

Potential Regional Innovation Strategies Program Applicants:

EDA plans to release the Federal Funding Opportunity (FFO) and **begin accepting applications for the 2016 round of [Regional Innovation Strategies \(RIS\) Program](#)** funding on **April 25, 2016**; the application period will be open for 60 days. In this 2016 round, a total of **\$15 million in Federal funding is available** to create and expand cluster-focused proof-of-concept and commercialization programs and early-stage seed capital funds through the i6 Challenge and the Seed Fund Support (SFS) Grant competition, respectively.

Rural communities have catalyzed economic growth in their communities and regions by supporting innovators and entrepreneurs, and RIS grants can support these efforts. While you're welcome to join any of the series of webinars, we encourage you to join our webinar on **April 21 at 2:00pm EDT**, which will feature a Q&A session focused on rural applicants.

This series of webinars aims to encourage all potential applicants to think about their strategies for developing regional opportunities, partnerships, and approaches by sharing the RIS Program's high-level objectives. OIE staff will provide an **overview of the Program** and its objectives and RIS grantees will provide **real-world highlights of their RIS projects**, including the problems they set out to solve and the activities, outputs, and impacts that their RIS grants have supported. Each webinar will end with a Q&A session that will be open to all participants but that will focus on specific categories of applicants or geographies as noted below. EDA will host the webinars at the following times:

- **April 19 at 2:00pm EDT** (with a Q&A focused on HBCUs and community colleges): [join this webinar](#);
- **April 20 at 3:30pm EDT** (with a Q&A focused on smart cities): [join this webinar](#); and
- **April 21 at 2:00pm EDT** (with a Q&A focused on rural communities): [join this webinar](#).

Additionally, EDA will host a post-launch webinar on **May 5, 2016, at 2:00pm EDT**. During this webinar, EDA staff will present a detailed overview of the 2016 RIS FFO and will take questions from attendees.

In order to ensure that you are able to connect to the webinar, please click the appropriate link above 15 minutes before the webinar begins.

To stay up-to-date on the latest RIS news, please [sign up for EDA's newsletter](#).

Thanks and best,

EDA's Office of Innovation and Entrepreneurship

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