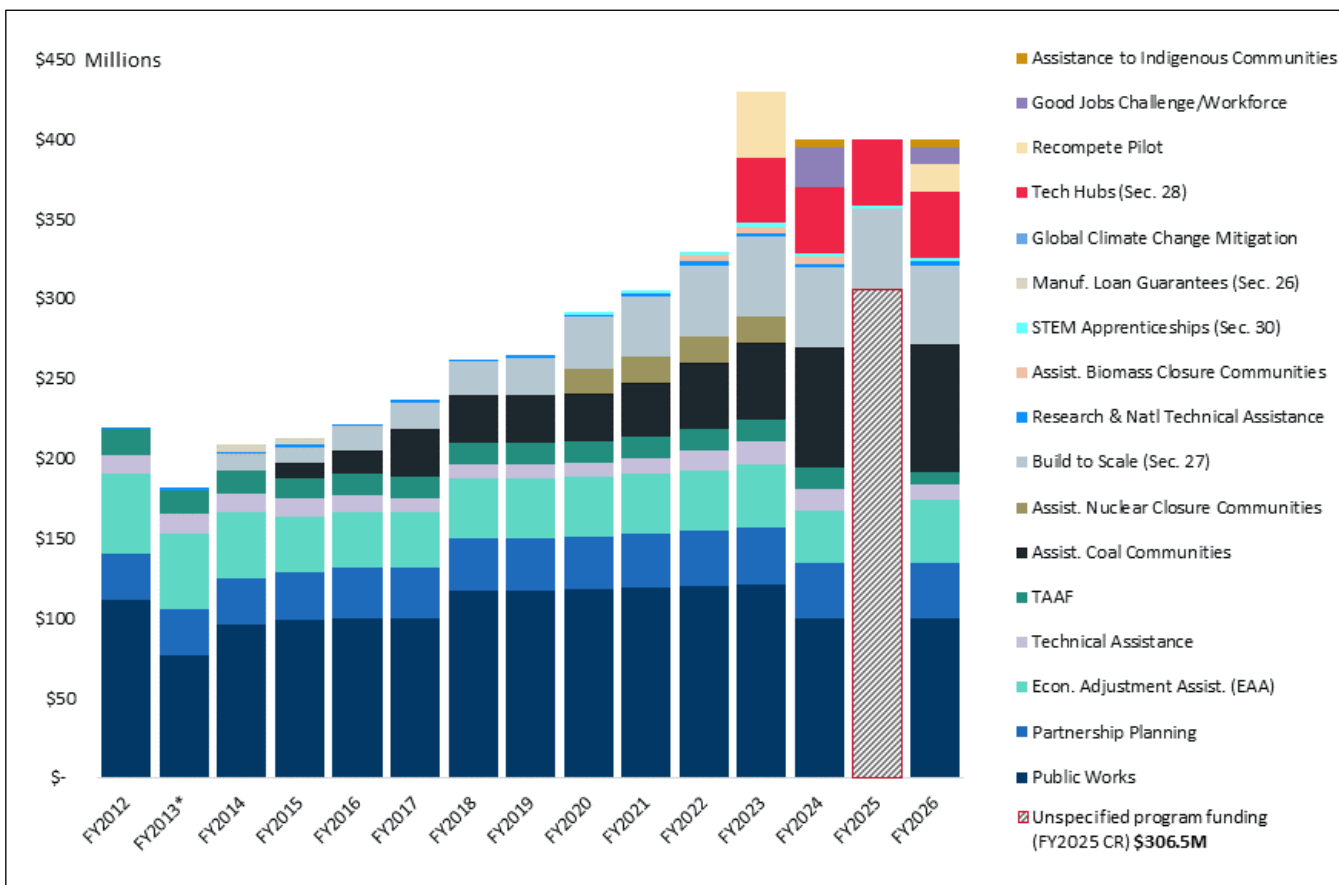
¹³⁰ See CRS Insight IN12413, *Facts and Figures: EDA Awards Phase 2 Grants Under Tech Hubs and Recompete Programs*, by Julie M. Lawhorn.

¹³¹ Division B, Title VI—Miscellaneous Science and Technology Provisions, Subtitle C, Section 10621. See also EDA, “Distressed Area Recompete Pilot Program (Recompete Pilot Program),” <https://www.eda.gov/funding/programs/recompete-pilot-program>; and CRS Insight IN12201, *Economic Development Administration Announces New Recompete Program*, by Julie M. Lawhorn. As of the date of publication, Congress directed EDA to provide \$200 million in annual and supplemental appropriations to the Recompete program in FY2023. See Senator Patrick Leahy, “Explanatory Statement Submitted by Mr. Leahy, Chair of the Senate Committee on Appropriations, Regarding H.R. 2617, Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2023,” *Congressional Record*, vol. 168, no. 198 (December 20, 2022), S7898-S7899, <https://www.congress.gov/congressional-record/volume-168/issue-198/senate-section/article/S7819-2>.

¹³² For a summary of EDA programs and appropriations prior to FY2012, see Robert W. Lake et al., “EDA and U.S. Economic Distress 1965–2000,” EDA Research Report, 99-07-13812, July 2004.

Figure 3. Annual Funding Amounts for EDA Programs, FY2012-FY2024 and FY2026

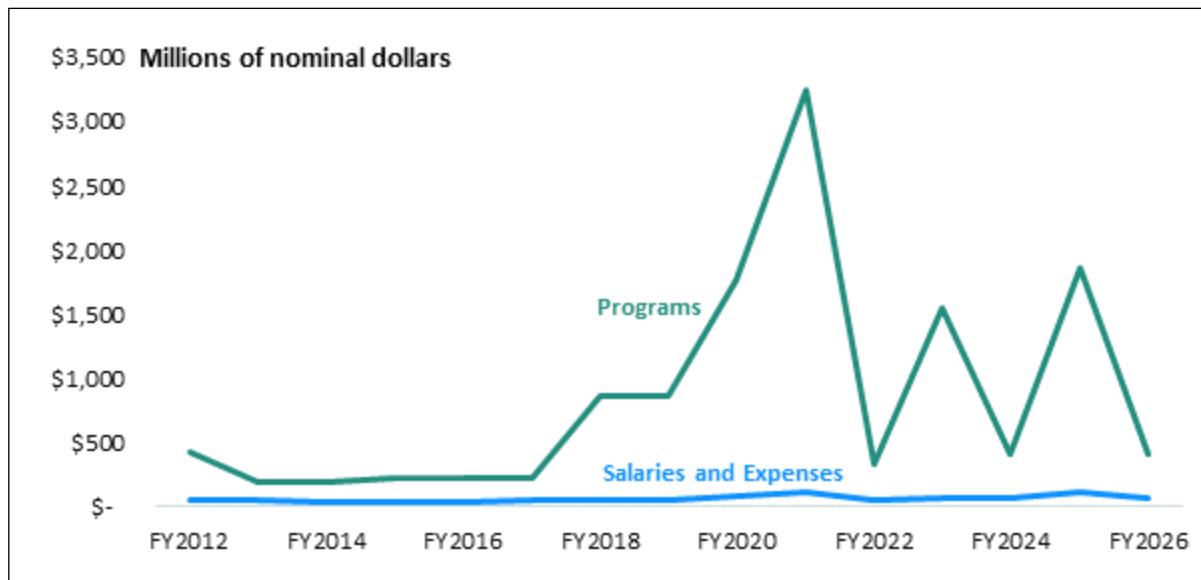
(in millions of nominal dollars; amounts do not include disaster, COVID-19, and other supplemental appropriations)



Source: CRS using information from the reports accompanying annual appropriations bills. For a breakdown of funding amounts by program, by fiscal year, see **Table B-2**.

Notes: The asterisk (*) indicates that the FY2013 levels are the post-sequestration amounts. EDA renamed the Regional Innovation Strategies program in FY2020. Amounts exclude funding provided for salaries and expenses. Amounts exclude disaster, COVID-19, and other supplemental appropriations.

Figure 4. Supplemental and Annual Appropriations for Programs and Salaries and Expenses, FY2012-FY2026



Source: CRS, using information from annual appropriations bills. For a breakdown of funding amounts, by fiscal year, see **Table B-2**.

Notes: Supplemental appropriations were provided to EDA in fiscal years 2012, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2023, and 2025. In fiscal years 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2023, and 2025, a portion of the supplemental funding was set aside for salaries and expenses to support the implementation of the supplemental EDA funding. In fiscal years 2018, 2019, 2020, 2023, and 2025, a portion of the supplemental funding was set aside for the Office of Inspector General account for carrying out investigations and audits related to the supplemental EDA funding; funding for the Office of the Inspector General is not displayed in this figure.

Assistance to Energy Transition Communities

Congress has signaled an interest in using the EDA to provide financial and technical assistance to communities impacted by changes in the coal economy since FY2014, and to communities impacted by nuclear plant closures since FY2015. The following milestones highlight Congress's interest in providing assistance to energy transition communities since FY2014:

- In FY2014, Congress encouraged EDA to assist communities impacted by the “economic dislocation in the coal and timber industries,” and directed EDA to allocate no less than \$3 million “to enhance regional business development in areas negatively impacted by the downturn in the coal industry.”¹³³
- In FY2015, a Senate appropriations committee report noted the negative, regional economic impact of nuclear plant closures and encouraged EDA to “identify and develop best practices” to assist communities.¹³⁴
- Between FY2015 and FY2017, Congress continued to direct EDA to provide additional funding through the EAA program to coal-impacted communities as a part of the multi-agency Partnerships for Opportunity and Workforce and Economic Revitalization (POWER) Initiative.¹³⁵
- Each year in FY2018 through FY2024 and in FY2026, Congress directed EDA to provide additional funding through the EAA program to coal-impacted communities as a part of the Assistance to Coal Communities (ACC) initiative.¹³⁶
- Each year in FY2020 through FY2023, Congress directed EDA to provide additional funding through the EAA program to the Assistance to Nuclear Closure Communities (NCC) initiative.¹³⁷
- Each year from FY2022 through FY2024 Congress directed EDA to provide funding (\$4.5 million) through the EAA program to biomass power plant closure communities (BCC).¹³⁸

¹³³ See explanatory statement accompanying the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2014 (P.L. 113-76), printed in the January 15, 2014, *Congressional Record* (pp. H507-H532), <https://www.congress.gov/congressional-record/2014/01/15/house-section/article/H475-2>.

¹³⁴ S.Rept. 113-181.

¹³⁵ In FY2015 and FY2016, Congress directed EDA to allocate funding to “Assistance to Coal Communities” (see explanatory statements accompanying the FY2015 and FY2016 appropriations bills, P.L. 113-235 and P.L. 114-113). In FY2015 and FY2016, the ACC initiative was administered as a component of the multi-agency POWER Initiative—a coordinated federal effort to assist coal-impacted communities. The Appalachian Regional Commission’s (ARC’s) POWER Initiative and the EDA’s ACC initiative were developed as part of the Obama Administration’s POWER+ Plan (FY2015-FY2016). At the time, the POWER Initiative was the multi-agency economic development component. During the Trump Administration, ARC’s POWER Initiative and the EDA’s ACC initiative continued to operate, but were no longer a part of a cross-agency POWER Initiative. See CRS Report R46015, *The POWER Initiative: Energy Transition as Economic Development*, by Julie M. Lawhorn.

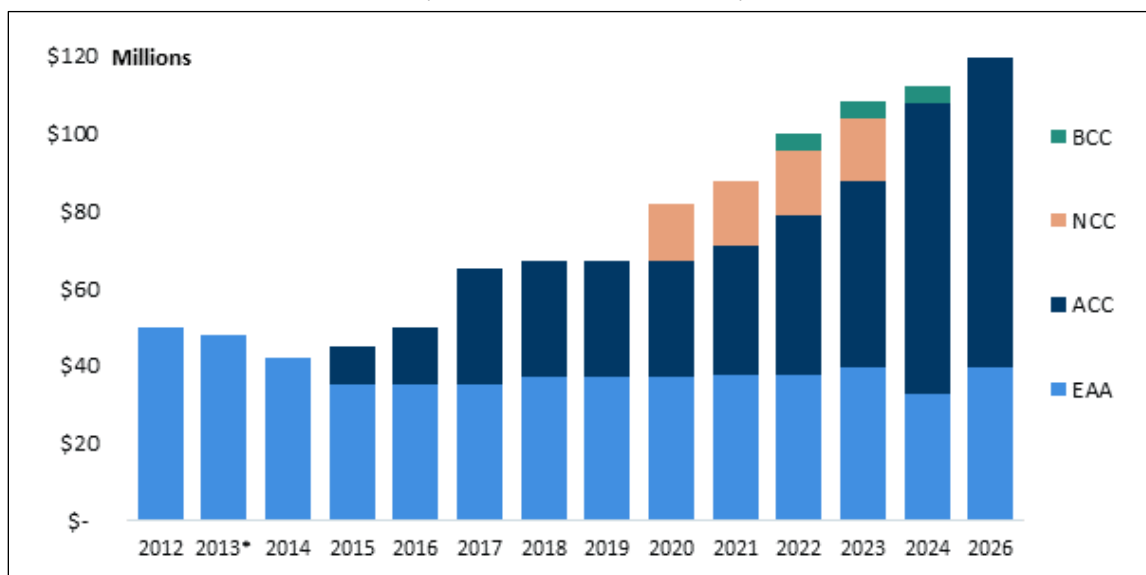
¹³⁶ EDA, “FY 2018 Economic Development Assistance Programs Notice of Funding Opportunity,” p. 7, <https://grants.gov/search-results-detail/306735>.

¹³⁷ In FY2020, Congress directed EDA to allocate \$15 million to the Assistance to Nuclear Closure Communities (NCC) initiative (P.L. 116-93; see also *Congressional Record*, December 17, 2019, pp. H10961-10962). Each year in FY2021 through FY2023, Congress directed EDA to allocate \$16.5 million to the NCC initiative (P.L. 116-260, see also *Congressional Record*, December 21, 2020, pp. H7922-7923; P.L. 117-103, see also *Congressional Record*, March 9, 2022, p. H1733; and P.L. 117-328, *Congressional Record*, December 20, 2022, p. S7898-S7899).

¹³⁸ Each year from FY2022 through FY2024, Congress directed EDA to allocate \$4.5 million to the biomass power plant closure communities (P.L. 117-103, *Congressional Record*, March 9, 2022, p. H1733; P.L. 117-328, (continued...))

Figure 5 charts the amounts of annual appropriations that EDA has allocated to the EAA, ACC, BCC, and NCC programs between FY2012 and FY2024 and in FY2026.¹³⁹ In FY2026, the funding for the ACC was double the amount allocated for the base EAA program.¹⁴⁰ In FY2021, EDA allocated \$300 million of the \$3 billion appropriation from the ARP Act to coal-impacted communities through the Coal Communities Commitment (CCC); CCC funding is not included in **Figure 5**.¹⁴¹

Figure 5. EAA, ACC, NCC, and BCC Funding History: FY2012-FY2024 and FY2026
(in millions of nominal dollars)



Source: CRS using information from reports accompanying annual appropriations bills.

Notes: Does not include supplemental appropriations for disaster or COVID-19 economic recovery assistance. The asterisk (*) indicates that the FY2013 level is the post-sequestration amount. Since FY2014, Congress has directed EDA to administer additional funding through the EAA program for coal communities. Each year in FY2020-FY2023, Congress directed EDA to administer additional funding through the EAA program for nuclear closure communities. Starting in FY2022, Congress further directed EDA to administer funding through the EAA program for biomass power plant closure communities (BCC).

Congressional Record, December 20, 2022, p. S7898-S7899; and P.L. 118-42 *Congressional Record*, March 5, 2024, p. S1399).

¹³⁹ Between FY2015 and FY2024 and in FY2026, congressional intent for funding the ACC and NCC initiatives was outlined in the explanatory statements accompanying annual appropriations committee reports. For additional information, including legislative origins, see CRS Insight IN11648, *The Economic Development Administration's Assistance to Coal and Nuclear Closure Communities Initiatives for Economic Transitions*, by Julie M. Lawhorn. See also EDA, "FY 2023 Public Works and Economic Adjustment Assistance Notice of Funding Opportunity," <https://grants.gov/search-results-detail/346815>. FY2022 and FY2023 funding for biomass power plant closure communities is displayed as "BCC" in **Figure 5**.

¹⁴⁰ Representative Tom Cole, "Explanatory Statement Submitted by Mr. Cole, Chair of the House Committee on Appropriations, Regarding H.R. 6938, Commerce, Justice, Science; Energy and Water Development; and Interior and Environment Appropriations Act, 2026," p. H256.

¹⁴¹ See EDA, "Coal Communities Commitment," <https://eda.gov/arpa/coal-communities/>, which notes that the *Initial Report to the President on Empowering Workers Through Revitalizing Energy Communities* (April 2021), developed by President Biden's Interagency Working Group, recommended focused federal investments for coal-impacted communities.

In 2025, EDRA (P.L. 118-272) codified EDA assistance to coal and nuclear host community initiatives under the existing EAA program and set aside an authorized funding level for economic development activities in these areas.¹⁴²

FY2025 and FY2026 Appropriations

Full-Year Continuing Appropriations and Extensions Act, 2025 (P.L. 119-4)

On March 5, 2024, Congress approved, and the President signed into law, the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2024 (P.L. 118-42) providing appropriations for a number of federal agencies and departments, including EDA’s programs and activities.

On March 15, 2025, Congress approved, and the President signed into law, the Full-Year Continuing Appropriations and Extensions Act, 2025 (P.L. 119-4) providing continuing appropriations for a number of federal agencies and departments, including EDA’s programs and activities. For FY2024, Division C of P.L. 118-42—the Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2024—provided \$468 million to the EDA (\$400 million for programs and \$68 million for salaries and expenses). P.L. 119-4 provided continuing appropriations for EDA for FY2025 at the same level of funding that was provided in FY2024 through the Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2024 (Division C of P.L. 118-42). P.L. 119-4 included a provision rescinding \$30 million in unobligated balances from prior-year appropriations for economic development assistance programs.¹⁴³

Additionally, as noted in CRS Report R48134, *Overview of FY2025 Appropriations for Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies (CJS)*, by Nathan James

Per Section 1110 of the CR [Continuing Resolution], funds provided for FY2025 in the CR that were designated by Congress as an emergency requirement in covered appropriations acts for FY2024 will retain such designations under the CR. Furthermore, Section 1110(b) of the CR establishes that “each amount” provided by the CR and designated by Congress as an emergency requirement will only become available for obligation if “the President subsequently so designates all such amounts and transmits such designations to the Congress.” The inclusion of such language, or similar language, in appropriations acts making the availability of all emergency-designated funds in the measure contingent on the President subsequently designating all such amounts as an emergency requirement has been common in recent decades. On March 24, 2025, OMB submitted a memorandum to Congress designating as an emergency requirement only certain amounts provided by the CR, including only \$1.441 billion of the \$2.000 billion in FY2025 funding for CJS accounts that Congress had designated as an emergency requirement.

Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2026, P.L. 119-74

On January 23, 2026, the President signed the Commerce, Justice, Science; Energy and Water Development; and Interior and Environment Appropriations Act, 2026, P.L. 119-74, into law. Division A of P.L. 119-74—the Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2026—included appropriations for EDA for FY2026. P.L. 119-74 provided \$466 million to the EDA (\$400 million for programs and \$66 million for salaries and expenses).

¹⁴² P.L. 118-272, §2219.

¹⁴³ According to OMB, “Unobligated balances refers to balances that have not yet been committed by contract or other legally binding action by the government.” See OMB, *Budget of the United States, FY2022*, p. 5, <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/BUDGET-2021-BALANCES/pdf/BUDGET-2021-BALANCES.pdf>.

The total FY2026 appropriations for EDA programs and administration represents a slight decrease of \$2 million from the FY2025 annual appropriations level of \$468 million.

In the explanatory statement accompanying P.L. 119-74, Congress decreased the amount of funding allocated to certain long-standing programs and directed EDA to provide funding for several existing programs at the same or slightly higher levels than in prior appropriations measures. For instance, Congress decreased funding for the TAAF and Technical Assistance programs compared to FY2024 funding levels. Funding levels for the Public Works, EAA, Assistance to Coal Communities, Assistance to Indigenous Communities, Partnership Planning, STEM Talent Challenge (now inactive), Build to Scale, and Tech Hubs programs remained constant or increased slightly from FY2024 levels.¹⁴⁴ Congress also directed EDA to allocate funding to the Recompete program, which last received a funding allocation in FY2023, and directed EDA to provide \$10 million for a “workforce training” program or initiative.¹⁴⁵ P.L. 119-74 included a provision rescinding \$60 million in unobligated balances from prior-year appropriations for economic development assistance programs.¹⁴⁶

Supplemental Appropriations

Supplemental appropriations for EDA programs have supported recovery efforts following economic injury caused by natural disasters and the COVID-19 pandemic. Disaster funding provides for expenses related to flood mitigation, disaster relief, long-term recovery, and the restoration of infrastructure for specific areas.¹⁴⁷ COVID-19 economic recovery funding supported economic recovery planning and technical assistance strategies to address economic dislocations caused by the coronavirus pandemic; entrepreneurial support programs to diversify economies; and related efforts.¹⁴⁸ EDA’s distribution and allocation strategy for supplemental appropriations varies by each event or situation.¹⁴⁹

Disaster Economic Recovery Assistance, FY2012-FY2026

Since FY2012, Congress has approved \$3.4 billion in supplemental funding for economic recovery in response to natural disasters (see **Figure 6**), including the following appropriations:

- In FY2012, Congress approved \$200 million in P.L. 112-55 for assistance to areas that received a major disaster designation in 2011 pursuant to the Robert T.

¹⁴⁴ Representative Tom Cole, “Explanatory Statement Submitted by Mr. Cole, Chair of the House Committee on Appropriations, Regarding H.R. 6938, Commerce, Justice, Science; Energy and Water Development; and Interior and Environment Appropriations Act, 2026,” p. H256.

¹⁴⁵ In FY2024, EDA administered the final round of the Good Jobs Challenge, which was administered through the EAA program to support regional workforce training activities. In FY2025, EDRA (P.L. 118-272) reauthorized the EDA and established new programs, including a workforce training program.

¹⁴⁶ P.L. 119-74, Sec. 521. According to OMB, “Unobligated balances refers to balances that have not yet been committed by contract or other legally binding action by the government.” See OMB, *Budget of the United States, FY2022*, p. 5, <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/BUDGET-2021-BALANCES/pdf/BUDGET-2021-BALANCES.pdf>.

¹⁴⁷ By example, see P.L. 116-20 which authorizes appropriations for disaster economic recovery activities under Section 703 of the Public Works and Economic Development Act (42 U.S.C. §3233).

¹⁴⁸ By example, see P.L. 116-260.

¹⁴⁹ Testimony by Mr. Dennis Alvord, Acting Assistant Secretary of Commerce for EDA, U.S. House of Representatives, Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, Subcommittee on Economic Development, Public Buildings and Emergency Management, *Investing in America: Reauthorization of the Economic Development Administration*, 117th Cong., 1st sess., April 28, 2021, <https://www.congress.gov/117/meeting/house/112512/witnesses/HHRG-117-PW13-Wstate-AlvordD-20210428.pdf>.

- Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (Stafford Act, 42 U.S.C. §§5121 et seq.). This amount was designated by Congress as being for disaster relief under the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985.¹⁵⁰
- In FY2018 and FY2019, supplemental appropriations provided \$1.2 billion for assistance to communities affected by disasters that occurred in calendar years 2017-2019.
 - The Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018 (P.L. 115-123) provided EDA with \$600 million in additional EAA funds for disaster relief and in response to economic distress or harm resulting from Hurricanes Harvey, Irma, and Maria, wildfires, and other federally declared natural disasters occurring in calendar year 2017. This amount was designated by Congress as an emergency requirement under the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985. P.L. 115-123 provided that, of the amount appropriated, 2% of funds may be transferred to the “Salaries and Expenses” account for administration and oversight activities and \$1 million was to be transferred to the Office of Inspector General (OIG).
 - The Additional Supplemental Appropriations for Disaster Relief Act, 2019 (P.L. 116-20) provided EDA with \$600 million in additional EAA funds for areas that received a major disaster designation under the Stafford Act as a result of Hurricanes Florence, Michael, and Lane, Typhoons Yutu and Mangkhut, wildfires, volcanic eruptions, earthquakes, and other natural disasters occurring in calendar year 2018, as well as for areas affected by tornadoes and floods occurring in calendar year 2019.¹⁵¹ This amount was designated by Congress as an emergency requirement under the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985. P.L. 116-20 provided that, of the amount appropriated, 2% of funds may be transferred to the “Salaries and Expenses” account for administration and oversight activities, and \$1 million was to be transferred to the OIG.
 - The Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2023 (P.L. 117-328) provided EDA with \$500 million in additional EAA funds for areas that received a major disaster designation under the Stafford Act as a result of Hurricanes Ian and Fiona, wildfires, flooding, and other natural disasters occurring in calendar years 2021 and 2022.¹⁵² P.L. 117-328 provided that, of the amount appropriated, 3% of funds may be transferred to the “Salaries and Expenses” account for administration and oversight activities, and \$2 million was to be transferred to the OIG.
 - In FY2025, the American Relief Act, 2025 (P.L. 118-158) provided \$1.51 billion to EDA for disaster economic recovery, with \$10 million of that amount to be transferred to the Delta Regional Authority (DRA). This amount was designated by Congress as an emergency requirement under the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985. P.L. 118-158 stated that the funding is

¹⁵⁰ Section 251(b)(2)(D) of BBEDCA (codified as amended at 2 U.S.C. §901(b)(2)(D)) establishes that statutory limits on discretionary spending may be adjusted upward to accommodate certain discretionary spending designated by Congress as being for disaster relief. For more, see CRS Report R48387, *Exemptions to the Fiscal Responsibility Act’s Discretionary Spending Limits*, by Drew C. Aherne and Megan S. Lynch, and CRS In Focus IF10720, *Calculation and Use of the Disaster Relief Allowable Adjustment*, by William L. Painter.

¹⁵¹ EDA, “FY 2019 Disaster Supplemental Funding NOFO,” <https://grants.gov/search-results-detail/319126>.

¹⁵² EDA administers this funding through the “FY 2023 Disaster Supplemental NOFO,” at <https://grants.gov/search-results-detail/347414>.

“for economic adjustment assistance related to flood mitigation, disaster relief, long-term recovery, and restoration of infrastructure in areas that received a major disaster designation as a result of hurricanes, wildfires, severe storms and flooding, tornadoes, and other natural disasters occurring in calendar years 2023 and 2024 under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5121 et seq.).” DRA and other federal regional commissions and authorities (FRCAs) have supported disaster economic recovery projects. However, in recent years, DRA and other FRCAs generally have not received supplemental funding for disaster economic recovery activities and have not received transferred funding provided through EDA. P.L. 118-158 provided that, of the amount appropriated, 3% of funds may be transferred to the “Salaries and Expenses” account for administration and oversight activities, and \$7 million was to be transferred to the OIG. P.L. 118-158.

For additional information about EDA’s administration of disaster recovery funding in FY2026 (to date), see CRS Insight IN12633, *Economic Development Administration Disaster Economic Recovery Funding (P.L. 118-158)*, by Julie M. Lawhorn; and CRS Insight IN12632, *Delta Regional Authority Disaster Economic Recovery Funding (P.L. 118-158)*, by Julie M. Lawhorn.

COVID-19 Economic Recovery Assistance, FY2020-FY2021

EDA received \$1.5 billion of supplemental appropriations through the CARES Act in FY2020, and \$3 billion of supplemental appropriations through the ARP Act in FY2021.¹⁵³ As noted previously, the supplemental CARES Act funding was nearly five times the amount of EDA’s FY2020 annual appropriation, and the ARP Act funding was over eight times the amount of EDA’s FY2021 annual appropriation—see **Figure 6**.

CARES Act, P.L. 116-136

The types of projects supported through CARES Act recovery assistance included

- economic recovery planning and preparing technical assistance strategies to address economic dislocations caused by the COVID-19 pandemic;
- preparing or updating resiliency plans to respond to future pandemics;
- implementing entrepreneurial support programs to diversify economies;
- constructing public works and facilities aimed to support economic recovery, and including the deployment of broadband to support telehealth and remote learning for job skills.

All geographic areas were eligible to apply for assistance under the “Special Need” criteria of the EAA program because of the widespread effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.¹⁵⁴ EDA used both competitive and non-competitive processes to distribute CARES Act funding. Activities that received funding through non-competitive processes included EDDs and tribal planning grantees; University Centers; and Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) programs.¹⁵⁵ P.L. 116-136 provided that, of

¹⁵³ Funding provided by the CARES Act to EDA was designated by Congress as an emergency requirement under the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985.

¹⁵⁴ 42 U.S.C. §3149(b).

¹⁵⁵ For more information on the EDA’s COVID-19 response, see CRS Insight IN11402, *The Economic Development Administration’s Economic Recovery Assistance for COVID-19 Impacted Communities*, by Julie M. Lawhorn; and DOC, “U.S. Department of Commerce CARES Act Implementation Plan,” June 2020, <https://www.commerce.gov/files/commerce-cares-act-implementation-plan-june-2020>.

the amount appropriated, 2% of funds may be transferred to the “Salaries and Expenses” account for administration and oversight activities to prevent, prepare for, and respond to the pandemic and \$3 million was to be transferred to the OIG. The funding for salaries and expenses provided by the CARES Act expired on September 30, 2022. Additionally, Congress provided temporary special hiring authority to EDA through the CARES Act.¹⁵⁶

American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act, P.L. 117-2

The ARP Act provided \$3 billion to assist communities with COVID-19 recovery and resiliency strategies. These funds are available for economic adjustment assistance, to prevent, prepare for, and respond to COVID-19 conditions and for necessary expenses for responding to economic injury as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. P.L. 117-2 provided that of the amount appropriated, up to 2% shall be used for “temporary Federal personnel as may be necessary” to prevent, prepare for, and respond to the pandemic. The funding for temporary federal personnel is to remain available until September 30, 2027. Of the amount appropriated, 25% was for states and communities that have been affected by the decline in the “travel, tourism, or outdoor recreation sectors.” EDA administered ARP Act recovery assistance through the following six new grant programs, each with different investment criteria and priorities:¹⁵⁷

- the Build Back Better Regional Challenge;¹⁵⁸
- the Good Jobs Challenge;
- the EAA Program;
- the Indigenous Communities Challenge;
- the Travel, Tourism, and Outdoor Recreation Program; and
- the Statewide Planning, Research, and Networks Program.

Other Supplemental Appropriations, FY2023

As noted above, the CHIPS and Science Act (P.L. 117-167 §10621) authorized two new programs to be administered by EDA: (1) the Tech Hubs program and (2) the Recompete Pilot program. The Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2023 (P.L. 117-328) appropriated \$500 million for the Tech Hubs Program (\$41 million in regular appropriations in Division B, and \$459 million in supplemental appropriations in Division N). P.L. 117-328 also appropriated \$200 million for the Recompete Pilot Program (\$41 million in regular appropriations in Division B, and \$159 million in supplemental appropriations in Division N of P.L. 117-328).¹⁵⁹

¹⁵⁶ P.L. 116-136. See also GAO, *Federal Hiring: OPM Should Collect and Share COVID-19 Lessons Learned to Inform Hiring During Future Emergencies*, GAO-22-104297, October 25, 2021, <https://www.gao.gov/assets/gao-22-104297.pdf>.

¹⁵⁷ For more information about the six ARP Act grant programs, see CRS Insight IN11712, *The Economic Development Administration’s American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act Grant Programs*, by Julie M. Lawhorn.

¹⁵⁸ The EDA allocated one third of the total amount of ARP Act appropriations (\$1 billion of a total \$3 billion in ARP Act funding) to the Build Back Better Regional Challenge (BBRC) to support new or existing regional innovation clusters. On December 13, 2021, EDA announced awards to 60 coalitions through Phase 1 of the BBRC program; for a list of finalists, see <https://www.eda.gov/funding/programs/american-rescue-plan/build-back-better/finalists>.

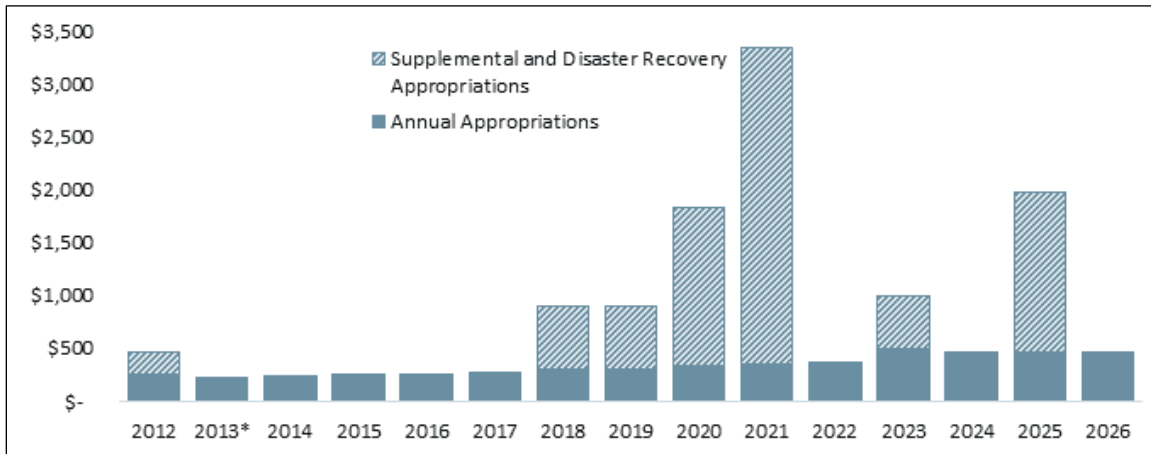
¹⁵⁹ See Division B, Title VI—Miscellaneous Science and Technology Provisions, Subtitle C, §10621.

Other Sources of EDA Program Funding in FY2025

The National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) of FY2025 (P.L. 118-159, Division E, Title LIV) approved up to \$500 million from proceeds from a spectrum auction for the Tech Hubs program in FY2025.

Figure 6. Annual and Supplemental and Disaster Recovery Appropriations, FY2012-FY2026

(in millions of nominal dollars)



Source: CRS using information from the reports accompanying appropriations bills.

Notes: Annual appropriations include funding for programs and salaries and expenses. In FY2012, annual appropriations for programs and disaster recovery assistance were approved in one bill, the Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2012 (P.L. 112-55). In FY2018 through FY2021, supplemental appropriations for disaster recovery assistance and COVID-19 pandemic economic recovery assistance were approved in bills separate from annual appropriations bills. In FY2023, supplemental appropriations in P.L. 117-328 included (1) \$500 million for disaster recovery, (2) \$159 million for the Recompete Pilot program, and (3) \$459 million for the Tech Hubs program (see Division N). The asterisk (*) indicates that the FY2013 level is the post-sequestration amount. Chart does not include funding provided by spectrum auction proceeds, which were authorized by the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) of FY2025 (P.L. 118-159, Division E, Title LIV).

FY2027 Funding Request

The Trump Administration proposed to eliminate the EDA in the FY2027 discretionary funding request. The President’s FY2027 budget requests \$20 million for salaries and expenses to conduct an orderly closeout of the agency.¹⁶⁰

Inspector General Oversight

The mission of the DOC Office of Inspector General (OIG) is to improve the DOC’s programs and operations through independent and objective oversight. The OIG’s methods of oversight

¹⁶⁰ OMB, “Appendix—Budget of the U.S. Government FY 2027,” https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2026/04/com_fy2027.pdf#page=4. The Trump Administration proposed to eliminate the EDA in the FY2026 discretionary funding request as well. EDA’s FY2026 Congressional Budget Justification showed a request for \$30 million to cover “costs associated with the first year of closing down the agency and restoring confidence in America’s fiscal management.” See EDA, “FY2026 Congressional Budget Justification,” June 2025, <https://www.commerce.gov/sites/default/files/2025-06/EDA-FY2026-Congressional-Budget-Submission.pdf>.

include audits, evaluations, investigations, and related activities.¹⁶¹ In recent years, DOC OIG testimonies and reports have analyzed the Public Works program, the Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) program (administered through the EAA program), and disaster recovery awards (also administered through the EAA program), with the OIG making recommendations for changes to grant application review, compliance, and related practices to prevent fraud, waste, and abuse.¹⁶² A report focused on the EDA by the OIG's Office of Audit and Evaluation (OAE) was issued in November 2023 and discussed EDA's administration of disaster recovery funding.¹⁶³ The report found that while EDA generally monitored grants, it did not always follow up on late submissions as required.¹⁶⁴ In February 2025, the OIG's OAE announced that it plans to audit the EDA's FY2019 disaster relief grant costs.¹⁶⁵

In recent years, the OIG also examined other aspects of EDA. In January 2021, an OIG report reviewed findings from an examination of EDA's administration of CARES Act funding.¹⁶⁶ The report found that (1) EDA was proactive in implementing the requirements of the CARES Act; (2) EDA mitigated challenges during implementation of the CARES Act; and (3) EDA exceeded obligation milestones and completed required certifications. The report reiterated a recommendation from a prior DOC OIG report for EDA to complete a comprehensive workforce plan for ongoing and future emergency and disaster relief efforts due to insufficient staffing and related concerns.¹⁶⁷ In April 2025, the DOC OIG published a report with findings from an examination of EDA's CARES Act RLF program. The report noted that EDA did not ensure RLF funds were loaned in accordance with federal regulations and RLF plans.¹⁶⁸ In June 2025, the DOC OIG published a report with findings on the planning and implementation of the EDA's grant management IT system. One of the OIG's 10 recommendations focused on EDA's system of internal control of IT investments; the other recommendations involved Department-level

¹⁶¹ U.S. Department of Commerce (DOC) Office of Inspector General (OIG), "Mission," <https://www.oig.doc.gov/about/our-mission/>; "FAQs," <https://www.oig.doc.gov/about/faqs/>; and "Organization," <https://www.oig.doc.gov/about/organization/>.

¹⁶² See, for example, Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works, Subcommittee on Transportation and Infrastructure, 110th Cong., 2nd sess., September 9, 2008, S. Hrg. 110-1262, <https://www.congress.gov/110/chrgr/CHRG-110shrg88906/CHRG-110shrg88906.pdf>; "The Economic Development Administration Faces Challenges in Effectively Monitoring Its Revolving Loan Funds," Final Report No. OIG-15-031-A, June 5, 2015, <https://www.oig.doc.gov/OIGPublications/OIG-15-031-A.pdf>; and "EDA Is Not Fully Complying with All Its Disaster Relief Award Policies," Final Report No. OIG-21-014-A, December 21, 2020, <https://www.oig.doc.gov/OIGPublications/OIG-21-014-A.pdf>.

¹⁶³ According to the DOC OIG, the Office of Audit and Evaluation activities "include performance audits and evaluations, and financial audits. OAE also reviews and handles resolution of certain single audits conducted by state and local auditors on recipients of Commerce financial awards." DOC OIG, "Audit and Evaluation," <https://www.oig.doc.gov/about/organization/audit-and-evaluation/>.

¹⁶⁴ DOC OIG, "EDA Generally Monitored Grants Awarded Under the FY 2019 EDA Disaster Supplemental Notice of Funding Opportunity," Final Report OIG-24-005-A, November 6, 2023, <https://www.oig.doc.gov/Pages/EDA-Generally-Monitored-Grants-Awarded-Under-the-FY-2019-EDA-Disaster-Supplemental-Notice-of-Funding-Opportunity.aspx>.

¹⁶⁵ DOC OIG, "Audit of EDA's FY 2019 Disaster Relief Grants Costs Claimed and Oversight Efforts," February 11, 2025, <https://www.oig.doc.gov/detail-disaster-relief/?entry=24092>.

¹⁶⁶ DOC OIG, "EDA Was Effective in Implementing the Requirements for Awarding Funds Under the CARES Act," Final Report No. OIG-21-017-1, January 5, 2021, <https://www.oversight.gov/sites/default/files/documents/reports/2021-01/OIG-21-017-1.pdf>.

¹⁶⁷ DOC OIG, "EDA Was Effective in Implementing the Requirements for Awarding Funds Under the CARES Act," Final Report OIG-21-017-I, January 5, 2021, <https://www.oig.doc.gov/OIGPublications/OIG-21-017-I.pdf>.

¹⁶⁸ DOC OIG, "EDA Needs to Improve Oversight of CARES Act Revolving Loan Funds to Ensure Loans Are Made to Eligible Borrowers and Used as Intended," Final Report No. OIG-25-019-A, April 30, 2025, <https://www.oig.doc.gov/wp-content/OIGPublications/OIG-25-019-A-SECURED.pdf>.

matters. DOC's response to the report indicated that the Department would implement the recommendation for an analysis of the EDA's internal controls.¹⁶⁹

EDA Reauthorization

Prior to 2025, Congress last amended and extended EDA authorities in 2004 through the Economic Development Administration Reauthorization Act (EDARA; P.L. 108-373). In hearings during the 117th and 118th Congresses, Members of Congress discussed issues related to EDA's grant requirements, grant allocations, disaster recovery, and capacity, and the reauthorization of appropriations for programs established by PWEDA among other matters.¹⁷⁰ Congressional debate centered on modernizing EDA's programs and authorities to meet changing technology and industries versus keeping broad-based programs that may be adapted to a range of challenges and opportunities. In deliberations preceding EDA's reauthorization, Members of Congress also expressed varying perspectives on the preferred level of federal participation in state and local economic development and raised questions about the extent of EDA and other federal agency collaboration versus the potential duplication of programs and services.¹⁷¹

In January 2025, the Economic Development Reauthorization Act (EDRA) of 2024 (P.L. 118-272) reauthorized the EDA. EDRA revised existing authorities, codified new and existing roles, expanded criteria for existing programs, and changed program and administrative requirements. In general, EDRA made significant changes to EDA because the legislation

- statutorily established EDA investment priorities;
- amended cost-sharing and other program requirements;
- prioritized small, rural, under-resourced, and tribal communities for certain EDA programs and activities;
- expanded and codified EDA's role in disaster economic recovery and tribal economic development;
- authorized new programs, amended program authorities to modernize or refine the scope of existing programs, and codified EDA's authority to support certain types of projects and activities (e.g., broadband, workforce training, project predevelopment);
- expanded and codified EDA's coordination and partnership activities; and
- authorized a total funding level of \$3.2 billion through FY2029, among other changes.

EDRA's reauthorization of EDA signaled continued congressional interest in promoting job creation and private investment in distressed communities through flexible, core economic development grant programs. EDRA also indicated congressional interest in allowing EDA to provide new forms of assistance and expand program access to certain communities and for certain development activities. For instance, EDRA's changes to core EDA program criteria

¹⁶⁹ DOC OIG, "The Department's Vision for an Enterprise Grants Management System Has Not Been Realized," Final Report Number OIG-25-025-A, June 30, 2025, https://www.oig.doc.gov/wp-content/OIGPublications/OIG-25-025-A_Final-Report-SECURED.pdf.

¹⁷⁰ For a list of hearings in the 117th and 118th Congresses related to the reauthorization of EDA, see **Table C-2**.

¹⁷¹ House Committee on T&I, Subcommittee on Economic Development, Public Buildings, and Emergency Management, *Regional Commissions: A Review of Federal Economic Development Program Effectiveness*, 118th Cong., 1st sess., October 19, 2023, Serial No. 118-32, pp. 2-3, 9, 35, <https://www.congress.gov/118/chr/CHRG-118hhrg56927/CHRG-118hhrg56927.pdf>.

appear to be designed to specifically address economic development needs of rural, small, and tribal communities and the needs of areas experiencing economic distress resulting from changes in energy and manufacturing industries. EDRA authorized assistance for regional economies that may be preparing for and responding to natural disasters, plant closures, broadband challenges, trade dynamics, and other problems and opportunities as well.

For additional information about EDRA, see CRS Report R48516, *Economic Development Reauthorization Act (EDRA) of 2024*, by Julie M. Lawhorn.

Policy Considerations

The following policy considerations center on the extent of innovation and technology-led economic development activities in EDA’s investment portfolio; EDA’s workforce; and the TAAF program in light of current trade and economic dynamics and ongoing trade negotiations.

Preparing for Future Industries and EDA’s Role in Federal Innovation Policy¹⁷²

In deliberations leading up to the reauthorization of EDRA, Members of Congress noted that one of the reasons for reauthorizing EDA was to address “changes in industries, technology, and trade patterns” that have occurred since prior reauthorization legislation was enacted.¹⁷³ Such changes provided both challenges and opportunities for regional economies to modernize their infrastructure, enhance workforce capabilities, and make technology-based economic development investments. EDA defines “technology-based economic development” as

economic development planning or implementation projects that foster regional knowledge ecosystems that support entrepreneurs and startups, including the commercialization of new technologies, that are creating technology-driven businesses and high-skilled, well-paying jobs of the future.¹⁷⁴

One of EDA’s investment priorities is “innovation and entrepreneurship,” which is generally associated with technology-based economic development. Congress recently authorized new EDA programs to further prepare regions and workers for innovation- and technology-based economic development, and for “future industries.”¹⁷⁵ Innovation- and technology-led economic

¹⁷² As previously noted, EDA’s involvement in innovation and technology broadly includes the administration of competitive grant programs (e.g., the Build to Scale (B2S), SPRINT Challenge, and the Accelerate Response and Recovery (R2) Network Challenge programs described above and in **Appendix A**), workforce development and technical assistance initiatives (e.g., the STEM Talent Challenge and University Centers), and coordination with other federal agencies on regional innovation strategies (e.g., NACIE), among other activities. For a review of EDA and other federal programs for regional innovation, see CRS Report R47495, *Regional Innovation: Federal Programs and Issues for Consideration*, by Julie M. Lawhorn et al.

For a list of CRS analysts associated with science, technology, and innovation policy, see CRS Report R42688, *Science, Technology, and Innovation Policy: CRS Experts*, by John F. Sargent Jr.

¹⁷³ See U.S. Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, *Economic Development Administration Reauthorization Act of 2024*, 118th Congress, 2nd Session, S.Rept. 118-233, September 25, 2024, <https://www.congress.gov/congressional-report/118th-congress/senate-report/233/1?outputFormat=pdf>. The report is for S. 3891, which included provisions that were similar, but not identical to the provisions in EDRA (P.L. 118-272).

¹⁷⁴ EDA, “Economic Development Glossary,” <https://www.eda.gov/about/economic-development-glossary>.

¹⁷⁵ See EDA, “Investment Priorities,” <https://www.eda.gov/funding/investment-priorities> and testimony by Mr. Dennis Alvord, Acting Assistant Secretary of Commerce for EDA, U.S. House of Representatives, Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, Subcommittee on Economic Development, Public Buildings and Emergency (continued...)

development strategies are based on the premise that technological breakthroughs and innovation drive economic growth. Some researchers observe that by identifying and promoting innovation, federal support may facilitate economic growth and competition.¹⁷⁶

Congress has supported various policies to promote innovation and to prepare regions for expanded technology-based economic development through workforce development programs as well as a subset of federal innovation policies often referred to as “regional innovation” or “innovation cluster” programs.¹⁷⁷ Congress may seek to continue support for EDA’s existing innovation-oriented programs (e.g., B2S, Regional Technology and Innovation Hub), similar programs, or new programs.¹⁷⁸ Alternatively, Congress may pursue a more limited federal role in the facilitation of innovation clusters, advance policies that favor stronger state and local roles in technology-led economic development, or advance policies that favor investment in public goods or other development strategies.¹⁷⁹

Management, *Investing in America: Reauthorization of the Economic Development Administration*, 117th Cong., 1st sess., April 28, 2021, <https://www.congress.gov/117/meeting/house/112512/witnesses/HHRG-117-PW13-Wstate-AlvordD-20210428.pdf>.

EDA’s guidance for the STEM Talent Challenge highlighted “industries of the future” which could include, but are not limited to: artificial intelligence; machine learning; advanced manufacturing and robotics; space exploration and commerce; broadband expansion; bioscience; quantum information science; climate technologies; the built environment; and aqua- and agricultural technologies. EDA, “STEM Talent Challenge NOFO,” FY2023, p. 6, <https://www.eda.gov/sites/default/files/2023-04/FY%2023%20STEM%20Talent%20Challenge%20NOFO.pdf>.

¹⁷⁶ See Congressional Budget Office, “Federal Policies and Innovation,” November 17, 2014, p. 5, <https://www.cbo.gov/publication/49487>; and Yong-Shik Lee, “Law and Economic Development in the United States: Toward a New Paradigm,” *Catholic University Law Review*, vol. 68, no. 2 (2019), pp. 1-62, May 31, 2018, SSRN: <https://ssrn.com/abstract=3168964>.

¹⁷⁷ EDA defines regional clusters as

geographic concentrations of firms, workers and industries that do business with each other and have common needs for talent, technology, and infrastructure. Regional clusters are essentially networks of similar, synergistic, or complementary entities that are engaged in or with a particular industry sector; have active channels for business transactions and communication; share specialized infrastructure, labor markets, and services; and leverage the region’s unique competitive strengths to stimulate innovation and create jobs. Regional clusters may cross municipal, county, and other jurisdictional boundaries.

EDA, “Key Definitions,” <https://eda.gov/performance/key-definitions/>.

¹⁷⁸ Federal support for regional clusters and innovation cluster initiatives have included programs administered by EDA (e.g., Regional Innovation Strategies/Build to Scale) and agencies such as the Department of Energy, DOC, NIST, SBA, and others. These programs generally provide planning and other support to intermediary organizations to develop new or expand existing industry clusters. See Ryan Donahue, Joseph Parilla, and Brad McDearman, “Rethinking Cluster Initiatives,” Brookings Institution Metropolitan Policy Program, July 2018, https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/201807_Brookings-Metro_Rethinking-Clusters-Initiatives_Full-report-final.pdf; Mark Muro and Bruce Katz, “The New ‘Cluster Moment’: How Regional Innovation Clusters Can Foster the Next Economy,” Brookings Institution Metropolitan Policy Program, September 21, 2010, <https://www.brookings.edu/research/the-new-cluster-moment-how-regional-innovation-clusters-can-foster-the-next-economy/>; National Research Council, “The Federal Dimension,” *Best Practices in State and Regional Innovation Initiatives: Competing in the 21st Century* (Washington, DC: The National Academies Press), 2013, <https://doi.org/10.17226/18364>; and Camilla Alexandra Hrdy, “Cluster Competition,” *Lewis & Clark Law Review*, vol. 20, October 7, 2016, pp. 982-986, 1013, <https://ssrn.com/abstract=2672660>, which includes the definition of innovation clusters as “regional economies made up of firms, suppliers, and human talent whose core activity is innovation.”

As noted, the EDA’s Build Back Better Regional Challenge, a grant program launched in July 2021, funded new or existing regional innovation clusters with one third of the total amount of ARP Act appropriations (\$1 billion out of a total of \$3 billion in ARP Act funding).

¹⁷⁹ Camilla Alexandra Hrdy, “Cluster Competition,” *Lewis & Clark Law Review*, vol. 20, October 7, 2016, pp. 997-1009, <https://ssrn.com/abstract=2672660>; and Giles Duranton, “California Dreamin’: The Feeble Case for Cluster Policies,” *Review of Economic Analysis*, vol. 3, pp. 3-45, http://repository.upenn.edu/real-estate_papers/2.

Congress may also seek to review the overall distribution and coordination of existing innovation policies as well as the EDA's role in the landscape of federal innovation programs. The House Subcommittee on Research and Technology reviewed these matters in a hearing in June 2021. The hearing addressed the following questions, many of which pertain to the broader discussion on EDA and its role in future industries and regional economic development, including

- What are the critical elements and who are the necessary partners in developing a successful strategy for local and regional innovation economies?
- What is the role of the federal government, and in particular the EDA, in supporting the development of local and regional innovation economies?
- How can research universities strengthen their role in helping to anchor local and regional innovation economies?
- How can efforts to build regional innovation economies include shared prosperity as a priority?¹⁸⁰

Discontinued Programs and EDA's Role in Artificial Intelligence (AI) Pilot Workforce Programs

In July 2025, the Trump Administration's *Artificial Intelligence Action Plan* identified a role for several agencies, including EDA, to implement artificial intelligence (AI) pilot programs and other activities to advance national economic and military objectives.¹⁸¹ The plan highlighted a range of strategies, including those that address workforce development and training, which could be implemented using existing DOL and DOC authorities, namely the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and PWEDA, respectively. The latter authorizes several long-standing EDA programs, such as the Public Works and EAA programs, as well as newer programs such as the workforce training program recently established by EDRA.¹⁸²

In December 2025, EDA published a blog post on "EDA Support for the Administration's AI Action Plan," which summarized EDA's plan to shift resources to new priorities and emerging opportunities, such as AI, in support of the *Artificial Intelligence Action Plan*.¹⁸³ EDA plans to allocate \$25 million for workforce grants and will discontinue funding for three programs (i.e.,

¹⁸⁰ Policy questions from the Hearing Charter for U.S. House of Representatives, Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, "Building Regional Innovation Economies," June 9, 2021, <https://www.congress.gov/117/meeting/house/112753/documents/HHRG-117-SY15-20210609-SD002.pdf>.

The hearing memo reviewed the role of the Department of Commerce and the EDA in expanding regional innovation economies, options for further development, and partnership opportunities with federal science agencies, and raised several considerations regarding the EDA's role and select aspects of the Build to Scale (B2S) program in particular. The memo noted that EDA's expertise includes leading regional economic development and related expertise, while NIST and other agencies are generally considered lead agencies in terms of technical expertise on innovation and research and development. The hearing charter further noted that the matching requirements associated with the competitive B2S program may limit participation by economically distressed and rural communities due to limited resources in some communities.

¹⁸¹ The White House, "Winning the Race: America's AI Action Plan," July 2025, pp. 1, 7, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/Americas-AI-Action-Plan.pdf>.

¹⁸² As of September 2025, EDA recommends that Public Works and EAA projects involving workforce training "should include artificial intelligence (AI) skill development where relevant and feasible," and "prioritize AI literacy and other skills necessary to prepare Americans and regions for the impact artificial intelligence will have on local economies and labor markets." See EDA, "FY2025 EDA Public Works and Economic Adjustment Assistance NOFO," pp. 18-19, <https://grants.gov/search-results-detail/346815>.

¹⁸³ EDA, "EDA Support for the Administration's AI Action Plan," December 22, 2025, <https://www.eda.gov/news/blog/2025/12/22/eda-support-administrations-ai-action-plan>.

the University Center (UC), Trade Adjustment Assistance for Firms (TAAF), and STEM Talent Challenge programs).¹⁸⁴ EDA noted that the three discontinued programs were outdated, costly, and “not designed to address recent developments in the economy or have had their authorizations lapse.”¹⁸⁵ The workforce grants will use a sectoral partnership approach and will address “opportunities created through AI adoption and workforce upskilling.”¹⁸⁶ In May 2026, EDA launched the new AI Upskill Accelerator Program that is to provide grants for AI workforce training activities designed and implemented by sectoral partnerships.¹⁸⁷ EDA indicates that it will make five to eight non-construction awards in amounts ranging from \$1 million to \$8 million.¹⁸⁸

Congress may wish to review whether, and to what extent, EDA’s AI initiative differs from or aligns with the agency’s statutorily established investment priorities (see “Investment Priorities, FY2012-Present”). One of the EDA’s five investment priorities is “workforce” and the agency has previously engaged in efforts to support sectoral partnerships through the Good Jobs Challenge (FY2021-FY2024). Another EDA investment priority is “innovation and entrepreneurship,” which includes fostering “the commercialization of new technologies that are creating technology-driven businesses and high-skilled, well-paying jobs of the future.”¹⁸⁹ EDA noted that the Trump Administration’s AI plan “recognizes the need for industry-driven training programs that address workforce needs tied to AI infrastructure investments.”¹⁹⁰ In recent decades, EDA has typically supported community-driven projects based on the unique set of opportunities and challenges presented by a particular regional economy, which varies from place to place and may include a range of different industries. For instance, EDA describes its work by noting that it “provides economic development financial assistance to communities so they can encourage innovation and entrepreneurship in a way that works best for them.”¹⁹¹

While economists lack consensus on the various ways that AI may impact national and regional economies and job markets, many point out that the labor effects of AI introduction and expansion may have implications that vary depending on industry, skills and region (geography). For a summary of perspectives on AI and labor considerations, see CRS In Focus IF12762, *The Macroeconomic Effects of Artificial Intelligence*, by Lida R. Weinstock and Paul Tierno. For additional CRS reports on AI, see CRS Insight IN12458, *Artificial Intelligence: CRS Products*.

¹⁸⁴ CRS In Focus IF12430, *Trade Adjustment Assistance for Firms*, by Kyla H. Kitamura.

¹⁸⁵ EDA, “EDA Support for the Administration’s AI Action Plan,” December 22, 2205, <https://www.eda.gov/news/blog/2025/12/22/eda-support-administrations-ai-action-plan>.

¹⁸⁶ EDA, “Frequently Asked Questions,” <https://www.eda.gov/ai-upskill/frequently-asked-questions>.

¹⁸⁷ EDA administers the new AI workforce grants under its authority for workforce training grants (42 U.S.C. §3154e) and issued an addendum to the Public Works and EAA NOFO for the initial round of AI Upskill Accelerator Program funding. For the AI Upskill Accelerator Program, EDA defined a sectoral partnership as a partnership of employers from the same industry who join with other strategic partners to focus on the workforce needs and place workers into high-paying skilled jobs that employers need filled. See EDA, “Fiscal Years (FY) 2023, 2024, and 2025 Public Works and Economic Adjustment Assistance Notice of Funding Opportunity (FY 23/24/25 PWEAA NOFO),” https://www.eda.gov/sites/default/files/2026-05/EDA_PWEAA_AI_Upskill_Accelerator_Pilot_Program_Notice_of_Funding_Opportunity.pdf.

¹⁸⁸ EDA, “AI Upskill Accelerator Program,” <https://www.eda.gov/ai-upskill>.

¹⁸⁹ EDA, “Investment Priorities,” <https://www.eda.gov/funding/investment-priorities>.

¹⁹⁰ Page, Testimony in *Smarter Spending, Stronger Results: Reducing Duplication and Ensuring Effectiveness Through Economic Development Reforms*.

¹⁹¹ EDA, “About EDA,” <https://www.eda.gov/about>.

EDA's Workforce

As Congress considers provisions in recent bills designed to reauthorize, alter, update, or expand EDA's programs, it may seek to review the scale and scope of financial resources, workforce capacity, and authorities that may be needed to meet future needs and roles of the EDA. For instance, in its FY2025 budget request, EDA noted that "Since 2018, EDA has seen its active grant portfolio grow by more than 8 times, going from 1,670 grants valued at \$694 million at the end of 2017 to over 3,000 grants valued at over \$6 billion in 2024."¹⁹² (See **Figure 4** for a visualization of EDA's funding for programs and salaries and expenses since FY2012.) Congress may seek to review EDA's workforce plan, permanent and temporary staffing levels, and hiring authorities to ensure that the agency is equipped to implement and oversee new programs and authorities.

Trade Adjustment Assistance for Firms (TAAF)

Following the TAAF termination provisions that took effect in 2022, EDA cannot accept new petitions for TAAF. EDA may continue to assist firms that submitted a petition prior to the program's expiration.¹⁹³ Congress may review the TAAF program in light of current trade and economic dynamics and ongoing trade negotiations. TAAF policy discussions involve the program's reauthorization, and broadening criteria so that more firms may qualify for assistance. The program's focus, funding level, and options to streamline its operations, among other matters, are outlined as "Issues for Congress" in CRS In Focus IF12430, *Trade Adjustment Assistance for Firms*, by Kyla H. Kitamura. Congress may also review the EDA's continued administration of the portion of the TAAF program for firms that submitted a petition prior to the program's expiration. In the explanatory statement accompanying FY2026 appropriations, for instance, Congress directed EDA to provide \$7.5 million to the TAAF program in FY2026.¹⁹⁴ According to EDA, funding is not available to continue support for the program, and "current Trade Adjustment Assistance Centers will utilize previously awarded funds to serve existing clients until such funding is exhausted."¹⁹⁵

Concluding Remarks

Throughout the agency's history, a central feature of EDA's role has been to provide matching federal funds to assist state, local, and regional entities to advance projects in support of growth, or to address geographic disparities for distressed areas. In 2025, EDRA expanded EDA's authorities, structure, and requirements, which may enable the agency to serve more communities, achieve different outcomes, or coordinate across federal and state departments and agencies in different ways. In light of recent changes provided in EDRA, Congress may be interested in tracking the implementation of new programs, roles, and coordination activities and their impact on communities.

¹⁹² EDA, "FY2025 Congressional Budget Justification," p. 115, <https://www.commerce.gov/sites/default/files/2024-03/EDA-FY2025-Justification-Congressional-Submission.pdf>.

¹⁹³ See CRS In Focus IF12430, *Trade Adjustment Assistance for Firms*, by Kyla H. Kitamura.

¹⁹⁴ Representative Tom Cole, "Explanatory Statement Submitted by Mr. Cole, Chair of the House Committee on Appropriations, Regarding H.R. 6938, Commerce, Justice, Science; Energy and Water Development; and Interior and Environment Appropriations Act, 2026," p. H256.

¹⁹⁵ EDA, "Trade Adjustment Assistance for Firms," <https://www.eda.gov/funding/programs/trade-adjustment-assistance-for-firms>.

Legislation enacted in recent Congresses indicates interest in expanding the EDA's role in place-based, regionally oriented, and community-led approaches to technology-based economic development. As EDA and other federal agencies implement new regional innovation programs, Congress may evaluate aspects of such programs for consideration in other place-based initiatives. Conversely, Congress may evaluate options to decrease federal involvement in state and local economic development.

Policies that propose to change the agency's roles or programs may reflect different interpretations of what constitutes economic development and differing views on whether federal policies should provide broad-based assistance, targeted assistance, or some combination thereof. For some, broad-based economic development programs with economic distress criteria allow assistance to be accessible for a range of communities' needs and opportunities (e.g., the Public Works and EAA programs). For others, targeted economic development programs allow assistance to reach a particular type of community or circumstance (e.g., programs for energy- and resource-based industries). For others still, policies may involve a mixture of approaches and overlap in definitions, agencies, roles, and strategies of practice. In considering policy changes, Congress may also wish to maintain current program roles and authorities—many of which are broad and flexible (e.g., the EAA program)—and targeted appropriations, directed as needed to address new challenges and opportunities (e.g., in the manner of setting aside EAA funding for coal-impacted and nuclear closure communities in the Assistance to Coal Communities (ACC) and Assistance to Nuclear Host Communities (ANHC initiatives)).¹⁹⁶ Congress may also review the allocation of assistance based on preferred economic development goals—to further economic growth, to advance national competitiveness, to foster job creation, to prepare regions for development, to develop human capital, to recover from and prepare for economic shocks, and/or other outcomes. While EDRA addressed some economic development challenges related to technology, trade, extreme weather trends, and industry changes, these matters may continue to impact regional economies and may warrant further congressional deliberation and/or response.

The EDA—through its program investments, partnerships, and integration roles—represents one of many channels of federal and nonfederal policies designed to address economic matters at the subnational level. In practice, economic development involves multiple stakeholders, and the associated outcomes and processes will likely be impacted by multiple macroeconomic factors and community-level circumstances, conditions, and histories. Policy considerations related to EDA are likely to involve a strategic and contextual evaluation of adjacent policies, related agencies, supporting actors, and awareness of the many, dynamic factors impacting global, national, and regional economies.

As debates about federal economic development policy and how to assist economically distressed areas continue, Congress may continue to explore legislative and other strategies to assist state and local entities with specific challenges and opportunities and/or to help them also build resilient, diversified economies that may weather these and other unforeseen events.

¹⁹⁶ Congress approved appropriations for several years for the ACC and NCC initiatives. EDRA codified EDA assistance to coal and nuclear host communities initiatives under the existing EAA program under in FY2025.

Appendix A. Grant Programs

This appendix provides summaries of EDA’s recent grant programs and selected requirements.

In January 2025, the Economic Development Reauthorization Act (EDRA) of 2024 (P.L. 118-272) reauthorized the EDA. EDRA also authorized several new EDA grant programs, including programs for renewable energy on brownfields sites (42 U.S.C. §3154d), workforce training (42 U.S.C. §3154e), high-speed broadband deployment (42 U.S.C. §3154g), and critical supply chain site development (42 U.S.C. §3154h). As of the date of publication, EDA has not published guidance for all of the new programs.

AI Upskill Accelerator Pilot (AI Workforce) Program

In May 2026, EDA launched the AI Upskill Accelerator Pilot Program, which is to provide grants for AI workforce training activities designed and implemented by sectoral partnerships.¹⁹⁷

Through these partnerships, public and private entities are to work collaboratively to train and place workers in AI positions needed by employers.¹⁹⁸ According to EDA, the approach is designed to “cut across traditional economic development, workforce, education, and social services system silos,” and target in-demand sectors.¹⁹⁹

The AI workforce funding is available for three project phases, which EDA refers to as “sequential and interdependent”:

- Phase 1: System Development,
- Phase 2: Program Design, and
- Phase 3: Program Implementation.

According to agency guidance, applicants may submit projects that cover all three phases, one optional phase in addition to the required Phase 3, or Phase 3 only.²⁰⁰

Statutory Authority: 42 U.S.C. §3154e²⁰¹

Agency Regulations: 13 C.F.R. Part 307

Economic distress criteria: The project area must demonstrate the following four aspects of the NOFO’s “special need” criterion to be eligible for funding:

- The focus industry and its associated employers are a significant part of the region or project service area’s economy;
- AI is currently being used by the relevant industry and the employers associated with the project;

¹⁹⁷ For the AI Upskill Accelerator Program, EDA defined a sectoral partnership as partnership as a partnership of employers from the same industry who join with other strategic partners to focus on the workforce needs and place workers into high-paying skilled jobs that employers need filled. See EDA, “FY 23/24/25 PWEAA NOFO,” p. 44.

¹⁹⁸ EDA, “EDA Support for the Administration’s AI Action Plan,” December 22, 2025, <https://www.eda.gov/news/blog/2025/12/22/eda-support-administrations-ai-action-plan>; and “AI Upskill Accelerator Pilot Program,” <https://www.eda.gov/ai-upskill>.

¹⁹⁹ EDA, “FY 23/24/25 PWEAA NOFO,” p. 18.

²⁰⁰ EDA, “FY 23/24/25 PWEAA NOFO,” p. 44.

²⁰¹ While P.L. 119-272 authorized EDA to make grants to support the development and expansion of workforce training programs (42 U.S.C. §3154e), EDA is also authorized to make such grants under its EAA authority (42 U.S.C. §3149). EDA administered the first round of AI workforce funding by issuing an addendum to the FY2025 PWEAA NOFO. See EDA, “AI Upskill Accelerator Pilot Program.”

- AI currently in use by employers in the relevant industry is important to the future competitiveness of the industry and the economy of the region; and
- There is an existing need for workforce training in AI with the employer partners in this project that is necessary to preserve and/or enhance their competitiveness and benefit to the region.²⁰²

Requirement to align with CEDS or equivalent: AI workforce projects must indicate how their activities will be consistent with the region or regions' CEDS.²⁰³

Level of matching funds requirement: EDA established a 60% maximum investment rate for the AI workforce program. However, EDA may award grants totaling 100% of a project's cost for tribes, small communities (provided that they meet other eligibility criteria and indicia of distress), certain applicants that have exhausted their effective borrowing capacity, or a state or political subdivision of a state that has exhausted its effective taxing and borrowing capacity or can otherwise document that no local matching funds are reasonably obtainable.²⁰⁴

Build to Scale (B2S)

The B2S program (formerly called Regional Innovation Strategies) supports entrepreneurship, innovation, technology commercialization, access to capital, and related efforts to expand startups, company growth, and increased access to risk capital across regional economies. According to EDA, the B2S program goals are to (1) enable high-growth technology entrepreneurship and foster inclusive access to proven entrepreneurship support models; and (2) increase access to capital in communities where risk capital is in short supply by providing operational support for early-stage investment funds, networks, and training programs that focus on both traditional and hybrid equity-based financing.²⁰⁵ The B2S program primarily funds intermediary organizations and does not provide funding to start-ups.

Statutory Authority: 15 U.S.C. §3722

Agency Regulations: 13 C.F.R. Part 312

Economic distress criteria: No minimum economic distress level requirements.²⁰⁶

Level of matching funds requirement: In FY2024, the minimum matching share was 50%.²⁰⁷

Economic Adjustment Assistance (EAA) Program

EDA refers to the EAA program as its most flexible economic development tool.²⁰⁸ The EAA program is designed to assist areas experiencing long-term economic distress or sudden and

²⁰² EDA, "FY 23/24/25 PWEAA NOFO," pp. 46-47.

²⁰³ EDA, "FY 23/24/25 PWEAA NOFO," pp. 50, 56.

²⁰⁴ 42 U.S.C. §3144(c).

²⁰⁵ EDA, "\$50 Million 'Build to Scale' Funding Opportunity Aims to Boost Technology Entrepreneur Ecosystems Across the Nation," <https://www.eda.gov/news/blog/2024/09/09/50-million-build-scale-funding-opportunity-aims-boost-technology-entrepreneur>.

²⁰⁶ The B2S Program is authorized under Section 27 of the Stevenson-Wydler Technology Innovation Act of 1980 (15 U.S.C. §3722). The FY2020 B2S Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) noted that, "this authorization does not require applicants to meet specific distress criteria to be considered eligible." See EDA, "2020 Build to Scale FAQ," <https://www.eda.gov/archives/2021/files/oie/b2s/2020-B2S-FAQ-FINAL.pdf>.

²⁰⁷ EDA, "2024 Build to Scale Program NOFO," <https://grants.gov/search-results-detail/356368>.

²⁰⁸ EDA, *FY2024 Congressional Budget Justification*, p. 56, <https://www.commerce.gov/sites/default/files/2023-03/EDA-FY2024-Congressional-Budget-Submission.pdf>.

substantial economic dislocation. Under EAA, EDA administers its Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) program, which allows local loan administrators to provide gap financing to small businesses and entrepreneurs. EAA funds are competitively awarded to qualified applicants to assist them in developing and implementing a five-year CEDS or for implementation grants that support the activities and strategies identified in a CEDS. EAA activities may include physical infrastructure projects, including water and sewer facilities, industrial parks, and business incubators; strategic planning; market or industry research and analysis; technical assistance, including feasibility studies; public services; and training.²⁰⁹ The FY2025 Public Works and EAA NOFO indicated that EAA projects involving workforce training “should include artificial intelligence (AI) skill development where relevant and feasible.”²¹⁰

As noted above, in FY2026, EDA launched the AI Upskill Accelerator Program (42 U.S.C. §3154e) by issuing an addendum to the PWEAA NOFO.²¹¹

EDA administers funding for ACC, ANHC, and some forms of supplemental appropriations through EAA.²¹² The EDA supports disaster recovery efforts primarily through the EAA program to support disaster recovery strategies, disaster recovery coordinators, construction activities, capitalizing RLFs, entrepreneurship development, technical assistance, and other recovery projects.²¹³

EDA administered the following economic recovery assistance through the EAA program in recent years:

- **Good Jobs Challenge.** In FY2021, EDA launched the Good Jobs Challenge through the EAA program with funding provided by the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (P.L. 117-2) to develop and strengthen regional workforce training systems and sectoral partnerships.²¹⁴ The program was designed to support regional workforce training programs. EDA announced that it would discontinue the program following the FY2024 Good Jobs Challenge competition.²¹⁵

²⁰⁹ 13 C.F.R. Part 307.

²¹⁰ EDA, “FY 23/24/25 PWEAA NOFO,” p. 18.

²¹¹ EDA, “FY 23/24/25 PWEAA NOFO,” p. 43.

²¹² For more information, see CRS Insight IN11648, *The Economic Development Administration’s Assistance to Coal and Nuclear Closure Communities Initiatives for Economic Transitions*, by Julie M. Lawhorn.

²¹³ EDA, “Leading Economic Recovery Efforts in Disaster-Impacted Communities,” <https://www.eda.gov/archives/2021/files/programs/disaster-recovery/EDA-Disaster-Brochure.pdf>.

²¹⁴ For the Good Jobs Challenge, EDA defined a sectoral partnership as a partnership of employers from the same industry who join with other strategic partners to focus on the workforce needs of an industry within a regional labor market. See EDA, “Good Jobs Challenge, Frequently Asked Questions,” July 29, 2024, p. 4, https://www.eda.gov/sites/default/files/2024-07/FY2024_GJC_Frequently_Asked_Questions.pdf; and “Workforce Development Design and Programming,” https://www.eda.gov/sites/default/files/2024-02/Recompete_Virtual_Summit_Workforce_Development_Recompete_Summit_Slides.pdf; and EDA, “Good Jobs Challenge,” <https://www.eda.gov/funding/programs/good-jobs-challenge>.

²¹⁵ EDA launched the Good Jobs Challenge (GJC) grant program in FY2021—with funding provided by the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (P.L. 117-2)—to develop and strengthen regional workforce training systems and sectoral partnerships. EDA defined a sectoral partnership as a partnership of employers from the same industry who join with other strategic partners to focus on the workforce needs of an industry within a regional labor market. See EDA, “Good Jobs Challenge, Frequently Asked Questions,” July 29, 2024, https://www.eda.gov/sites/default/files/2024-07/FY2024_GJC_Frequently_Asked_Questions.pdf; and “Workforce Development Design and Programming,” https://www.eda.gov/sites/default/files/2024-02/Recompete_Virtual_Summit_Workforce_Development_Recompete_Summit_Slides.pdf. EDA, “Good Jobs Challenge,” <https://www.eda.gov/funding/programs/good-jobs-challenge>.

- **Economic Recovery Corps.** In FY2022, EDA administered the new Economic Recovery Corps program through the EAA program with funding provided by the CARES Act. The Economic Recovery Corps program was designed to expand staff capacity in local organizations focused on improving economic resilience and competitiveness in distressed regions. The Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) indicated that EDA would select a Network Operator (an organization or coalition) to build, launch, and operate the Economic Recovery Corps program, which will embed Fellows in local economic development organizations.²¹⁶
- **Equity Impact Investments.** In FY2022, EDA administered the new Equity Impact Investments program through the EAA program with funding provided by the CARES Act. The program was designed to provide technical assistance to enable organizations serving underserved populations and communities to participate in economic development planning and projects.²¹⁷

Statutory Authority: 42 U.S.C. §3149

Agency Regulations: 13 C.F.R. Part 307

Economic distress criteria: The project area must meet one (or more) of the economic distress criteria, which includes projects that meet a “special need.”

Requirement to align with CEDS or equivalent: Funded projects must be part of an EDA-certified CEDS or equivalent EDA-accepted regional economic development strategy, unless the project is for a Strategy Grant (as defined in 13 C.F.R. §307.3)²¹⁸ or serves a Special Impact area (as defined in 13 C.F.R. Part 310).²¹⁹

Level of matching funds requirement: Generally, 60% of project costs, but may vary. Projects may receive an additional amount, not to exceed 30%, based on the relative needs of the region in which the project will be located, as determined by EDA. In the case of certain applicants that have exhausted their effective borrowing capacity, a state or political subdivision of a state that has exhausted its effective taxing and borrowing capacity, or small communities (provided that they meet other eligibility criteria), EDA may award grants totaling 100% of a project’s cost. Credit may be given toward the nonfederal share for in-kind contributions, including contributions of space, equipment, and services.

Local Technical Assistance Program

The Local Technical Assistance (Local TA) program provides grants for management and technical services, including feasibility studies, impact analyses, disaster resiliency plans, and project planning. Analysis from the impact and feasibility studies may help leaders in economic development decisionmaking. For instance, an eligible entity could apply for a Local TA grant to prepare for a business development project such as an incubator, shared-use processing facility, or an entrepreneurship center. Local TA could help a city or county prepare a feasibility study regarding the reuse of an abandoned manufacturing facility to advance local economic

²¹⁶ EDA, “Economic Recovery Corps,” <https://www.eda.gov/archives/2022/programs/economic-recovery-corps/>.

²¹⁷ EDA, “Fiscal Year 2022 CARES Act Economic Recovery Corps and Equity Impact Investments Programs,” <https://www.eda.gov/funding/funding-opportunities/fiscal-year-2022-cares-act-economic-recovery-corps-and-equity-impact>.

²¹⁸ 13 C.F.R. §307.5(1).

²¹⁹ 13 C.F.R. §301.10(c).

development. EDA notes that, in recent years, the median amount of Local Technical Assistance grants has been approximately \$100,000, and EDA typically has awarded 30-50 Local Technical Assistance projects each year.²²⁰

Statutory Authority: 42 U.S.C. §3147

Agency Regulations: 13 C.F.R. Part 306, Subpart A

Economic distress criteria: EDA's regulations (13 C.F.R. §301.3) note that there are no minimum economic distress level requirements for Local TA projects.

Requirement to align with CEDS or equivalent: EDA regulations (13 C.F.R. §306.2) note that projects will be evaluated based on the extent that they are "consistent with an EDA-approved CEDS, as applicable, for the region in which the project is located."

Level of matching funds requirement: Generally, 60% of project costs, but may be provided up to 100% of project costs (see 42 U.S.C. §3144(c)(3)). See 13 C.F.R. §301.4.

Planning Partnership Program

Planning grants are used for direct and indirect administrative expenses of Economic Development Districts (EDDs) as well as local organizations (Indian tribes and other eligible recipients) charged with long-term strategic economic development planning efforts such as a CEDS in EDA-designated distressed areas. In 2025, EDRA (P.L. 118-272) allowed administrative expenses to include expenses related to

- carrying out certain planning activities;
- project predevelopment;
- updating economic development plans to align with other planning efforts;
- hiring professional staff to assist communities in project predevelopment, identifying and using other economic development programs and funding;
- preparing economic recovery plans in response to disasters; and
- carrying out economic development and predevelopment activities that align with professional economic development best practices.

Planning grants may also support short-term planning investments to states, sub-state planning regions and urban areas and may help communities undertake focused, project-specific planning activities. Eligible activities under this program include developing, maintaining, and implementing a CEDS and related short-term planning activities.²²¹

Statutory Authority: 42 U.S.C. §3143

Agency Regulations: 13 C.F.R. Part 303

²²⁰ EDA, "Fiscal Year 2021–2023 EDA Planning and Local Technical Assistance Programs Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)," <https://www.eda.gov/funding/funding-opportunities/fiscal-year-2021-2023-eda-planning-and-local-technical-assistance>.

²²¹ According to an example noted in EDA's FY2021-FY2023 NOFO for Planning and Local Technical Assistance, "EDA might provide Short Term Planning funding to a coalition of Tribal and regional organizations to plan a coordinated response to the sudden loss of a significant employer in the affected area. EDA also makes Short-Term Planning awards to support the preparation or update of a CEDS for regions not served by a District Organization." See EDA, "NOFO—EDA Planning and Local Technical Assistance Programs," p. 6, <https://www.grants.gov/search-results-detail/332125>.

Economic distress criteria: No minimum economic distress level requirements.²²²

Requirement to align with CEDS or equivalent: Generally, the long-term partnership planning investments support the development of CEDS.

Level of matching funds requirement: Generally, 60% of project costs, but may be provided up to 100% of project costs (see 42 U.S.C. §3144(c)(3)).

Public Works Program

The Public Works program is designed to promote long-term economic development and assist with the construction of physical infrastructure projects in distressed areas. Grants may support the acquisition or development of land and improvements for use for a public works, public service, or development facility; and the acquisition, design and engineering, construction, rehabilitation, alteration, expansion, or improvement of such a facility, including related machinery and equipment. Examples of Public Works activities may include water and sewer systems improvements, industrial parks, business incubator facilities, telecommunications infrastructure, skill-training facilities, brownfields redevelopment, and the expansion of port and harbor facilities. Similar assistance is also available under the agency’s EAA program. The FY2025 Public Works and EAA NOFO (updated September 2025) indicated that Public Works projects involving workforce training “should include artificial intelligence (AI) skill development where relevant and feasible.”²²³

Statutory Authority: 42 U.S.C. §3141

Agency Regulations: 13 C.F.R. Part 305

Economic distress criteria: The project area must meet one (or more) of the economic distress criteria, which includes projects that meet a “special need.”

Requirement to align with CEDS or equivalent: Funded projects must be part of an EDA-certified CEDS or equivalent EDA-accepted regional economic development strategy.

Level of matching funds requirement: Generally, 60% of project costs, but may vary. Projects may receive an additional amount, not to exceed 30%, based on the relative needs of the region in which the project will be located, as determined by EDA. In the case of certain applicants that have exhausted their effective borrowing capacity—such as a state or political subdivision of a state that has exhausted its effective taxing and borrowing capacity, or small communities (provided that they meet other eligibility criteria)—EDA may award grants totaling 100% of a project’s cost. Credit may be given toward the nonfederal share for in-kind contributions, including contributions of space, equipment, and services.

Recompete Pilot Program (Distressed Area Recompete Pilot Program)

The Recompete Pilot program is a new program authorized by the CHIPS and Science Act (P.L. 117-167 §10621) that provides grants and cooperative agreements to persistently distressed areas. EDA administers two types of Recompete awards: (1) strategy development grants and (2) strategy implementation grants.

²²² 13 C.F.R. §306 and 13 C.F.R. §301.3.

²²³ EDA, “FY 23/24/25 PWEAA NOFO,” p. 18.

In the inaugural Recompete competition, EDA administered the two types of funding awards through two award phases for the program.

- For Phase 1, EDA instructed applicants to choose either a strategy development grant, approval of a Recompete Plan, or both. Strategy development grants were designed to help applicants strengthen regional coordination and support planning and pre-development activities, including hiring a coordinator or the formulation of a Recompete Plan. A strategy development grant conveys funding. A Recompete Plan is a comprehensive economic development plan that includes the proposed multiyear activities to be implemented, projected costs, partner roles, and other information. EDA also approved Recompete Plans in Phase 1, but approval of a Recompete Plan did not convey funding. According to EDA, applicants were required to have their Recompete Plan approved in order to be invited to apply for implementation funds under Phase 2.
- In Phase 2, EDA funded implementation awards to support a range of economic development activities based on regional priorities. The implementation funds may be used for activities that are consistent with an applicant's approved Recompete plan in order to support workforce development; business and entrepreneur development; infrastructure (or other site development programs); and planning and technical assistance activities. Implementation award recipients were not required to have previously received a strategy development award.

Eligible applicants include

- political subdivisions of a state;
- tribal governments;
- U.S. territories;
- the District of Columbia;
- nonprofit organizations working in cooperation with a political subdivision of a state;
- EDDs; and
- a coalition of any of the entities listed above.

Statutory Authority: 15 U.S.C. §3722b

Agency Regulations: The program is governed by the terms of the NOFO.²²⁴

Economic distress criteria: The program targets areas where prime-age (25-54 years) employment falls below the national rate. The prime age employment gap (PAEG) is the difference (expressed as a percentage) between (1) the national five-year average prime-age employment rate and (2) the five-year average prime-age employment rate of the eligible area.

Among other requirements, projects must be located in one of two eligible geographic areas and meet certain PAEG requirements. The two eligible geographic areas are

- **Local Labor Markets (LLMs)**—a Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA), a Micropolitan Statistical Area (μMSA), a commuting zone, or tribal lands. LLMs with a PAEG of at least 2.5% are eligible. Tribal lands and Pacific Ocean territories are considered eligible LLMs.

²²⁴ EDA, "FY2023 Distressed Area Recompete Pilot Program Phase 1 NOFO (Recompete Pilot Phase 1 NOFO)," https://www.eda.gov/sites/default/files/2023-06/Recompete_Pilot_Program_NOFO_phase_1_vF.pdf.

- **Local Communities (LCs)**—an area served by a general-purpose unit of local government (e.g., county government) that is located within, but does not fully cover, an ineligible LLM. In addition, one of these conditions must apply:
 - The entire area served by the unit of local government on average has a PAEG of at least 5% and a median annual household income of no more than \$75,000; or
 - A subset of the area served by the unit of local government has five or more contiguous Census tracts that each individually have a PAEG of at least 5% and median annual household income of no more than \$75,000. In this instance, the applicant’s service area must be contained within the identified Census tracts.

Requirement to align with CEDS or equivalent: The CEDS requirement is not referenced in 15 U.S.C. §3722b.

Level of matching funds requirement: There is no match requirement for Phase 1 or Phase 2 awards in the FY2023 NOFO; matching was a competitive factor in Phase 2.

Regional Technology and Innovation Hubs (Tech Hubs) Program²²⁵

P.L. 117-167 (the CHIPS and Science Act), enacted August 8, 2022, established a new Regional Technology and Innovation Hub (Tech Hubs) Program at the Department of Commerce.²²⁶ The focus of the program is to support technology development, job creation, and expanding U.S. innovation capacity. The program also seeks to develop hubs in areas that are not “leading technology centers.”

Program applicants will determine their technology focus area and hub activities based on their regional assets and other factors. P.L. 117-167 does not include a list of specific industry or technology focus areas for the hubs. However, it does outline “considerations for the designation and award of implementation grants.” One of the considerations indicates that, among other factors, the Secretary shall consider “the potential of the eligible consortium to advance the research, development, deployment, and domestic manufacturing of technologies in a key technology focus area, as described in Section 10387 of the Research and Development, Competition, and Innovation Act or other technology or innovation sector critical to national security and economic competitiveness.” The initial list of ten key technology focus areas in Section 10387 (Division B, Title III—National Science Foundation for the Future, Subtitle G) includes biotechnology, quantum information sciences, advanced materials science, and advanced energy and industrial efficiency technologies, among others.

The NOFO further noted that the grants will be made using a competitive, merit-review process, and that awards will be made in a manner that ensures geographic diversity and representation from communities of differing populations, among other considerations. EDA administers two Tech Hubs funding awards:

- **Strategy development awards**—to help a consortium prepare to apply for an implementation award and/or Tech Hub designation by supporting planning, coordination, and pre-development activities; and

²²⁵ For more information, see <https://www.eda.gov/funding/programs/regional-technology-and-innovation-hubs>.

²²⁶ See P.L. 117-167, Division B, Title VI—Miscellaneous Science and Technology Provisions, Subtitle C, §10621.

- **Strategy implementation awards**—to support economic development activities such as workforce development, business and entrepreneur development, technology maturation, and infrastructure.

In the inaugural competition, EDA administered the program in two phases. In Phase 1, an applicant could apply for a strategy development award, a Tech Hub designation, or both. Only entities that were *already designated* as Tech Hubs in Phase 1 were permitted to apply for implementation awards under the Phase 2 NOFO. Designated Tech Hubs, however, were not required to receive a strategy development award to apply for an implementation award. EDA is statutorily required to designate at least 20 Tech Hubs and indicated that designation is a strong signal of a region’s potential. There is no funding associated with the designation.

Tech Hubs grants are awarded to eligible consortia. In addition to other entities, an eligible consortium must include one or more representatives from

- Institutions of higher education;
- State, territorial, local, or tribal governments or other political subdivisions of a state;
- Industry groups or firms in relevant technology, innovation, or manufacturing sectors;
- Economic development organizations or similar entities; and
- Labor or workforce training organizations.

The NOFO encourages the participation of at least two private firms in an eligible consortium, and notes that other entities may be part of the consortium. One of the consortium members will be the lead applicant.²²⁷

Statutory Authority: 15 U.S.C. §3722a²²⁸

Agency Regulations: The program is governed by the terms of the NOFO.²²⁹

Economic distress criteria: No minimum economic distress level requirements.²³⁰

Requirement to align with CEDS or equivalent: The CEDS requirement is not referenced in 15 U.S.C. §3722a.

Level of matching funds requirement: Strategy development award recipients will generally contribute at least a 20% cost share, except the cost share is lowered to 10% if the eligible consortium represents all or part of a small and rural or other underserved community. For implementation awards, the total amount of initial funds awarded shall not exceed 90% of the total operating costs of the hub—except in the case of an eligible consortium that represents all or part of a small and rural or other underserved community or is led by a tribal government.

Research and National Technical Assistance Program (RNTA)

According to the EDA, the RNTA program funds research, evaluation, and national technical assistance projects that promote competitiveness and innovation. The EDA administers RNTA

²²⁷ P.L. 117-167, §10621.

²²⁸ The Tech Hubs program is authorized under Section 28 of the Stevenson-Wydler Technology Innovation Act (15 U.S.C. §3722a).

²²⁹ EDA, “FY2023 Regional Technology and Innovation Hub Program Phase 1 NOFO (Tech Hubs Phase 1 NOFO),” https://www.eda.gov/sites/default/files/2023-05/Tech_Hubs_NOFO.pdf.

²³⁰ EDA, “FY2023 Tech Hubs NOFO.”

funding through a single NOFO for two separate programs: the Research and Evaluation (R&E) Program and the National Technical Assistance (NTA) Program.²³¹ Through the National Technical Assistance program, EDA may provide technical assistance that is national in scope on a specific type of economic development challenge, opportunity, event, or condition, or for “outreach, training, and information dissemination.” For instance

- EDA partnered with two national organizations (the National Association of Development Organizations (NADO) Research Foundation and the National Association of Counties (NACo)) to disseminate promising strategies among coal-impacted communities.
- EDA directed a portion of Assistance to Nuclear Closure Communities (NCC) funds to a national technical assistance provider that disseminates promising strategies and creates a ‘community of practice’ for applicants and grantees.²³²

Statutory Authority: 42 U.S.C. §3147

Agency Regulations: 13 C.F.R. Part 306

Economic distress criteria: EDA’s regulations (13 C.F.R. §301.3) note that there are no minimum economic distress level requirements for RNTA projects.

Requirement to align with CEDS or equivalent: EDA regulations (13 C.F.R. §306.2) note that projects will be evaluated based on the extent that they are “consistent with an EDA-approved CEDS, *as applicable*, for the region in which the project is located.”

Level of matching funds requirement: Generally, 50% of project costs, but may vary. PWEDA notes that the Secretary may also increase the federal share up to 100% for RNTA grants (42 U.S.C. §3144(c)(3)). See 13 C.F.R. §301.4.

STEM Talent Challenge²³³ (Discontinued by EDA)

According to EDA, “Funding is not available to continue support for this program and no further competitions are planned.”²³⁴ Congress directed EDA—in legislative text—to allocate \$2 million each fiscal year for FY2021 and FY2022 and \$2.5 million each fiscal year for FY2023-FY2025. Report language accompanying FY2026 appropriations directed EDA to allocate \$2.5 million to the program.²³⁵

²³¹ EDA, “Research and National Technical Assistance (RNTA) Programs,” <https://eda.gov/programs/rnta/>. See also EDA, “NOFO for FY 2021-2023 Research and Evaluation (R&E) and National Technical Assistance (NTA) Programs,” EDA-HDQ-RNTA-2021, <https://grants.gov/search-results-detail/334079>.

²³² In partnership with EDA, the Nuclear Decommissioning Collaborative (NDC), NADO Research Foundation (NADO RF), the Center on Creative Land Recycling, and Smart Growth America provided support to communities through the Technical Assistance for Nuclear Communities (TANC) program, which assisted communities that have experienced a nuclear power plant closure event and the subsequent adverse socioeconomic impacts. Through the program, the TANC team engaged with stakeholders in nuclear closure communities to evaluate their needs and assets and provided support for redevelopment efforts. The EDA’s webpage on RNTA provides additional examples at <https://www.eda.gov/rnta>.

²³³ STEM is the acronym used for science, technology, engineering, and mathematics curriculum, training, education, and related initiatives. For more information, see <https://www.eda.gov/funding/programs/stem-challenge>.

²³⁴ EDA, “STEM Talent Challenge,” <https://www.eda.gov/funding/programs/stem-challenge>.

²³⁵ Representative Tom Cole, “Explanatory Statement Submitted by Mr. Cole, Chair of the House Committee on Appropriations, Regarding H.R. 6938, Commerce, Justice, Science; Energy and Water Development; and Interior and Environment Appropriations Act, 2026,” p. H256.

Prior to FY2026, the STEM Talent Challenge program (or “STEM Apprenticeship Pilot” program) funded proposals to expand career pathways and meet employers’ needs for a STEM-capable workforce. The program was authorized in the American Innovation and Competitiveness Act of 2017 (P.L. 114-329) and is administered by the EDA’s Office of Innovation and Entrepreneurship (OIE). According to EDA, the STEM initiative aligned with the goals of the agency’s B2S program, which is also administered by OIE and designed to develop talent, capital, and entrepreneurial support systems. The STEM Talent Challenge was designed to address the need for the “talent” component by building a skilled workforce for regional innovation economies. Funded projects generally addressed training gaps in order to facilitate the growth of high-growth, high-wage entrepreneurial ventures, innovation-driven businesses, and industries that leverage emerging technologies.

Statutory Authority: 15 U.S.C. §3723²³⁶

Agency Regulations: The program is governed by the terms of the NOFO.²³⁷

Economic distress criteria: No minimum economic distress level requirements.

Requirement to align with CEDS or equivalent: See the terms of the program’s NOFO.

Level of matching funds requirement: Applicants must provide a matching nonfederal cost-share of at least 50% of the total project cost.

Trade Adjustment Assistance for Firms (TAAF)²³⁸ (Discontinued by EDA)

According to EDA, “Funding is not available to continue support for this program. Key portions of the statutory authorization of EDA’s TAAF program expired on June 30, 2022. As of July 1, 2022, EDA was unable to accept new petitions from firms for certification of eligibility for trade adjustment assistance (“petitions”) through the TAAF program. Current Trade Adjustment Assistance Centers will utilize previously awarded funds to serve existing clients until such funding is exhausted.”²³⁹ According to the explanatory statement accompanying FY2026 appropriations, Congress directed EDA to provide \$7.5 million to the TAAF program in FY2026.²⁴⁰

Prior to FY2026, the TAAF program funded a national network of Trade Adjustment Centers (TAACs) that provide assistance to American companies that have “lost domestic sales and employment because of increased imports of similar goods and services.” According to the EDA, “a national network of 11 TAACs help strengthen the competitiveness of American companies that have lost domestic sales and employment because of increased imports of similar goods and services.” The following entities were eligible to apply for assistance to operate a TAAC:

²³⁶ The STEM Talent Challenge is authorized under Section 30 (formerly Section 28) of the Stevenson-Wydler Technology Innovation Act of 1980 (15 U.S.C. §3723). The STEM Talent Challenge program was established by the American Innovation and Competitiveness Act (P.L. 114-329).

²³⁷ EDA, “2023 STEM Talent Challenge Program NOFO,” <https://www.eda.gov/sites/default/files/2023-04/FY%2023%20STEM%20Talent%20Challenge%20NOFO.pdf>.

²³⁸ For more information, see CRS In Focus IF12430, *Trade Adjustment Assistance for Firms*, by Kyla H. Kitamura.

²³⁹ EDA, “Trade Adjustment Assistance for Firms,” <https://www.eda.gov/funding/programs/trade-adjustment-assistance-for-firms>.

²⁴⁰ Representative Tom Cole, “Explanatory Statement Submitted by Mr. Cole, Chair of the House Committee on Appropriations, Regarding H.R. 6938, Commerce, Justice, Science; Energy and Water Development; and Interior and Environment Appropriations Act, 2026,” p. H256.

universities or affiliated organizations; states or local governments; or nonprofit organizations.²⁴¹ EDA generally funds a TAAC for a three-year period composed of three separate funding periods of 12 months each.²⁴²

Beginning July 1, 2022, TAAF termination provisions took effect. EDA reported that it will no longer accept new petitions from firms for certification of eligibility for trade adjustment assistance (“petitions”) through the TAAF program.²⁴³

Statutory Authority: Trade Act of 1974, as amended (19 U.S.C. §§2341 et seq.)

Agency Regulations: 13 C.F.R. Part 315

Economic distress criteria: No minimum economic distress level requirements.²⁴⁴

Requirement to align with CEDS or equivalent: The CEDS requirement is not referenced in 19 U.S.C. §§2341 et seq. or agency regulations.

Level of matching funds requirement: There are no matching share requirements for adjustment assistance provided by the TAACs to firms for certification or for administrative expenses of the TAACs.²⁴⁵ Certified firms that receive assistance from TAACs must pay a percentage of expenses associated with services.²⁴⁶

University Center Program²⁴⁷ (Discontinued by EDA)

According to EDA, “Funding is not available to continue support for this program. Information provided on this, and related program pages, is for historical reference and applies to competitions in or before FY 2023.”²⁴⁸

Prior to FY2026, EDA administered the University Center activities as a component of the Research and National Technical Assistance (RNTA) program.²⁴⁹ The University Center program connects economic development practitioners with expertise and resources from colleges and universities. University Centers provide technical assistance in support of regional economic development strategies.

University Centers have the statutorily defined duties to

- collaborate with other University Centers;
- provide technical assistance to support CEDS and other economic development planning with a focus on innovation, entrepreneurship, workforce development, and regional economic development;
- provide technical assistance, business development, and technology transfer services to businesses in the University Center’s service area;

²⁴¹ 13 C.F.R. §315.4.

²⁴² 13 C.F.R. §315.5.

²⁴³ EDA, “Trade Adjustment Assistance for Firms,” <https://www.eda.gov/funding/programs/trade-adjustment-assistance-for-firms>.

²⁴⁴ 13 C.F.R. §315.5.

²⁴⁵ 13 C.F.R. §315.5.

²⁴⁶ 13 C.F.R. §315.6.

²⁴⁷ For a list of University Centers, see <https://www.eda.gov/funding/programs/university-centers/current-list>.

²⁴⁸ EDA, “University Centers,” <https://www.eda.gov/funding/programs/university-centers>.

²⁴⁹ 42 U.S.C. §3147(c).

- establish partnerships with commercialization intermediaries that are eligible to receive a grant under 42 U.S.C. §1862s-9;
- promote local and regional capacity building; and
- provide assistance on data collection, analysis, and research to help communities and regions inform economic development and adjustment strategies.

EDRA (P.L. 118-272) directed EDA, when reviewing University Center grants applications, to consider University Centers that may support distressed communities in planning and implementing economic development projects and University Centers that may be located near a distressed community. EDRA also specified that University Centers are to provide services to each state, but did not state that they must be located in each state.

Eligible recipients for the University Center program included institutions of higher education (including community colleges or junior colleges and consortia of institutions of higher education); university-affiliated research institutions; and nonprofit organizations. University Center grants generally had a five-year period of performance, with an initial funding period of one year. Beginning in FY2004, EDA administered the University Center program as a competitive multiyear program.

Statutory Authority: 42 U.S.C. §3147

Agency Regulations: 13 C.F.R. Parts 300-302 and 13 C.F.R. §306 Subpart B

Economic distress criteria: No minimum economic distress level requirements.²⁵⁰

Requirement to align with CEDS or equivalent: Recent University Center NOFOs indicate that applicants to the University Center program are not required to submit a CEDS.²⁵¹

Level of matching funds requirement: Generally, 60% of project costs, but may be provided up to 100% of project costs (see 42 U.S.C. §3144(a) and 42 U.S.C. §3144(c)(3)). See 13 C.F.R. §301.4.

²⁵⁰ 13 C.F.R. §306 Subpart B. The EDA encourages University Centers to provide services that benefit distressed areas in their region (13 C.F.R. §306.5(a)).

²⁵¹ EDA, “NOFO—FY2021 EDA University Center Economic Development Program Competition,” EDA-CHI-TA-CRO-2021-2006893 and EDA-CHI-TA-CRO-2021-2006894, p. 20.

Appendix B. EDA Funding—Historical Tables

Table B-1. Budget Requests and Annual Enacted Appropriations, FY2012-FY2027

(budget authority, in millions of nominal dollars)

Fiscal Year	Request	Enacted
2012	324.9	457.5*
2013	219.7	218.3
2014	320.9	246.5
2015	248.2	250.0
2016	273.0	261.0
2017	258.0	276.0
2018	30.0	901.5*
2019	14.9	904.0*
2020	30.0	1,833.0*
2021	31.6	3,346.0*
2022	433.1	373.5
2023	502.5	1,616.0*
2024	2,304.0	468.0
2025	2,022.9	1,978.0*
2026	30.0	466.0
2027	20.0	

Sources: OMB Budget Appendices of the United States, EDA Annual Reports, and EDA Congressional Budget Justification Reports.

Notes: Includes funding for programs and salaries and expenses and supplemental appropriations. The asterisk (*) indicates that the amount includes supplemental appropriations. In the FY2024 and FY2025 Congressional Budget Justifications, the Administration’s budget included requests for no-year mandatory spending for the Tech Hubs program.

Table B-2. Funding for EDA, by Program, FY2012-FY2026

(budget authority, in millions of nominal dollars)

	FY2012	FY2013 ^a	FY2014	FY2015	FY2016	FY2017	FY2018	FY2019	FY2020	FY2021	FY2022	FY2023	FY2024	FY2025 ^b	FY2026
Program															
Public Works	111.6	77.2	96.0	99.0	100	100	117.5	117.5	118.5	119.5	120.5	121.5	100.0		100.0
Economic Adjustment Assistance	50.1	49.0	42.0	35.0	35.0	35.0	37.0	37.0	37.0	37.5	37.5	39.5	33.0		39.5
Planning Assistance	29.0	28.4	29.0	30.0	32.0	31.5	33.0	33.0	33.0	33.5	34.5	36.0	34.5		34.5
Technical Assistance	12.0	11.8	11.0	11.0	10.5	9.0	9.5	9.5	9.5	10.0	12.5	14.0	14.0		10.0
Research and Evaluation	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	2.0	2.0	2.0		2.0
Trade Adjustment Assistance	15.8	15.5	15.0	12.5	13.0	13.0	13.0	13.0	13.0	13.5	13.5	13.5	13.5		7.5
Innovative Manufacturing (Sec. 26)	— ^c		5.0	4.0											
Build to Scale (Sec. 27)	— ^d		10.0	10.0	15.0	17.0	21.0	23.5	33.0	38.0	45.0	50.0	50.0	50.0	50.0
Assistance to Coal Communities				10.0 ^e	15.0	30.0	30.0	30.0	30.0	33.5	41.5	48.0	75.0		80.0
Assistance to Nuclear Closure Communities									15.0	16.5	16.5	16.5			
Assistance to Biomass Power Plant Closure Communities											4.5	4.5	4.5		
STEM Apprenticeships (Sec. 30)									2.0	2.0	2.0	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5
Recompete Pilot (Sec. 29)												41.0 ^f			18.0
Tech Hubs (Sec. 28)												41.0 ^f	41.0	41.0 ^g	41.0
Good Jobs Challenge or Workforce Training Grants													25.0		10.0
Assistance to Indigenous Communities														5.0	5.0
Global Climate Change Mitigation															
Subtotal—Programs	220.0	182.0	209.5	213.0	222.0	237.0	262.5	265.0	292.5	305.5	330.0	430.0	400.0^h	400.0^h	400.0
Salaries and Expenses	37.5	36.2	37.0	37.0	39.0	39.0	39.0	39.0	40.5	40.5	43.5	68.0	68.0	68.0	66.0

	FY2012	FY2013 ^a	FY2014	FY2015	FY2016	FY2017	FY2018	FY2019	FY2020	FY2021	FY2022	FY2023	FY2024	FY2025 ^b	FY2026
Supplemental Appropriations	200.0						600.0	600.0	1,500.0	3,000.0		1,118.0		1,510.0	
Total (Supplemental + Annual)	457.5	218.3	246.5	250.0	261.0	276.0	901.5	904.0	1,833.0	3,346.0	373.5	1,616.0	468.0	1,978.0	466.0

Sources: Appropriated funding amounts compiled by CRS using data from the conference reports and explanatory statements for the following annual appropriations bills: P.L. 112-10, P.L. 112-55, P.L. 113-76, P.L. 113-235, P.L. 114-113, P.L. 115-31, P.L. 115-141, P.L. 116-6, P.L. 116-93, P.L. 116-136, P.L. 116-260, P.L. 117-103, and P.L. 118-42, P.L. 119-4, P.L. 119-74; and EDA, FY2013 Annual Report, <https://www.eda.gov/impact/annual-reports/fy2013> and S.Rept. 113-78. Funding amounts include the following supplemental appropriations bills: P.L. 112-55, P.L. 115-123, P.L. 116-20, P.L. 116-136, P.L. 117-2, P.L. 117-328, and P.L. 118-158.

Notes: Amounts may not add to totals due to rounding. Build to Scale was called Regional Innovation Strategies (RIS) or Regional Innovations Program (RIP) in annual appropriations bills from FY2014 to FY2021; EDA began administering RIS/RIP funding using the Build to Scale program name in FY2020. The RIS/RIP included Science Parks Loan Guarantees in FY2014 (P.L. 113-76). In FY2015 (P.L. 113-235), the explanatory statement indicated that the amount for regional innovation would include up to \$5 million for planning grants for science park infrastructure.

- a. FY2013 levels reflect post-sequestration amounts. According to CRS Report R43080, *Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies: FY2014 Appropriations*, coordinated by Nathan James, Jennifer D. Williams, and John F. Sargent Jr., “FY2013 post-sequestration amounts were provided by the Department of Commerce. FY2014-requested amounts were taken from S.Rept. 113-78. The FY2013 amounts include rescissions of FY2013 budget authority and the amount sequestered per the Budget Control Act of 2011 (P.L. 112-25).”
- b. With the exception of supplemental appropriations provided by P.L. 118-158, FY2025 appropriations were provided to EDA under full-year continuing resolution legislation. As of publication date, amounts to be allocated for certain EDA programs are undetermined. Amounts specified in legislative text are included in the table.
- c. The conference report accompanying the FY2012 appropriations directed EDA to allocate up to \$5,000,000 for loan guarantees under Section 26 under the Economic Adjustment Assistance program. See CRS Report R41721, *Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies: FY2012 Appropriations*, coordinated by Nathan James, Jennifer D. Williams, and John F. Sargent Jr.
- d. In FY2012, the annual appropriations bill did not include a separate appropriation for Regional Innovation Program activities as requested by the Administration. Grants and loan guarantees authorized by Section 27 were funded under the Economic Adjustment Assistance program. See CRS Report R41721, *Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies: FY2012 Appropriations*, coordinated by Nathan James, Jennifer D. Williams, and John F. Sargent Jr. In FY2014, the explanatory statement accompanying the appropriations bill directed EDA to administer Section 27 grants and loan guarantees in accordance with the requirements of 15 U.S.C. §§3721-3722 rather than the requirements of PWEDA. See Representative Harold Rogers, “Explanatory Statement Submitted by Mr. Rogers, Chairman of the House Committee on Appropriations Regarding H.R. 3547, Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2014,” *Congressional Record*, vol. 160, no. 9 (January 15, 2014), p. H507.
- e. According to the EDA, “This program line was created by the Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriation Act, 2015 (P.L. 113-235).” See EDA, *FY2024 Congressional Budget Justification*, p. 67, <https://www.commerce.gov/sites/default/files/2023-03/EDA-FY2024-Congressional-Budget-Submission.pdf>.
- f. In FY2023, supplemental appropriations provided \$159 million and \$459 million for the Recompete and Tech Hubs programs, respectively. These amounts are accounted for in this table under “Supplemental Appropriations.” See also P.L. 117-328, Division N.
- g. This does not include amounts provided by the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) of FY2025 (P.L. 118-159, Division E, Title LIV), which approved up to \$500 million from proceeds from a spectrum auction for the Tech Hubs program.
- h. This includes amounts designated as an emergency requirement.

Table B-3. Supplemental Funding, FY2012-FY2025

(budget authority, in millions of dollars)

	FY2012 (P.L. 112-55)	FY2018 (P.L. 115-123)	FY2019 (P.L. 116-20)	FY2020 (P.L. 116-136)	FY2021 (P.L. 117-2)	FY2023 (P.L. 117-328)	FY2025 (P.L. 118-158)
Economic Adjustment Assistance	200	600	600	1,500	3,000	500	1,510
Recompete Pilot	—	—	—	—	—	159	—
Regional Technology and Innovation Hub	—	—	—	—	—	459	—
Total	200	600	600	1,500	3,000	1,118	1,510

Sources: CRS using information from appropriations laws and the reports accompanying the following appropriations bills: Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2012 (P.L. 112-55), Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018 (P.L. 115-123), Supplemental Appropriations for Disaster Relief Act, 2019 (P.L. 116-20), CARES Act (P.L. 116-136), American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA, P.L. 117-2), Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2023 (P.L. 117-328), and the American Relief Act, 2025 (P.L. 118-158).

Notes: P.L. 117-167 established the Recompete Pilot and the Tech Hubs programs. Beginning in FY2018, certain supplemental appropriations laws have included provisions allowing EDA to use a portion of appropriated funding for administration and oversight activities. A dash (“—”) indicates that no appropriation was provided.

Appendix C. Staff Level History

Table C-1. EDA Employment, FY2012-FY2025

Year	Employment
2012	197
2013	169
2014	167
2015	174
2016	192
2017	180
2018	181
2019	202
2020	261
2021	281
2022	314
2023	323
2024	244
2025	198

Sources: Data for 2011-2024 were drawn from the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) Employment cubes, see FedScope, <http://www.fedscope.opm.gov>. The employment figure for 2025 was drawn from the U.S. Office of Personnel Management Federal Workforce Data website, <https://data.opm.gov/>.

Note: Each total is an “on-board” U.S.-based personnel count as of September of the year noted.

Table C-2. Selected Hearings on EDA Oversight or Reauthorization

(117th, 118th, and 119th Congresses)

Committee	Congress, Session, Date	Hearing Title	Hearing Report or Other Materials
Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works (EPW)	117 th Cong., 1 st sess., Nov. 3, 2021	<i>Examining Programs at the Economic Development Administration</i>	https://www.epw.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/hearings?ID=256D08CE-44DC-47B4-9663-F9AC5AA8950E
House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure (T&I), Subcommittee on Economic Development, Public Buildings, and Emergency Management	117 th Cong., 1 st sess., April 28, 2021	<i>Investing in America: Reauthorization of the Economic Development Administration</i>	https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CHRG-117hrg45230/pdf/CHRG-117hrg45230.pdf

Committee	Congress, Session, Date	Hearing Title	Hearing Report or Other Materials
Senate Committee on Indian Affairs	117 th Cong., 1 st sess., May 12, 2021	<i>Examining the COVID-19 Response in Native Communities: Native Tourism Economies One Year Later</i>	https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CHRG-117shrg45580/pdf/CHRG-117shrg45580.pdf
House Committee on Science, Space, and Technology (SST), Subcommittee on Research and Technology	117 th Cong., 1 st sess., June 9, 2021	<i>Building Regional Innovation Economies</i>	https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CHRG-117hrg44720/pdf/CHRG-117hrg44720.pdf
House Select Committee on Economic Disparity and Fairness in Growth	117 th Cong., 2 nd sess., May 11, 2022	<i>Bringing Prosperity to Left-Behind Communities: Using Targeted Place-based Development to Expand Economic Opportunity</i>	https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CRPT-117hrpt619/pdf/CRPT-117hrpt619.pdf
House SST Committee	117 th Cong., 2 nd sess., December 14, 2022	<i>Building Regional Innovation Economies Part II</i>	https://www.congress.gov/event/117th-congress/house-event/115219
Senate EPW Committee	118 th Cong., 1 st sess., June 21, 2023	<i>Reauthorization of the Economic Development Administration: State and Local Perspectives</i>	https://www.congress.gov/118/chr/CHRG-118shrg53731/CHRG-118shrg53731.pdf
House T&I, Subcommittee on Economic Development, Public Buildings, and Emergency Management	119 th Cong., 2 nd sess., January 22, 2026	<i>Smarter Spending, Stronger Results: Reducing Duplication and Ensuring Effectiveness Through Economic Development Reforms</i>	https://www.congress.gov/event/119th-congress/house-event/118896

Sources: Compiled by CRS using ProQuest Congressional, govinfo.gov, and committee websites.

Notes: The hearings listed in this table do not represent a comprehensive list of all hearings involving EDA in the 117th-119th Congresses. The table does not include hearings focused on annual appropriations.

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