Indigenous Economic Development Practitioner Interviews
Interview Protocol

Background
The US Economic Development Administration (EDA) is a federal government agency that works directly with communities and regions to help them build the capacity for economic development based on local business conditions and needs. As part of EDA's work to support Indigenous communities, EDA has funded the Urban Institute (Urban), an independent, nonprofit research organization based in Washington, DC, to conduct research to document and inform EDA's work in Indigenous communities.

Purpose of this research
The purpose of this interview is to collect information about the economic development needs, planning, priorities, and projects in and of Indigenous communities. Findings will inform EDA's work with Indigenous communities and will support other agencies, organizations, and communities in better planning, funding, and implementing economic development activities.

How the data will be used and shared
Urban will publish on its website a factsheet(s) and report(s) describing findings from these interviews.

What you say during this interview will only be shared outside of the research team anonymously. For example, interview results might be reported as: "One respondent reported that their community was focused on integrating climate risk and resilience considerations into their economic development planning."

Consent to participate
Your participation in this interview is voluntary. You may choose not to participate in this interview, and you may also stop participating in the interview at any point.

While there is no direct personal benefit to participating, these interviews provide an opportunity for Indigenous communities to communicate to EDA and other agencies and organizations working with Indigenous communities about their achievements, capacities, needs, and goals.

We believe the risks associated with participating are minimal. Interview questions focus on your professional experiences with and perceptions of economic development in Indigenous communities. The interview should take approximately one hour to complete. We ask that you participate in a private setting away from earshot or viewing by unauthorized persons to include family members and we want you to understand that given the technical limitations of Zoom and similar internet platforms, we cannot guarantee the confidentiality of what might be said.

You will be eligible to receive a $50 gift card as compensation for your time participating in this interview. We will follow up after the interview with the gift card if you are interested in receiving one.

Do you consent to participating in this interview?

To help us accurately keep track of what you share during this interview, we would like to record the conversation. We will use this recording to double-check our notes and

summaries of our conversation; we will not share the recording outside the research team, and once we've summarized the conversation, we will delete the recording.

Is it OK with you if we record this conversation? If not, we can do the interview without recording it and we will rely on notes from our conversation.

PUBLIC BURDEN STATEMENT

OMB Control Number: ####-####
Expiration Date:

Economic Development Priorities/Activities, Implementation, and Challenges Thereto
- In your responses to the survey we sent out in [MONTH], you mentioned that [APPLICANT ENTITY NAME] is working on economic development focused on [survey question *"What are APPLICANT ENTITY NAME's current economic development plans and activities?"* selected options].
- [REPEAT TWICE] Can you tell me about a major project that your community is working on in this area/one of these areas? (Prompts)
    - What are the goals / intended outcomes of the project?
    - How far along is the project? What is the timeline for the project?
    - What are the funding sources for this project?
    - What sorts of planning was needed to design the project and secure funding for it?
        - Who was involved in this planning?
        - Was your community able to leverage past experience with this sort of project (e.g., because the community / current staff have executed similar projects, or because the community leveraged external resources, such as a contracted firm with expertise, TA from a funding agency or other source, etc.)?
    - Are there any construction activities as part of this project?
        - How have these been to coordinate and implement?
    - What challenges have impacted this project?
        - (Prompts: On the survey, you identified a number of challenges impacting your community's economic development plans and activities, including [survey question *"What are the challenges to achieving APPLICANT ENTITY NAME's current economic development plans and activities?"* selected options]. Have any of these impacted this project?)

- Stepping back and thinking about your community's economic development plans more broadly—would you say some of these plans are moving forward more quickly than others?
    - Why do you think that is?
        - (Prompts: funding in hand, addresses greatest need, affects more people/promises broad impact, available expertise for implementation)
    - Are the plans that are moving ahead quickly your community's top priorities, or are some slower-moving plans higher priority?
        - (Prompts: funding, TA, community support, available staffing/labor)
- On the survey, you identified the following challenges to achieving the community's economic development plans or activities, including [survey question *"What are the challenges to achieving APPLICANT ENTITY NAME's current economic development plans and activities?"* selected options]. Can you tell me about these challenges and how they impact your community?
    - (Develop questions in advance that are specific to the barriers identified: e.g., if insufficient data, ask what data is needed; options for or likelihood of getting them; why the data are needed / effects of not having them, etc.)
- Are there other challenges impacting your community's economic development plans or activities?

Funding Sources
- How do you learn about funding sources for economic development?
  - (Prompts: word of mouth, conferences, newsletters, media)
- Thinking about the funding sources you have experience applying to, what challenges were there to applying, if any? Can you give an example?
  - What, if anything, made applying relatively easy? Can you give an example?
- Now, thinking about the ones you have received funds from, have/were there challenges with the use of funds? Can you give an example?
  - (Prompts: use restrictions, reporting requirements)
  - What, if anything, made working with the funds relatively easy? Can you give an example?
- Was there anything about the funding beyond the money itself that supported positive outcomes?
  - (Prompts: TA available through the funding program, flexible use of funds, connections with other funding recipients)
- Has the community had plans for economic development projects but been unable to find possible funding opportunities?
  - What type of projects were they?
  - What were the funding barriers? (Prompts: activity was not allowed/supported, amount of available funds was insufficient)

Matching Funding
- [If survey question *"Has APPLICANT ENTITY NAME applied to a funding opportunity at any time from 2019-2023 where they were required to provide match funding?"* == YES] Talk about your experience applying for funding that comes with a funding match requirement. Was it easy or difficult to identify and secure the match?
- Has a match requirement led you/the community not to apply for other funding opportunities? Please give an example.
- How do you think your experiences will affect your decisions around future funding applications that include a funding match?
    - (Prompts: would be less likely to apply, would pursue a match differently, will be in a better position because of past experienced, have more information now about possible matching sources)
- Are there other considerations related to pursuing funding with a match requirement?
    - (Prompts: level of staff effort required to apply for or administer project; internal community policies around match funding; makes record keeping more challenging; requires more time for relationship-building/maintenance; provides benefits beyond the funding itself)

Indigenous Communities Program
- [If Indigenous Communities Program applicant] Let's shift to talk about the Indigenous Communities (IC) grant program. Can you talk a little about your interest in the program? What were your expectations for the program at the time you applied?
- What was your experience like with the application process?
    - (Prompts: easy process, sufficient information available to complete the application, needed assistance, difficult process)
- How would you compare the application process for IC funding to the processes for other funding opportunities?
    - In what ways was the IC process easier or more difficult? Can you give an example?
- On the survey, you said your community [would/would not] apply to any opportunities like the IC program in the future. Why [would you/would you not] apply?