



EDA AI Upskill Accelerator Pilot Program

Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)

AI Addendum

Technical Assistance Webinar

May 19, 2026

AGENDA

- Program Background
- AI Addendum Highlights
- Timeline
- Additional Webinars
- Next Steps
- Submission of questions

Information shared in this presentation do not replace or supersede the contents in the AI Addendum. Please see the AI Addendum for complete instructions and information.

Program Background



U.S. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION

Program Background

Overview

America's AI Action Plan

- **Prioritize** AI skill development as a core objective of relevant education and workforce funding streams.
- **Pilot** new approaches to workforce challenges created by AI, to include rapid retraining and addressing shifting skill requirements for entry-level roles.
- **Surface** scalable, performance-driven strategies that help the workforce system adapt and evolve with an AI-driven labor market.

Statutory Authority

EDA is utilizing its authority in 42 U.S.C. § 3154e to support this program.

- Authorizes EDA to make grants to support the development and expansion of innovative workforce training programs through sectoral partnerships leading to high-paying skilled jobs.

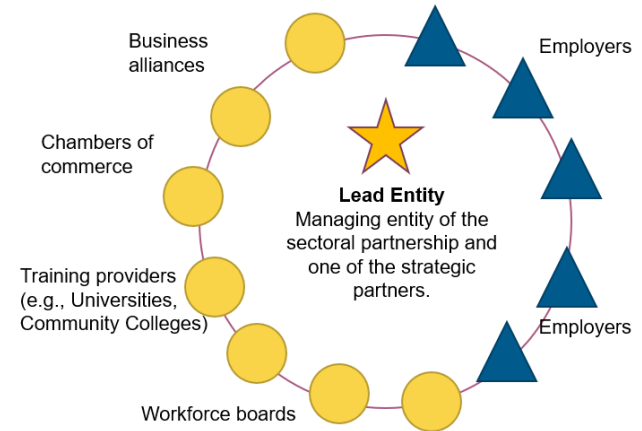
Program Goals and Design

***AI Upskill** is designed to support employer-led regional workforce training systems that equip American workers with practical AI skills required to effectively and efficiently, utilize AI-enabled technology within respective industries.*

Program Goals

- ✓ Provide American workers with job-ready AI skills for immediate application.
- ✓ Support workforce development that emphasizes strong employer engagement and commitments to drive regional economic growth.
- ✓ Identify and learn from sustainable models that effectively address AI upskilling.

Sectoral Partnerships



AI Addendum Highlights



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AI Addendum

- The notice announcing the funding opportunity for AI Upskill is in **Addendum II (“AI Addendum”)** to the *FY 2023/2024/2025 Public Works and Economic Adjustment Assistance (PWEAA) Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)*.
 - The AI Addendum starts in section II of the PWEAA NOFO.
- The AI Addendum generally follows the same rules as the *FY 2023/2024/2025 PWEAA NOFO*. Please see *EDA Program and Application Requirements for AI Upskill Grants* (starting on page 46 of the AI Addendum) for AI Addendum-specific requirements that supersede FY 2023/2024/2025 PWEAA NOFO requirements.

Eligible Entities

Eligible applicants for investment assistance include a(n):

- District Organization of an EDA-designated Economic Development District (EDD);
- Indian Tribe or a consortium of Indian Tribes;
- State¹, 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 of political subdivisions;
- Institution of higher education (IHE) or a consortium of IHEs;
- Public or private non-profit organization or association acting in cooperation with officials of a political subdivision of a State;
- Economic Development Organization; or
- Public-private partnership for public infrastructure.

¹ Under section 3(10) of PWEDA (42 U.S.C. § 3122), the term “State” includes any State, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the U.S. 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.

Funding Details

Funding & Awards

- \$25 million in awards
- Anticipate making 4-8 awards ranging from \$1-\$8 million each.

Match Rate

- Maximum allowable EDA investment rate is 60% but must meet Special Need.
- 40% match is required from all applicants.

Period of Performance

- 24-36 months
- Must begin training within 1 year of award.

Reporting Obligations

- Annual submission of key performance outcomes and compliance with all federal reporting requirements (Progress Reports and Financial Reports).

Allowable Uses of Funds

Project Phases

System Development

Up to \$500K

Optional

Supports the identification and convening of employer partners and other organization to define industry needs and support related to the applied use of AI in the workforce.

Program Design

Up to \$2M

Optional

Supports the design of employer-driven skills training and making the investments necessary to enable its implementation (i.e. equipment)

Program Implementation

Up to \$8M

Required

Supports the delivery of employer-driven skills training programs that have been designed or refined through this program specific to the region, industry, and worker role.

Construction is not allowable under this addendum.

Project Narrative



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Project Narrative: At A Glance

All applicants must submit a project narrative of no more than 12 pages (12-point font, 1-inch margins, single spaced).

Attachments are permitted **only** for match letters, sectoral partnership and employer commitment letters, and the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy.

All proposals must address each section of the project narrative:

Section 1: Executive Summary

Section 4: Regional Impacts

Section 7: Impacts & Return on Investments

Section 2: Sectoral Partnership Governance, Structure, Readiness

Section 5: Project Description & Feasibility

Section 8: Future Evaluation, Scalability and Sustainability

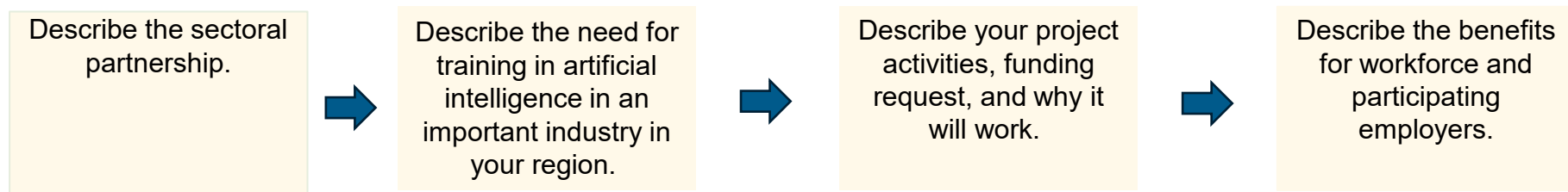
Section 3: Need for Training in AI

Section 6: Funding Request

Project Narrative: Core Concept

The Ask:

Propose a sectoral partnership between entities eligible for funding under the AI Addendum and employers that will design and provide training to incumbent workers and new hires in industry aligned AI skills.



*Refer to page 47, Project Narrative for specific requirements.

Special Need

An applicant must demonstrate Special Need by meeting **all** the following criteria listed below:

- 1 Is the focus industry and its associated employers a significant part of the region or project service area?
- 2 Is AI **currently** being used by the relevant industry and the employers associated with the project?
- 3 Is AI **currently** in use by employers in the relevant industry is important to the future competitiveness of the industry and the economy in the region?
- 4 Is there an existing need for 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?

Align with Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy

What does the applicant need to know?

- Each project must be consistent with the region's current Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) or an equivalent EDA-accepted regional economic development strategy that meets EDA's CEDS or strategy requirements.
- Applications will need to detail how the proposed project will support the economic development needs and objectives outlined in the CEDS or equivalent strategy, and provide a copy of this planning document, either by attaching the document to the application or providing a web link.

What must the applicant do?

- Detail how the proposed project will support the economic development needs and objectives outlined in the CEDS or equivalent strategy.
- Provide a copy of this planning document, either by attaching the document to the application or providing a web link.
- In section 4 of the Project Narrative, describe how the proposed project will be consistent with the regions or regions' CEDS.

Meet EDA's Investment Priorities

What does the applicant need to know?

- All projects must be consistent with at least one of EDA's Investment Priorities:
[Investment Priorities | U.S. Economic Development Administration \(eda.gov\)](#)

How can the applicant align to EDA's Investment Priority(s)?

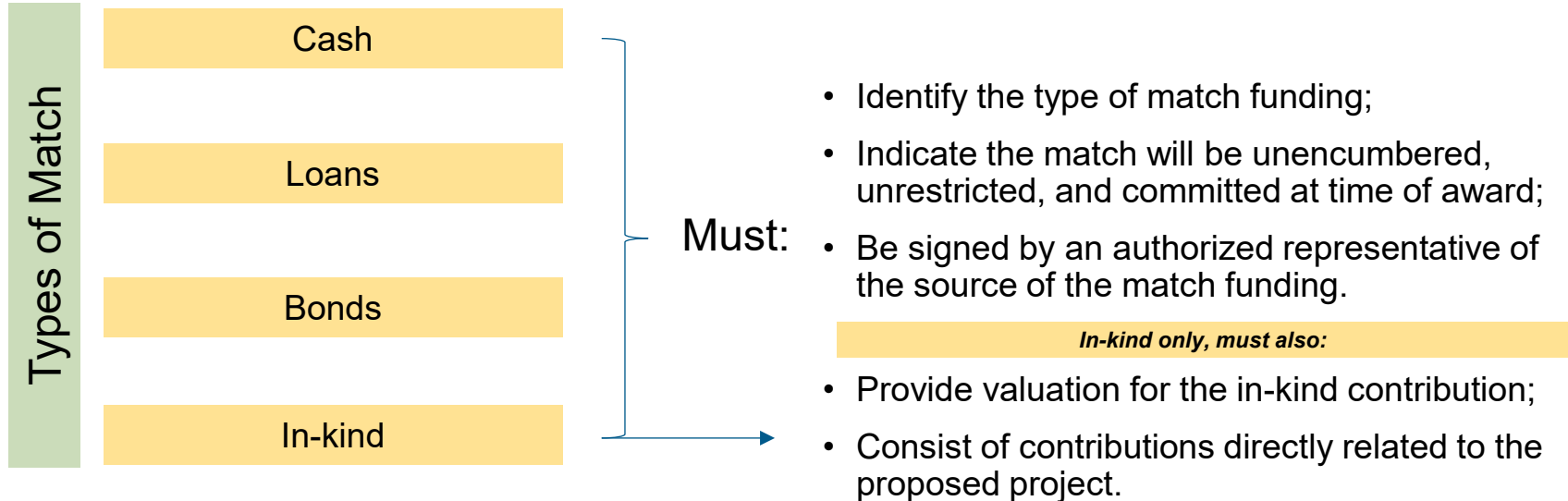
- Effectively address the creation and/or retention of high-paying, high-skilled jobs.
- Demonstrate the ability to leverage public and private resources and rapidly launch and implement the project effectively.
- Provide a clear scope of work with specific, measurable project outputs and efficient use of funds.

Where can the applicant provide this information?

- In section 4 of the Project Narrative, address how the proposed project will meet EDA's Investment Priority(s).

Match Letters

With limited exceptions, cost share is required for all projects funded under this addendum. The maximum allowable EDA investment rate for all projects is 60%. All applicants must commit 40% of total project costs in cash or in-kind.



Commitment Letters

All applications **must** include letters of commitment from employers and other relevant sectoral partnership members.

Commitment letters demonstrate the project's external support, implementation capacity and the ability to achieve the identified outcomes.

Sectoral Commitments

- Be on the sectoral partner's letterhead;
- Identify the role of the sectoral partner in the project;
- Describe the support and/or resource the partner will provide to the project; and
- Be signed by the sectoral partner's authorized representative.

At minimum must:

Employer Commitments

- Describe how the employer is and will be using AI in business functions;
- Identify any AI-enabled technologies to be utilized;
- Describe the benefits AI will bring to the employer;
- List the commitments being made;
- Estimate number of workers who will utilize training;
- Provide anticipated wage/wage gains of employees who successfully complete training;
- Commit to provide data demonstrating the impact of AI training

Commitment Letter Tips*

Good commitment letters will:

- ✓ Identify specific role of the committing entity;
- ✓ Identify concrete contributions (resources);
- ✓ Include measurable commitments;
- ✓ Align/support project goals and outcomes;
- ✓ Signed by committing entity's authorized representative.

Weak commitment letters:

- ✗ Vague language (generic statement of support);
- ✗ Offer no information on actual involvement of the committing entity;
- ✗ Only offer advisory input;
- ✗ Unsigned or low-authority signatory.
- ✗ Are not on company letterhead

**The tips in this presentation do not replace or supersede the contents in the NOFO or AI Addendum. Please see the NOFO and AI Addendum for complete instructions and information.*

Application Evaluation

Criteria	Point Value
Strength of Sectoral Partnership	10 points
Strength of Employer Partnerships	10 points
Need for Training in Artificial Intelligence	20 points
Regional Alignment	10 points

Criteria	Point Value
Project Description & Feasibility	20 points
Impacts & Return on Investment	20 points
Future Evaluation, Scalability, & Sustainability	10 points
Total	100 points

More in-depth criteria descriptions can be found in the AI Addendum, pages 55-58.

Required Documents for Application Submission

- Project Narrative (no more than 12 pages)
- Letters of Commitment from Sectoral Partnership members and employer partners
- Match documentation
- SF-424 (Application for Federal Assistance)
- SF-424A (Budget Information—Non-Construction Programs)
- CD-511 (Certification Regarding Lobbying)
- SF-LLL (Disclosure of Lobbying Activities) *(If Applicable)*
- SPOC Documentation *(If Applicable)*
- Indirect Cost Rate Documentation *(If Applicable)*
- Organizational Documentation *(If Applicable)*
- Budget Narrative and Staffing Plan *(Note that EDA has an optional template that it highly encourages applicants to use)*

Timeline



U.S. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION

Key Dates

AI Addendum
Released

May 11, 2026

Technical
Assistance
Webinar*

*May 19, 2026
at Noon EST*

Application
Deadline**

*July 10, 2026
at 4:59 PM EST*

Anticipated
Award
Announcement

Fall 2026

*Additional webinars will be facilitated throughout the application window.

**Applications must be submitted on EDA's grants management portal, Economic Development Grants Experience (EDGE).

Additional Webinars & Resources



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Competition Resources

- ❑ AI Addendum Overview Webinar (today)
- ❑ [AI Addendum](#)
- ❑ Recordings of Conducted Webinars *(updated throughout the competition)*
- ❑ [FAQs](#) *(updated throughout the competition)*
- ❑ Technical Assistance Webinars / Office Hours
- ❑ OIE Email (OIE@eda.gov)

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE WEBINARS*
AI Addendum Overview (today)
Developing Your Concept <i>June 4, 2026, at 12pm ET</i>
Budget Best Practices <i>June 9, 2026, at 12pm ET</i>
Submitting Your Application <i>June 11, 2026, at 12pm ET</i>
Data, Impact & Evaluation <i>June 23, 2026, at 12pm ET</i>

*Visit eda.gov/ai-upskill for upcoming webinar access.

Contact Information

- If applicants have questions or need assistance, they are welcome to email OIE@eda.gov
- Include in the subject line: “***AI Ready Workforce FY 2026***”