



AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN

BUILD BACK BETTER REGIONAL CHALLENGE AWARDEES FACT SHEET

EDA's \$1 Billion Build Back Better Regional Challenge Selects 21 Coalitions to Implement Strategies for Regional Economic Transformation

On September 2nd, the Biden-Harris Administration announced awards for 21 regional coalitions that were finalists in the Build Back Better Regional Challenge (BBBRC). This \$1 billion grant competition, created through the American Rescue Plan Act, challenged communities to identify a set of interconnected investments that, together, could transform their local economy, expand economic opportunity and competitiveness, and create thousands of good jobs.

BBBRC awardees will each receive between \$25 million and \$65 million to fund 123 individual strategic projects to advance economic strategies benefiting 24 states. This federal funding is matched by more than \$300 million of local investment and will leverage support from over 450 private sector and 27 labor unions or workers organizations.

These 21 coalitions were chosen from a highly competitive group of 60 finalists that each received \$500,000 seed grants after being selected from 529 applicants. The selected portfolio represents the diversity of our nation and the belief that, with the right resources and opportunities, all communities can compete in the economy of the future.



Key



Icons mark the lead institution of awardees

BBBRC is investing in emerging industries across the economy, including:

- 5 biotechnology and health clusters
- 4 advanced mobility hubs, from autonomous and electric vehicles to advanced aerospace manufacturing
- 4 clusters reinventing their natural resource and agricultural industries
- 4 communities developing next-generation manufacturing clusters
- 3 coalitions driving key segments of the clean energy economy
- 1 multi-state Tribal coalition growing an Indigenous finance industry

These investments will fund complementary, locally-led projects and create a coordinated regional economic strategy that is far greater than the sum of the parts. They include approximately:

- \$300 million to accelerate innovation in emerging technologies
- \$270 million to help workers access new job opportunities and job training
- \$140 million to increase new business growth and entrepreneurial activity
- \$110 million to construct critical enabling infrastructure and attract private investment
- \$100 million to help small and mid-sized businesses adopt new processes and enter new markets
- \$50 million to sustain regional governance and strengthen cluster development

And those dollars are reaching communities across the United States:

123 selected projects serving 801 counties across 24 states

- 236 counties that are fully rural
- 136 persistent poverty counties
- 106 counties that are home to largely underserved populations
- 121 counties that include Tribal areas, with \$87 million funding two primarily Tribal coalitions
- Over \$150 million invested in coal communities, as part of EDA's \$300 million [Coal Community Commitment](#)

THE 21 FUNDED COALITIONS

- 

The **Alaska Mariculture Cluster**, led by Southeast Conference, will receive \$49 million to catalyze a sustainable mariculture industry, producing shellfish and seaweed for the long-term benefit of Alaska's economy, environment, and communities.
- 

The **Fresno-Merced Future of Food Innovation (F3) Coalition**, led by the Central Valley Community Foundation, will receive \$65.1 million to accelerate the integration of technology and skills in the region's agriculture industry—improving productivity and job quality for existing farmworkers while driving a more resilient and sustainable food system.
- 

Building Central Florida's Semiconductor Cluster for Broad-Based Prosperity, a coalition led by the Osceola County Board of County Commissioners, will receive \$50.8 million to accelerate the growth of the specialized semiconductor cluster at NeoCITY, a 5,000-area technology park developed in partnership with the state of Florida.
- 

The **Georgia AI Manufacturing (GA-AIM) Coalition**, led by the Georgia Tech Research Corporation, will receive \$65 million to accelerate the adoption of artificial intelligence across the state's legacy industrial sectors.
- 

The **South Kansas Coalition**, led by Wichita State University (WSU), will receive \$51.4 million to strengthen the United States' competitive advantage and global market share in aerospace production.
- 

H2theFuture, led by the Greater New Orleans Development Foundation, will receive \$50 million to transition the regional hydrogen energy sector by closing the cost gap between green hydrogen (produced from renewable energy sources) and other forms of hydrogen used today, which rely on fossil fuels.
- 

The **Global Epicenter of Mobility (GEM) Coalition**, led by the Detroit Regional Partnership Foundation, will receive \$52.2 million to transform the Detroit area's legacy automotive industry into a highly competitive advanced mobility cluster.
- 

The **St. Louis Tech Triangle**, led by Greater St. Louis, Inc., will receive \$25 million to converge the region's three leading industry clusters of biosciences, geospatial, and advanced manufacturing, and build a national model for inclusive economic growth.
- 

The **Heartland Robotics Cluster**, led by the Invest Nebraska Corporation, will receive \$25 million to accelerate Nebraska's leadership in the agricultural industry through robotic technologies and advanced manufacturing automation while also revitalizing the region's rural labor force and strengthening the nation's food supply chain.
- 

Western New York Advanced Manufacturing, led by the Empire State Development Corporation, will receive \$25 million to invest in the distressed eastern side of Buffalo, NY and accelerate the growth of advanced manufacturing in the region.
- 

New Energy New York, a coalition led by the State University of New York (SUNY) at Binghamton, will receive approximately \$63.7 million to accelerate innovation in battery technology and to transform New York's Southern Tier into a global hub of energy storage manufacturing.
- 

The **BioFabrication Cluster**, led by the City of Manchester, will receive \$44 million to establish Southern New Hampshire as the global epicenter for the production and distribution of regenerative tissues and organs.
- 

The **Mountain | Plains Regional Native CDFI Coalition**, led by the Four Bands Community Fund Inc, will receive \$45 million to accelerate the growth of the Indigenous finance sector and expand economic opportunity in Native American communities through an alliance of nine Native Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFIs).
- 

The **Accelerate NC – Life Sciences Manufacturing Coalition**, led by the North Carolina Biotechnology Center, will receive \$25 million to strengthen its life sciences manufacturing cluster by investing in a more robust pipeline of biotech talent across the state and expanding those opportunities to underserved and historically excluded communities.
- 

The **Tulsa Regional Advanced Mobility (TRAM) Corridor**, led by the Indian Nations Council of Governments, will receive \$39 million to transition the region from its legacy of oil and gas and traditional manufacturing to advanced mobility, automation, and unmanned aerial systems.
- 

The **Oklahoma Biotech Innovation Cluster**, led by the Oklahoma City Economic Development Foundation, will receive \$35 million to rapidly expand its biotechnology cluster, bolstering domestic resiliency within the biopharmaceutical supply chain and making the cluster more globally competitive.
- 

The **Oregon Mass Timber Coalition**, led by the Port of Portland, will receive \$41.4 million to become a national leader in using mass timber to accelerate affordable housing production, provide good jobs, and restore forest health.
- 

The **Southwestern Pennsylvania (SWPA) New Economy Collaborative**, a coalition of the region's leading university, philanthropic, and private sector leaders, will receive \$62.7 million to supercharge SWPA's globally recognized robotics and autonomy cluster and ensure that its economic benefits equitably reach rural and coal-impacted communities in the 11-county region.
- 

The **West Texas Aerospace and Defense Manufacturing Coalition**, led by the University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP), will receive \$40 million to strengthen America's aerospace and defense manufacturing capabilities by integrating legacy manufacturers in West Texas into the aerospace and defense (A&D) supply chain.
- 

The **Advanced Pharmaceutical Manufacturing (APM) Cluster**, a coalition led by the Virginia Biotechnology Research Partnership Authority (Activation Capital), will receive \$52.9 million to expand the domestic supply chain for essential medicines and critical active pharmaceutical ingredients (APIs).
- 

The **Appalachian Climate Technology Coalition (ACT Now)**, led by Coalfield Development Corporation, will receive \$62.8 million to spur job growth in 21 economically distressed and coal-impacted counties in southern West Virginia by creating a hub of clean energy and green economy jobs.

CORE THEMES

Restoring American Competitiveness

While the country continues to recover from the Coronavirus pandemic, for too many Americans, the pandemic represents just the latest economic shock that has battered their communities, reduced wages, and eliminated entire local industries. BBBRC is a \$1 billion investment towards global competitiveness and prosperity of regional economies that for too long have been underinvested in.

In New York's Southern Tier region, the New Energy New York coalition will leverage SUNY Binghamton's legacy of innovation in lithium-ion battery technology to grow a domestic supply chain for advanced energy storage and support the country's clean energy transition.

Empowering Local Leadership

Local community leaders—public, private, civic and labor—are best positioned to build the blueprint of their own economic future. BBBRC empowered these leaders to form regional coalitions centered on a core strategic industry, to prioritize specific investments their communities need, and to compete for the resources to make their visions a reality.

The Mountain | Plains Regional Native CDFI coalition is drawing on the strengths of Tribal communities across North Dakota, South Dakota, Wyoming and Montana to improve access to capital through the development of a locally led indigenous finance industry.

Supporting Underserved Communities

BBBRC awardees reflect the fact that equity is a key investment priority for EDA. Coalitions were challenged to design explicit strategies that would ensure that historically excluded population such as racial minorities and women would not just benefit from their proposals, but would also be a meaningful part of the coalition leadership.

The Accelerate NC – Life Sciences Manufacturing coalition is expanding biotech job opportunities to underserved populations by expanding entry-level training at 10 community colleges across the state and through North Carolina Central University's leadership of a network of the state's HBCUs and its one historically American Indian University to create new training hubs.

Aligning Investments in Innovation and Workers

BBBRC invests in both technology development and complementary workforce programs to ensure workers at all skill levels benefit from innovation. By investing in coordinated strategies between research institutions building the technologies of tomorrow and workforce development organizations, the competition is promoting new strategies for innovation-based industries that rely on workers using technology not being replaced by technology.

In California's Central Valley, the Fresno-Merced Future of Food coalition, led by the Central Valley Community Foundation, is accelerating the integration of technology in the region's agriculture industry—improving productivity and job quality for existing farmworkers while driving a more resilient and sustainable food system.

Accelerating Economic Transformation

While there are examples of regions that have successfully made the transition from low-wage to high-wage sectors, it can often take a generation for these transitions to occur. One reason is that the necessary economic development investments are made individually, with too few resources, in sequence. By making significant investments in multiple interconnected projects over the same 5-year period, BBBRC will accelerate cluster development in places that need it today.

The H2TheFuture coalition in New Orleans, LA, will invest in projects spanning technology development, workforce training, and construction of critical infrastructure to speed the development of cost-competitive green hydrogen, decarbonize the region's heavy industry, and create new clean energy jobs.

For more information about the Build Back Better Regional Challenge, please visit www.eda.gov/arpa/build-back-better.



For more information about Economic Development Administration's six American Rescue Plan Programs, collectively called Investing in America's Communities, please click here.