

AI Upskill Accelerator Pilot: Bridging the Workforce Gap through Targeted Industry-Driven Training

This AI Upskill Accelerator Pilot Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) aims to position the United States as a global leader in artificial intelligence and fortify our economic competitiveness. To respond to the call to empower American workers in the age of AI, EDA will award \$25 million through this pilot initiative to accelerate industry-led workforce development projects to support the upskilling of workers for an AI-enabled future where technology enhances human capability and industry advancement.

To compete for these awards, this NOFO requires eligible applicants to propose industry-led partnerships that will deliver training on in-demand AI skills that move beyond foundational AI literacy and introductory skill-building and equip workers with job-ready AI skills for immediate application.

To apply, applicants must provide an overarching narrative that addresses the following:

- ➞ Membership of the industry-led partnership that includes employers and training providers;
- ➞ Regional need for AI training in a critical industry;
- ➞ Description of the AI tools and skills that workers need;
- ➞ Employer commitments that not only demonstrate advisory input, but also include tangible contributions such as co-design, hiring pathways, resource alignment, and data sharing; and
- ➞ Robust, yet feasible project outcomes that will be delivered through AI training and workforce development efforts.

For all competition requirements, applicants must review the NOFO located at EDA.gov/AI-Upskill.

Who Should Apply

EDA will make awards to an eligible lead entity of a sectoral partnership. These organizations may make subawards to other eligible recipients as necessary to the proposed project and as approved by EDA.

Eligible applicants for EDA's AI Upskill Accelerator Pilot program include a(n):

- District Organization of an EDA-designated Economic Development District
- Indian Tribe or a consortium of Indian Tribes
- State, county, 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 or political subdivisions
- Institution of higher education or a consortium of institutions of higher education
- Public or private non-profit organization or association acting in cooperation with officials of a political subdivision of a State
- Economic Development Organization
- Public-private partnership for infrastructure

Individuals or for-profit entities including for-profit institutions of higher education are not eligible.

Key Details

- EDA anticipates making 5-8 awards, with single awards capped at \$8 million.
- Project duration of 24-36 months, ready to deliver training 12 months after award.
- All projects are required to provide 40% cost share of total project amount.
- Projects can fund the following:
 - ➞ System Development (Phase I)
Formal partnership formation
 - ➞ Program Design (Phase II)
Curriculum and training development
 - ➞ Program Implementation (Phase III)
Training delivery
Required Phase for all projects

Application Deadline:
July 10, 2026, 4:59pm ET via
submission portal (EDGE)

Contact

Please send email inquiries about the AI Upskill Accelerator Pilot program to OIE@eda.gov.