

SUPPORTING STATEMENT PART A
U.S. Department of Commerce
Economic Development Administration
EDA Regional Economic Development Collection Instrument
OMB Control No. 0610-0113

Abstract

EDA leads the Federal economic development agenda by promoting innovation and competitiveness and preparing American regions for growth and success in the worldwide economy. Section 28 of the Stevenson-Wydler Technology Innovation Act of 1980 (Regional Technology and Innovation Hub Program (15 U.S.C. §3722a) is the legal authority under which EDA awards financial assistance and designee status under the Fiscal Year (FY) 23 Regional Technology and Innovation Hub Program (“Tech Hubs”).

Under Tech Hubs, EDA seeks to strengthen U.S. economic and national security through place-based investments in regions with the assets, resources, capacity, and potential to become globally competitive, within approximately ten years, in the technologies and industries of the future - and for those industries, companies, and the good jobs they create to start, grow, and remain in the U.S. in order to support the growth and modernization of U.S. manufacturing, improve commercialization of the domestic production of innovative research, and strengthen U.S. economic and national security.

The purpose of this data collection is to help ensure that Tech Hub investments are evidence-based, data driven, and accountable to participants and the public. Lead consortium members of the 31 designated Tech Hubs will submit identified program metrics and qualitative information to help assess specific program objectives. A semi-annual questionnaire will be sent to each of the Tech Hubs consortium leads which will gather the relevant data and stories for each of the 31 Tech Hubs designee consortia, resulting in consortia regional impact evaluation, resources, and tools for regional economic development decision-makers.

Justification

1. Explain the circumstances that make the collection of information necessary. Identify any legal or administrative requirements that necessitate the collection. Attach a copy of the appropriate section of each statute and regulation mandating or authorizing the collection of information.

To effectively administer and monitor its economic development assistance programs, EDA collects certain information from applications for, and recipients of, EDA investment assistance. Under the EDA Regional Technology and Innovation Hub Program, award recipients are required to submit identified program metrics and information to ensure that EDA regional development investments are evidence-based and data-driven, and accountable to participants and the public.

EDA requires information from the 31 Designated Tech Hubs recipients also known as the consortia leads. This collection instrument will provide more granular information on respondent's progress towards the program goal to strengthen U.S. economic and national security with investments in regions across the country with assets and resources with the potential to become globally competitive in the technologies and industries of the future—and for those industries, companies, and the good jobs they create, to start, grow, and remain in the United States.

Tech Hubs Designees will submit data on a semi-annual basis to better understand project progress, meet reporting requirements of the program, and track how EDA funding supports regional

development. Furthermore, the data collected, and the tools created will help inform economic development practices at EDA, paving the way for future programming.

2. Indicate how, by whom, and for what purpose the information is to be used. Except for a new collection, indicate the actual use the agency has made of the information received from the current collection.

The information will be used by EDA to monitor and assess the progress of the Tech Hub Designees toward program goals, including but not limited to jobs created, additional investment raised, and workers trained. The outputs will include tools, resources, and recommendations that will help inform current program monitoring as well as economic development policy, economic decision-making, and economic best practices. In doing so, EDA will ensure that the agency's regional investments are evidence-based and data-driven, and accountable to participants and the public.

3. Describe whether, and to what extent, the collection of information involves the use of automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology, e.g. permitting electronic submission of responses, and the basis for the decision for adopting this means of collection. Also, describe any consideration of using information technology to reduce burden.

EDA plans to collect the information via electronic submissions.

4. Describe efforts to identify duplication. Show specifically why any similar information already available cannot be used or modified for use for the purposes described in Question 2

EDA reviews new and existing information collections to ensure that there is no duplication. The information requested is unique to the information collection and is not collected elsewhere.

5. If the collection of information impacts small businesses or other small entities, describe any methods used to minimize burden.

Pursuant to EDA's authorizing legislation and regulations, eligible applicants and eligible recipients of EDA investment assistance include "small entities" as defined by the Regulatory Flexibility Act (5 U.S.C 601(6)). Accordingly, this information collection potentially involves small entities. As part of this process, EDA has conducted a thorough review of its forms and other information collections to minimize respondent burden. EDA collects only the minimum amount of information to effectively administer its programs and to monitor compliance with Stevenson-Wydler Technology Innovation Act of 1980 (Regional Technology and Innovation Hub Program (15 U.S.C. 3722a) and EDA regulations.

6. Describe the consequence to Federal program or policy activities if the collection is not conducted or is conducted less frequently, as well as any technical or legal obstacles to reducing burden.

EDA serves as the lead bureau for the Department of Commerce's Strategic Objective 2.1 ("Drive equitable, resilient, place-based economic development and job growth"). If the collection is not conducted, EDA will limit its ability to monitor grant program impacts which will play an important role program in continuously improving EDA's investment strategy. This data collection will provide EDA with the necessary data to facilitate sound evidence-based decision making.

7. Explain any special circumstances that would cause an information collection to be conducted in a manner:

- requiring respondents to report information to the agency more often than quarterly
 - Respondents will be asked to report semi-annually
- requiring respondents to prepare a written response to a collection of information in fewer than 30 days after receipt of it;
 - Respondents will have a minimum of 30-days to respond
- requiring respondents to submit more than an original and two copies of any document;
 - Only one original will be required
- requiring respondents to retain records, other than health, medical, government contract, grant-in-aid, or tax records for more than three years;
 - Respondents will only be asked about activities within the past six months
- in connection with a statistical survey, that is not designed to produce valid and reliable results that can be generalized to the universe of study;
 - Respondents will not be asked to respond to a statistical survey
- requiring the use of a statistical data classification that has not been reviewed and approved by OMB;
- that includes a pledge of confidentiality that is not supported by authority established in statute or regulation, that is not supported by disclosure and data security policies that are consistent with the pledge, or which unnecessarily impedes sharing of data with other agencies for compatible confidential use; or
- requiring respondents to submit proprietary trade secret, or other confidential information unless the agency can demonstrate that it has instituted procedures to protect the information's confidentiality to the extent permitted by law.
 - The survey is not designed as a statistical survey and respondents are not required to submit any proprietary or confidential information

8. If applicable, provide a copy and identify the date and page number of publications in the Federal Register of the agency's notice, required by 5 CFR 1320.8 (d), soliciting comments on the information collection prior to submission to OMB. Summarize public comments received in response to that notice and describe actions taken by the agency in response to these comments. Specifically address comments received on cost and hour burden.

On December 12, 2024, EDA published a FRN that solicited public comments for 60 days (89 FR 96636). No public comments were received on the information collection.

The current request for an extension and revision is based on extensive reviews conducted on the current OMB approved survey. In particular, EDA solicited reviews from persons outside the agency including from independent researchers, Department of Commerce and other Federal agency staff, and OMB staff on topics including but not limited to: (a) whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information shall have practical utility; (b) the accuracy of the agency's estimate of the burden (including hours and cost) of the proposed collection of information; (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (d) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on respondents, including through the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

9. Explain any decision to provide any payment or gift to respondents, other than remuneration of contractors or grantees.

No gifts or payments are made to any respondent, other than disbursements of award funds to financial assistance recipients.

10. Describe any assurance of confidentiality provided to respondents and the basis for the assurance in statute, regulation, or agency policy. If the collection requires a systems of records notice (SORN) or privacy impact assessment (PIA), those should be cited and described here.

While information submitted by a respondent to EDA generally is subject to public disclosure, EDA does not publicly release confidential personal or business information, including trade secrets and confidential commercial or financial information, to the extent that such information is exempt from public disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). See 5 U.S.C. 552(b)(4). Additionally, EDA does not release information that would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy. See 5 U.S.C. 552(b)(6).

11. Provide additional justification for any questions of a sensitive nature, such as sexual behavior or attitudes, religious beliefs, and other matters that are commonly considered private. This justification should include the reasons why the agency considers the questions necessary, the specific uses to be made of the information, the explanation to be given to persons from whom the information is requested, and any steps to be taken to obtain their consent.

This information collection requests aggregated financial information regarding funds raised, received, and revenue generated but the information does not collect information associated with individual businesses or entities. The information collection will also request EINs of businesses served, this information will only be provided if already publicly available and no SSN will be collected. This information is necessary to assess whether the Tech Hub Designees are producing positive outcomes as pursuant with EDA's Investment Priorities.

12. Provide estimates of the hour burden of the collection of information.

Type of Metric (all information to be provided by Coalition Lead)	Number of Respondents	Hours per Response	Number of Responses per Year	Total Estimated Time
Lead Consortium Members/ Tech Hub Designee Consortia	31	3	2	186 hours

Multiplying the expected number of responses by the average time to complete a response, EDA estimates the above total respondent burden.

Respondent	# of Respondents	# of Responses per Respondent	Average Burden per Response	Hourly Wage Rate	Total Burden
Lead Consortium Members	31	2	3	\$62.04	\$11,539.44

Estimated Total Annual Cost to Public: \$ 115,394 (cost assumes application of U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics second quarter 2022 mean hourly employer costs for employee compensation for professional and related occupations of \$62.04).

13. Provide an estimate for the total annual cost burden to respondents or record keepers resulting from the collection of information. (Do not include the cost of any hour burden already reflected on the burden worksheet).

Apart from the value of the burden hours, there is no additional cost to respondents associated with this information collection.

14. Provide estimates of annualized cost to the Federal government. Also, provide a description of the method used to estimate cost, which should include quantification of hours, operational expenses (such as equipment, overhead, printing, and support staff), and any other expense that would not have been incurred without this collection of information.

EDA estimates the total annual cost burden to the federal government to be \$ 11,539.44 (cost assumes application of U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics second quarter 2022 mean hourly employer costs for employee compensation for professional and related occupations of \$62.04).

15. Explain the reasons for any program changes or adjustments reported in ROCIS.

EDA is requesting a revision and extension to the current OMB-approved survey, OMB control number 0610-0113.

Summary of Changes:

Frequency: The reason for revision request is the current survey requests information regarding current and past activities over the past year. This information was important to capture as a starting point before program implementation. Respondents will now begin program implementation, and it is important to request information on activities on a more regular basis, therefore, the survey requests information on a semi-annual basis.

EDA is also requesting the survey be conducted for 10 years. The reasoning for this long duration is the program goal is to support the development of globally competitive Tech Hubs within ten years. This duration is necessary to allow for time for the positive impacts of the funding and activities to be fully realized.

Topics: The content will largely be similar to the current survey. Changes will include requesting additional detail on services and activities conducted, including workforce programs, entrepreneurship, commercialization, and access to facilities. This additional detail is necessary as respondents have now received funding and it is important to understand what activities are being supported by that funding.

Response Burden: EDA anticipates the average burden per response and number of responses to be the same as the currently approved survey. This is because while additional detailed questions will be added, other questions will be removed. These questions include information that is not needed on a semi-annual basis and not likely to change. This may include, but is not limited to, industry type. Response burden is increased only due to the increased frequency and duration of data collection.

16. For collections of information whose results will be published, outline plans for tabulation and publication. Address any complex analytical techniques that will be used. Provide the time schedule for the entire project, including beginning and ending dates of the collection of information, completion of report, publication dates, and other actions. Specific details of information collected from respondents will generally not be published.

However, information collected from respondents may be published in aggregate form as part of EDA's annual report, GPRA reporting, progress reports to the DOC and/or its OIG, or other summary reports.

17. If seeking approval to not display the expiration date for OMB approval of the information collection, explain the reasons that display would be inappropriate.

EDA is not seeking approval to not display the expiration date of OMB approval for the information collections.

18. Explain each exception to the certification statement identified in "Certification for Paperwork Reduction Act Submissions."

There are no exceptions to the certification statement.