• *Mail:* Jackie Pickens, USDA/FSA/FMD, STOP 0581, Patriot Plaza III, 355 E. Street SW., Washington, DC 20024.

You may also send comments to the Desk Officer for Agriculture, Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Office of Management and Budget, Washington, DC 20503. Copies of the information collection may be requested by contacting Jackie Pickens at the above address.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Jackie Pickens; (615) 277–2613.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Title: Data on Nonresident.

OMB Number: 0560–NEW.

Type of Request: New.

Abstract: FSA is using the FSA–500 Data on Nonresident Applicants, to verify each applicant's citizenship, if applications for payments are filed by or for applicants who reside outside the United States, its territories or possessions, even if the application is filed by an agent of the applicant whose address is in the United States. County office employees provide the FSA–500 to the nonresident applicants or agents to complete the form. The FSA–500 request the applicant's name, address, United States citizenship and signature of applicant or authorized agent. The completed returned form will be filed at the County office. The data collected on the FSA–500 will assist with ensuring foreign taxes are collected and reported to the IRS.

The formula used to calculate the total burden hour is estimated average time per responses hours times total annual responses.

Estimate of Respondent Burden: Public reporting burden for this information collection is estimated to average 0.0833 hours per response. The average travel time, which is included in the total burden, is estimated to be 1 hour per respondent.

Respondents: Individuals or households, businesses or other for profit farms.

Estimated Annual Number of Respondents: 55.

Estimated Number of Reponses per Respondent: 1.

Estimated Total Annual Responses: 55.

Estimated Average Time per Response: 1.0833.

Estimated Total Annual Burden on Respondents: 60.

We are requesting comments on all aspects of this information collection to help us to:

(1) Evaluate whether the collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the FSA, including whether the information will have practical utility;

(2) Evaluate the accuracy of the FSA's estimate of burden including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used;

(3) Enhance the quality, utility and clarity of the information to be collected;

(4) Minimize the burden of the collection of information on those who are to respond, including through the use of appropriate automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

All comments received in response to this notice, including names and addresses when provided, will be a matter of public record. Comments will be summarized and included in the submission for Office of Management and Budget approval.

Signed on January 23, 2015.

Val Dolcini,

Administrator, Farm Service Agency.

[FR Doc. 2015–01651 Filed 1–28–15; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410–05–P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

Economic Development Administration

Announcement of Federal Interagency Competition, Fiscal Year 2015 Investing in Manufacturing Communities Partnership

AGENCY: Economic Development Administration, U.S. Department of Commerce.

ACTION: Notice.

Authority: The Public Works and Economic Development Act of 1965, as amended (PWEDA) (42 U.S.C. 3121 *et seq.*).

SUMMARY: This notice outlines a competition to designate up to 12 communities as manufacturing communities (Manufacturing Communities) through the Investing in Manufacturing Communities Partnership (IMCP), including proposal submission requirements and instructions, and eligibility and selection criteria that will be used to evaluate proposals. Manufacturing Communities will receive preference for a range of future Federal economic development funding and technical assistance offered by IMCP participating agencies. Some Manufacturing Communities, as discussed in the Supplementary Information section of this notice and subject to the availability of funds, may receive financial assistance awards from IMCP participating agencies to assist in cultivating an environment for businesses to create well-paying manufacturing jobs in regions across the country.

DATES: The deadline for receipt of applications is April 1, 2015 at 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time. Applications received after this deadline will not be reviewed or considered. Applicants are advised to carefully read the application and submission information provided in the **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** section of this notice.

ADDRESSES: Applications will be accepted in electronic form only. To begin the application process, applicants should use the following link: *http://www.eda.gov/challenges/imcp/applications/.*

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Ryan Hedgepeth and/or Julie Wenah, U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration, 1401 Constitution Avenue NW., Suite 78006, Washington, DC 20230 or via email at *IMCP@eda.gov.*

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Overview

The Investing in Manufacturing Communities Partnership (IMCP) is a government-wide initiative to help communities cultivate an environment for businesses to create well-paying manufacturing jobs in regions across the country and thereby accelerate the resurgence of manufacturing. The IMCP is designed to reward communities that demonstrate best practices in attracting and expanding manufacturing by bringing together key local stakeholders and using long-term planning that integrates targeted public and private investments across a community's industrial ecosystem to create broad-based prosperity. Research has shown that vibrant ecosystems may create a virtuous cycle of development for a key technology or supply chain through integrated investments and linkages among the following elements:

• Workforce and training;
• Supplier network;
• Research and innovation;
• Infrastructure/site development or redevelopment;
• Trade and international investment; and
• Operational improvement and capital access.

Interactions within and between these elements create "public goods," or assets upon which many firms can draw and that are fundamental in promoting an industry's development but are not adequately provided by the private sector. Thus, well-designed public investment is a key part of developing a self-sustaining ecosystem that attracts private investment from new and existing manufacturers and leads to broad-based prosperity.

Designation as an IMCP manufacturing community (each a Manufacturing Community, and collectively the Manufacturing Communities) will be given to communities with the best strategies for designing and making such investments in public goods. The Federal agencies participating in the IMCP are the: Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration; Department of Commerce, National Institute of Standards and Technology; Department of Defense; Department of Education; Appalachian Regional Commission; Delta Regional Authority; Department of Energy; Department of Housing and Urban Development; Department of Labor; Department of Transportation; Environmental Protection Agency; National Science Foundation; Small Business Administration; and the Department of Agriculture (each an IMCP Participating Agency, and collectively the IMCP Participating Agencies). IMCP Participating Agencies will coordinate with each other to leverage complementary activities (including from non-federal sources such as philanthropies) while also preventing duplication of efforts. Manufacturing Communities will receive preferential consideration for other Federal programs identified by IMCP Participating Agencies, the exact nature of which is dependent upon, *inter alia,* the existing legal authorities of the Participating Agencies as well as each program's eligibility requirements and evaluation criteria (*see* Section II of this notice). Additionally, a Federal point of contact (POC) will be made available to help the winning Manufacturing Communities access Federal funds and resources. Manufacturing Communities will also have access to generally available technical assistance resources developed through IMCP, namely: (1) An online data portal centralizing data available across agencies to enable communities to evaluate their strengths and weaknesses; and (2) a ''playbook'' that identifies existing Federal planning grant and technical assistance resources, and catalogues economic development best practices.

Manufacturing Communities, subject to the availability of funds and fund allocation requirements, may receive preference in award competitions from IMCP Participating Agencies (*see* Section II of this notice). However, applicants need to compete for funding from participating agencies. Designation as a manufacturing community does not guarantee federal funding.

II. Benefits of IMCP Manufacturing Communities Designation

Up to 12 communities will be designated as Manufacturing Communities for a period of two years. After two years, communities will be invited to apply to renew their designation as Manufacturing Communities; they will be evaluated based on: (a) Performance against the terms of the designation and post-designation awards received (if any); and (b) progress against project-specific metrics as proposed by communities in their applications, designed to also help communities track their own progress. *See* Section V.A.2. of this notice for more information on self-defined metrics. Renewal will not be a competitive process; each Manufacturing Community will be evaluated on its own merits. It is possible that all of the Manufacturing Communities will have their designations renewed, but also possible that some will not.

Co-applicants and identified, committed core partners in Manufacturing Communities' original IMCP proposals will be eligible for the following benefits:

1. Preferential consideration (or supplemental awards for existing grantees) for funding streams identified by the IMCP Participating Agencies as furthering IMCP goals and thereby assisting Manufacturing Communities in bolstering their IMCP strategy. Manufacturing Communities will only receive a preference when applying for grants and projects consistent with the community's economic development strategy. (**Note:** In the event that co-applicants and/or core partners submit multiple applications to a given funding stream, the federal agency reserves the right to determine how a preference will be applied, which may include asking the Manufacturing Community to identify which applicant should be given the preference). In instances where two or more partners are deemed eligible to receive the preference for a given funding stream, they will be asked to demonstrate coordination in developing their applications.

2. A federal point of contact (POC) to help the Manufacturing Community identify and access Federal economic development funding streams and to meet requirements of individual agencies, and identify and access funding related to specialized services provided by the IMCP Participating Agencies. These specialized services include capacity-building assistance and technical assistance.

3. Branding and promotion under the Manufacturing Community designation that may be helpful in attracting partners and investors behind the community's development strategy.

4. In addition, subject to the availability of funds, some Manufacturing Communities may be invited to submit additional documentation (*e.g.,* budget information) for consideration for Federal financial assistance through Challenge Grant Awards, with the possibility of additional funding from other Federal programs. Challenge Grant Awards are intended to support investments in ecosystems such as transit or digital infrastructure, workforce training, and business incubators.

Publication of this announcement does not obligate the IMCP Participating Agencies to award Manufacturing Communities any specific grant or cooperative agreement, and the IMCP Participating Agencies reserve the right to fund, in whole or in part, any, all, or none of the applications submitted in response to future solicitations.

The following 10 IMCP Participating Agencies have agreed to provide preferential consideration, and/or consideration in the determination of application merit, and/or grant supplemental awards (totaling approximately $1.3 billion) for Manufacturing Communities for the following 18 economic development programs:

1. Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC)

a. Local Access Road Program: This ARC program aims to better link the Region's businesses, communities, and residents to the Appalachian Development Highway System and to other key parts of the Region's transportation network. The program offers a flexible approach designed to meet local needs and provide a financing mechanism to support a variety of economic development opportunities throughout the Region. Funding is available to provide access to industrial sites, business parks, and commercial areas where significant employment opportunities are present. Other eligible sites include timberlands with significant commercial value and areas where educational services are provided. Proposals for the use of this program should be developed in coordination with the State ARC Program Office and State Department of Transportation as required lead times can span multiple fiscal years and/or project cycles.

b. Area Development Program: This ARC program addresses three of the four goals identified in the Commission's strategic plan: (1) Increase job opportunities and per capita income in Appalachia to reach parity with the nation; (2) Strengthen the capacity of the people of Appalachia to compete in the global economy; and (3) Develop and improve Appalachia's infrastructure to make the Region economically competitive. Projects funded in these program areas create thousands of new jobs; improve local water and sewer systems; increase school readiness; expand access to health care; assist local communities with strategic planning; and provide technical and managerial assistance to emerging businesses. Proposals for the use of this program should be developed in coordination with the State ARC Program Office.

2. Delta Regional Authority (DRA)

a. States' Economic Development Assistance Program (SEDAP): DRA's primary investment, SEDAP, provides for investments in Basic Public Infrastructure, Transportation Infrastructure, Workforce Development, and Business Development with an emphasis in entrepreneurship. SEDAP funds are allocated to Lower Mississippi Delta designated counties in eight states (Alabama, Arkansas, Illinois, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, and Tennessee).

3. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)

a. Office of Economic Resilience Integrated Planning & Investment Grants (program funding pending) will offer $75 million in Integrated Planning and Investment Grants that will seed locally-created, comprehensive blueprints that strategically direct investments in development and infrastructure to projects that result in: Attracting jobs and building diverse and resilient economies, significant municipal cost savings, and stronger, more unified local leadership. Integrated Planning and Investment Grants will incorporate some of the same features of the previously-funded Regional Plans for Sustainable Communities and the Community Challenge Grants offered by the Office of Sustainable Housing and Communities, but, using lessons learned from that program and feedback from local leaders, will place a greater emphasis on supporting actionable economic development strategies, reducing redundancy in Federally-funded planning activities, setting and monitoring performance, and identifying how Federal formula funds can be used smartly and efficiently in support of economic resilience. As with the previous efforts, priority will be placed on directing grants to rural areas, cities, counties, metropolitan areas and states that demonstrate economic need and are committed to building the cross-sector, cross-disciplinary partnerships necessary to tackle the tough decisions that help make places economically competitive. A portion of grant funds will be reserved for small and rural communities and regions.

4. Department of Labor (DOL)

a. DOL will align funds as appropriate throughout 2015 and ensure all designees are aware of opportunities as they become available. Generally, competitions for funding that may be aligned require strong public private partnerships that include entities involved in administering the workforce investment system established under Title I of the Workforce Investment Act, such as a state or local Workforce Investment Board or an American Job Center (formerly One-Stop Career Center); education and training providers that are institutions of higher education as defined in Section 102 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1002), which include public or other nonprofit educational institutions; community-based organizations that provide training and other workforce development services are also considered to be education and training providers; employers; and business-related nonprofit organizations including trade or industry associations, such as local Chambers of Commerce and small business federations, and labor organizations.

5. Department of Transportation (DOT)

a. DOT will align resources as appropriate throughout 2015 and ensure all designees are aware of opportunities as they become available, including assistance to better understand future solicitations related to the Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER), or TIGER Discretionary Grant program. This program provides a unique opportunity for DOT to engage directly with states, cities, regional planning organizations, and rural communities through a competitive process that invests in road, rail, transit and port projects that promise to achieve critical national objectives. Each project is multi-modal, multi-jurisdictional or otherwise challenging to fund through existing programs. The TIGER program showcases DOT's use of a rigorous cost-benefit analysis throughout the process to select projects with exceptional benefits, explore ways to deliver projects faster and save on construction costs, and make investments in our Nation's infrastructure that make communities more livable and sustainable. For more information about the TIGER program, please visit *http://www.dot.gov/tiger*.

6. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

a. Targeted Brownfield Assessments (TBA) program is designed to help states, tribes, and municipalities, as well as land clearance authorities, regional redevelopment agencies, and other eligible entities–especially those without other EPA brownfield site assessment resources—minimize the uncertainties of contamination often associated with brownfields, and set the stage for new investment. The TBA program is not a grant program, but a service provided by EPA via a contractor, who conducts environmental assessment activities to address the requestor's needs.

b. Brownfield Site Assessment/cleanup/Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) (includes assessment, RLF, and cleanup grants) can support a range of activities needed to re-deploy properties, including for manufacturing and related uses. Assessment grants provide funding for communities, regional development authorities, and other eligible recipients to inventory, characterize, assess, and conduct planning and community involvement related to brownfield sites. RLF grants provide funding for states, communities, and other eligible recipients to capitalize a locally administered RLF to carry out cleanup activities at brownfield sites; alternatively, recipients may use up to 40% of their capitalization grants to provide subgrants for cleanup purposes. Cleanup grants provide funding to carry out remedial activities at brownfield sites. Cleanup grants require a 20 percent cost share (cash or eligible in-kind), which may be waived based on hardship. An applicant must own the site for which it is requesting funding at time of application. For additional information on brownfield grants, including examples of their use to advance manufacturing activities, please visit *www.epa.gov/brownfields*.

7. National Science Foundation (NSF)

a. Advanced Technology Education (ATE) (supplemental awards will be awarded only to existing ATE grantees also designated as Manufacturing Communities entitled to Challenge Grants): With an emphasis on two-year colleges, the ATE program focuses on the education of technicians for the high-technology fields that drive our nation's economy. The program involves partnerships between academic institutions and employers to promote improvement in the education of science and engineering technicians at the undergraduate and secondary school levels. The ATE program supports curriculum development; professional development of college faculty and secondary school teachers; career pathways to two-year colleges from secondary schools and from two-year colleges to four-year institutions; and other activities. Another goal is articulation between two-year and four-year programs for K–12 prospective teachers that focus on technological education. The program also invites proposals focusing on research to advance the knowledge base related to technician education.

b. I/UCRC (supplemental awards will be awarded only to existing ATE grantees also designated as Manufacturing Communities entitled to Challenge Grants): The Industry/University Cooperative Research Centers (I/UCRC) program develops long-term partnerships among industry, academe, and government. The centers are catalyzed by a seed investment from the NSF and are primarily supported by industry center members, with NSF taking a supporting role in their development and evolution. Each center is established to conduct research that is of interest to both the industry and the center. An I/UCRC not only contributes to the Nation's research infrastructure base and enhances the intellectual capacity of the engineering and science workforce through the integration of research and education, but also encourages and fosters international cooperation and collaborative projects.

8. Small Business Administration (SBA)

a. Accelerator Program (pending funding and authority for the program): The Accelerator Program, within SBA's Office of Investment and Innovation, is a prize competition for entrepreneurial ecosystem models that support startups. These models provide support in the form of mentorship, networking opportunities, introductions to investors and sometimes an infusion of seed capital from the accelerator itself. Most of these also have a 3–6 month graduation period after which startups exit the accelerators to operate independently. SBA is encouraging and will give special attention to applicants to the program which are run by or support women, minorities or veterans and/or which are focused on manufacturing.

b. Regional Innovation Clusters Program (pending funding and authority for the program): The Regional Innovation Clusters Program, within SBA's Office of Entrepreneurial Development, funds and monitors organizations to connect and enhance regional innovation hubs so that small businesses can effectively leverage them to commercialize new technologies and expand into new markets, thereby positioning themselves and their regional economies for growth.

9. U.S. Department of Agriculture

a. Rural Economic Development Loan and Grant Program (REDLG): REDLG provides loans and grants to local public and nonprofit utilities which use the funds to make zero interest loans to businesses and economic development projects in rural areas that create and retain employment. Examples of eligible projects include: Purchase or improvement of real estate, buildings, and equipment; working capital and start-up costs; health care facilities and equipment; business incubators; telecommunications/computer networks; educational and job training facilities and services; community facilities and other community development projects. In REDLG a rural area is any area other than an urban area of 50,000 or more in population and its adjacent urbanized areas, as determined by the latest federal decennial census.

b. Rural Business Enterprise Grant Program (RBEG): RBEG grants may be made to public bodies and private nonprofit corporations who use the grant funds to assist small and emerging businesses in rural areas. Public bodies include States, counties, cities, townships, and incorporated town and villages, boroughs, authorities, districts, and Indian tribes. Small and emerging private businesses are those that will employ 50 or fewer new employees and have less than $1 million in projected gross revenues. Examples of eligible fund use include: Capitalization of revolving loan funds to finance small and emerging rural businesses; training and technical assistance; job training; community facilities and infrastructure; rural transportation improvement; and project planning and feasibility. In RBEG a rural area is any area other than an urban area of 50,000 or more in population and its adjacent urbanized areas, as determined by the latest federal decennial census.

c. Intermediary Relending Program (IRP): IRP loans are provided to intermediaries to establish revolving loan funds, which finance business and economic development activity in rural communities. Private non-profit corporations, public agencies, Indian groups, and cooperatives with at least 51 percent rural membership may apply for intermediary lender status. IRP funding may be used for a variety of business and community development projects located in a rural area. Under the IRP, a rural area is any area other than an urban area with a population of 25,000 or more according to the latest decennial census. Some examples of eligible projects related to businesses in the manufacturing sector are: Acquisition of a business; purchase or development of land, buildings, facilities; leases; purchase equipment; leasehold improvements; machinery; supplies; startup costs and working capital. IRP may also finance community and economic development projects.

d. Business & Industry Guaranteed Loan Program (B&I): The B&I Guaranteed Loan Program bolsters existing private credit structure by guaranteeing quality loans aimed at improving the economic and environmental climate in rural communities. A borrower may be a cooperative organization, corporation, partnership, or other legal entity organized and operated on a profit or nonprofit basis; an Indian tribe on a Federal or State reservation or other Federally recognized tribal group; a public body; or an individual. Borrowers must be engaged in a business that will: Provide employment; improve the economic or environmental climate; promote the conservation, development, and use of water for aquaculture; or reduce reliance on nonrenewable energy resources by encouraging the development and construction of solar energy systems and other renewable energy systems.

10. U.S. Department of Commerce (DOC), National Institute for Standards and Technology (NIST)

a. *Award Competitions for Hollings Manufacturing Extension Partnership Centers.* These awards are made to U.S.-based nonprofit institutions or organizations such as a 501(c)(3) entities, non-profit and State Universities, non-profit and community or technical colleges, and State, local or Tribal Governments. Awards are in the form of a Cooperative Agreement to provide manufacturing extension services to small and medium-sized manufacturers within the State designated in the applications. The Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP) network of centers helps manufacturers create and retain jobs, increase profits and save time and money. They provide technical assistance with innovation strategies, process improvements, green manufacturing, workforce development, supply chain optimization, and offer other products and services customized to address the needs of their regional manufacturers.

b. *NIST Advanced Manufacturing Technology (AMTech) Consortia.* These planning grants support new or existing industry-driven consortia to develop research plans that address high-priority challenges impeding the growth of advanced manufacturing in the United States. Nonprofit U.S. organizations as well as accredited institutions of higher education and state, local and Tribal Governments are eligible to apply for the program. Teaming and partnerships that include broad participation by companies of all sizes, universities and government agencies, driven by industry, are encouraged. The AMTech awards are intended to bridge the gap between R&D activities and the deployment of technological innovations. The grants encourage the formation and strengthening of industry-driven technology consortia in areas of national importance in advanced manufacturing. Activities supported by these planning awards include detailed technology roadmaps of critical advanced manufacturing technologies and associated long-term industrial research challenges.

c. *Manufacturing Extension Partnership Network Special Competitions.* NIST's MEP works with small and mid-sized U.S. manufacturers to help them create and retain jobs, increase profits, and save time and money. The nationwide network provides a variety of services, from innovation strategies to process improvements to green manufacturing. MEP also works with partners at the state and federal levels on programs that put manufacturers in position to develop new customers, expand into new markets and create new products. NIST's MEP Federal Funding Opportunities (FFOs) are awarded to existing MEP Centers for projects designed to enhance the productivity, technical performance and global competitiveness of U.S. manufacturers. These opportunities help encourage the creation and adaption of improved technologies and provide resources to develop new products that respond to the ever changing needs of manufacturers.

In addition, applicant communities are reminded about the availability of local and state Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds and opportunities to use HUD's Section 108 Loan Guarantee program in achieving their economic development goals. HUD's Section 108 Loan Guarantee program enables states and local governments to borrow money from private investors at reduced interest rates to promote economic development, stimulate job growth, and carry out public infrastructure improvements, including development of public facilities. The state and local governments can borrow up to five times their annual CDBG allocation, which allows them to transform a small portion of their CDBG funds into federally guaranteed loans large enough to pursue physical and economic revitalization projects that can renew entire communities.

The loan guarantees approved by HUD for states and local governments are not competitive awards. States and local governments, however, must submit an application to allow HUD to confirm the proposed uses of the guaranteed financing will meet CDBG program requirements and that projects are financially feasible.

Several financing features of the Section 108 Loan Guarantee Program that promote economic development and job growth are: Loan terms up to 20 years; reduced interests costs; and flexible repayment of loan principal. Eligible activities under the program in recent years include site assembly, predevelopment costs, infrastructure and undergrounding of utilities for large scale commercial developments in underserved areas; and acquisition, rehabilitation, or construction of commercial or industrial buildings, and structures. For more information about the program's eligible activities and uses of Section108 guaranteed loan funding, follow the link below: *https://www.hudexchange.info/section-108/section-108-program-eligibility-requirements.*

For more Section 108 Loan Guarantee Program information, you may contact Hugh Allen at HUD (202–402–4654); *hugh.allen@hud.gov.*

For more information on using CDBG for economic development, please see the program link below: *http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/comm_planning/communitydevelopment.*

In addition, each of the 14 IMCP Participating Agencies—the above ten plus the EDA, Defense, Education, and Energy—will offer staff time in order that each Manufacturing Community will have access to a POC (assigned from an IMCP Participating Agency) to facilitate access to technical assistance and economic development funds. POCs will help with identifying appropriate funding streams and assisting Manufacturing Communities with understanding the application requirements of individual agencies.

III. Eligibility Information

A. Eligible Organizations

Proposals for designation as a Manufacturing Community must be submitted on behalf of the region by a consortium that includes one or more of the eligible organizations discussed in this section. The consortium must designate, for administrative purposes, an eligible organization as its lead applicant with one member of that organization designated as the primary point of contact for the consortium. The lead applicants should serve as the spokespersons presenting the consensus opinion of their respective consortium (*see also* Section II regarding eligibility of co-applicants and co-partners of a consortium for preferential consideration and other substantive benefits). All members of the consortium must submit letters of commitment or sign a Memorandum of Understanding documenting their contributions to the partnership. Consortiums are strongly encouraged to include key stakeholders, including but not limited to private sector partners, higher education institutions, government entities, economic development and other community and labor groups, financial institutions and utilities. At a minimum, a consortium should include a higher education institution, a private sector partner, and a government entity; however, if one or more of these organizations is not part of the consortium, a letter of support from each type of organization not included in the consortium must be submitted. Consortiums should demonstrate a significant level of regional cooperation in their proposal.

Eligible lead applicants include a(n):

1. District Organization;
2. Indian Tribe or a consortium of Indian Tribes;
3. 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 of political subdivisions;
4. Institution of higher education or a consortium of higher education institutions; or
5. Public or private non-profit organization or association acting in cooperation with officials of a political subdivision of a State.[1]

[1] *See* section 3(4) of PWEDA (42 U.S.C. 3122(4)) and 13 CFR 300.3.

B. Geographic Scope

Applicants may define the regional boundaries of their consortium, though all such regions should have a strong existing manufacturing base. In general, an applicant's region should be large enough to contain critical elements of the key technologies or supply chains (KTS) prioritized by the applicant, but small enough to enable close collaboration (*e.g.,* generally, larger than a city but smaller than a state). The proposed manufacturing community should provide evidence that their community ranks in the top third in the nation for their key manufacturing technology or supply chain by: Location quotient for either employment or firms in the KTS, or in terms of employment or firm numbers. If a community is using location quotient exclusively, this quotient must be in the top third in the nation and be greater than one. Other metrics can be used to determine a top third national ranking in the applicants KTS region, but data sources and methods used to calculate the top third ranking must be well-documented in the application. Tools for helping communities determine their KTS location quotients can be found at: *http://www.eda.gov/challenges/imcp/*.

A key element in evaluating proposals will be the rate of improvement on (rather than absolute value of) key performance metrics and goals, as defined in communities' strategies, that applicants can credibly generate. For example, communities are encouraged to demonstrate how their proposals will lead to an improvement in key performance metrics including, increases in private investment in the sector, creation of middle-to-high wage well-paying jobs, increased median income, increased exports and improved environmental quality. Thus, both distressed (as defined in PWEDA) and non-distressed manufacturing regions are encouraged to apply.

IV. Application and Submission Information

A. How To Submit an Application

Applications will be accepted in electronic form only. The application is subject to the Paperwork Reduction Act, and has OMB Control Number 0610–0107. Application submission will involve a two-step process, described briefly below. To begin the application process, applicants should use this link: *http://www.eda.gov/challenges/imcp/applications/*.

Step 1: Eligibility Screen for Lead Applicants To Establish a Username

Only eligible lead applicants will be able to upload and submit an application. Guided questions will screen who is eligible to serve as lead applicant for a consortium. Interested applicants must establish access to the system by completing the eligibility screen by March 12, 2015. If a lead applicant has not established access to the system by March 12, 2015, applicants may not be able to complete the application by the deadline. No additional registrations (*e.g.,* SAM, grants.gov) will be required.

Step 2: Application Submission

Only lead applicants may submit materials via the electronic system on behalf of a consortium. Fields will guide applicants in the submission of the required information. For more details about the information requirements for an application, see Section IV B. Please note that any optional letters of support must also be uploaded electronically by the lead applicant.

Establish Access Early and Submit Early

In order to submit an application through the electronic system, an applicant must establish access to this system. Note that this process can take several weeks, especially if all steps are not completed correctly. To avoid delays, EDA strongly recommends that applicants start early and not wait until close to the application deadline date before logging in, establishing access, reviewing the application instructions, and applying.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Ryan Hedgepeth and/or Julie Wenah, U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration, 1401 Constitution Avenue NW., Suite 78006, Washington, DC 20230 or via email at *IMCP@eda.gov*.

In preparing their applications, communities are urged to consult online resources developed through IMCP, namely (1) a data portal centralizing data available across agencies to enable communities to evaluate their strengths and weaknesses; (2) a "playbook" that identifies existing Federal planning grant and technical assistance resources and catalogues best practices in economic development, and (3) common questions and answers, the applications of successful designees, and online data tools for calculating a community's KTS performance. These resources are available at *www.eda.gov/challenges/imcp/*.

B. Content and Form of Application Submission

In order to be considered for designation, applicants must submit a proposal that includes all required elements outlined below. The proposal will be used to determine which communities will receive a Manufacturing Community designation. A proposal that does not contain all of the required elements is incomplete and will not be considered for a designation. Reviewers will focus on the quality of the analysis described below. Each proposal must include the following information:

(a) *Point of Contact:* Name, phone number, email address, and organization address of the primary point of contact for the lead applicant, including specific staff member to be the point of contact;

(b) *Assessment of Local Industrial Ecosystem:* An integrated assessment of the local industrial ecosystem (*i.e.,* the whole range of workforce and training, supplier network, research and innovation, infrastructure/site development, trade and international investment, operational improvements and capital access components needed for manufacturing activities) as it exists today in the region defined by the applicant and what is missing; and an evidence-based path for developing chosen components of this ecosystem (infrastructure, transit, workforce, etc.) by making specific investments to address gaps and make a region uniquely competitive (*see also* Section V.A.1.);

(c) *Implementation Strategy Description:* A description of the proposed investments and implementation strategy that will be used to address gaps in the ecosystem (*see also* Sections V.A.1, V.A.2);

(d) *Implementation Strategy Parties:* A description of the local organizations/jurisdictions that comprise the consortium and that will carry out the proposed strategy, including letters of commitment or signed a Memorandum of Understanding documenting their contributions to the partnership, as well as a description of their specific roles and responsibilities (*see also* Sections V.A.2, V.A.3);

(e) *Performance Measurement and Impact Evaluation:* A description of outcome-based metrics, benchmarks and milestones to be tracked and evaluation methods to be used (experimental or high quality quasi-experimental designs using control groups, etc.) over the course of the implementation to gauge performance of the strategy; for example, communities are encouraged to demonstrate how their proposals will lead to an improvement in key performance metrics including increases in private investment in the sector, creation of middle-to-high wage well-paying jobs, increased median income, increased exports and improved environmental quality. In addition, communities are also expected to identify metrics more specifically tied to the implementation of their plan (*see also* Section V.A.2).

(f) *Federal Financial Assistance Experience:* Evidence of the intended recipient's ability and authority to manage a Federal financial assistance award;

(g) *Geographic Scope:* Description of the regional boundaries of their consortium and the basis for determining that their manufacturing concentration ranks in the top third in the nation for their key manufacturing technology or supply chain by either: location quotient for employment or firms in the KTS, or in terms of employment or firm numbers. Other metrics can be used to determine a top third national ranking in the applicants the KTS region, but data sources and methods used to calculate the top third ranking must be well-documented in the application.

(h) *Submitting Official:* Documentation that the Submitting Official (the lead applicant) is authorized by its organization to submit a proposal and subsequently apply for assistance.

C. Deadlines for Submission

The deadline for receipt of applications is April 1, 2015 at 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time. Proposals received after the closing date and time will not be considered.

V. Application Review and Evaluation Process

Throughout the review and selection process, the IMCP Participating Agencies reserve the right to seek clarification in writing from applicants whose proposals are being reviewed and considered. IMCP Participating Agencies may ask applicants to clarify proposal materials, objectives, and work plans, or other specifics necessary to comply with Federal requirements. To the extent practicable, the IMCP Participating Agencies encourage applicants to provide data and evidence of the merits of the project in a publicly available and verifiable form. Applicants are reminded that confidential information must be identified appropriately and is subject to EDA's obligations under the Freedom of Information Act (*see* Section VI.A.).

A. Proposal Narrative Requirements and Selection Criteria

IMCP Participating Agencies will consider each of the following factors as a basis to confer the Manufacturing Community designation. Applicants have the opportunity to single out one of the following factors as a priority area or special focus of their proposal for additional weighting in the evaluation of their proposal. (*See* Section V.B. of this notice for weighting).

1. Quality of Assessment/ Implementation Strategy

At the outset, applicants should identify a KTS or a small integrated set of KTS on which their development plan will focus, and explain how the KTS builds on existing regional assets and capabilities. In selecting a KTS and in defining the geographic boundaries of the community, applicants should choose areas that are sufficiently focused to ensure a well-integrated development plan, but sufficiently broad that resulting development of related capabilities have a substantial impact on a community's prosperity overall and achieve broad distribution of benefits. Finally, the applicant should discuss why this community has a comparative advantage in building their KTS (*e.g.,* comparative data such as location quotients, levels of sales, wages, employment, and patents) and how their strategy integrates the ecosystem categories, noted below, into a coherent whole, leading to a vibrant manufacturing ecosystem based on the KTS.

Applicants should provide a detailed data-driven assessment of the local industrial ecosystem as it exists today, what is missing, and an evidence-based path to development that could make a region uniquely competitive. For example, a data-driven assessment could include metrics such as the number of firms, the regional market share or value added, and the share of the workforce dedicated to the local industrial ecosystem. This description should also explain public good investments needed to realize these plans. The proposed development should involve strong coordination across the subcategories below—for instance, detailing how plans in workforce, infrastructure, capital access, and international trade combine to support the growth or development of a particular KTS or sector. Applicants must conduct a cost-benefit analysis of their proposed public good investments and demonstrate that expected project benefits exceed project costs.

We expect that winning applications will include a detailed, integrated, and data-driven assessment of the local industrial ecosystem as it currently exists for their KTS, what is missing, and a path to development that could make a region uniquely competitive. However, we do not expect that applicants will provide detailed budgets and analysis for plans to remedy every gap they identify. Instead, applicants should submit estimated budgets for such projects that they can show would be catalytic.

The following text provides guidance on how we will analyze the composition of a community's industrial ecosystem. Applicants are asked to discuss their strategies for each of the following six elements. However, while the six elements are fixed, the guidance under each element is not meant to be proscriptive.

For *workforce and training,* the applicant should consider:

i. Current capability: What are the requisite skills and average compensation for employees in fields relevant to the KTS? How many people with these or similar skills currently reside in the region? How many employees could be added to the workforce with minimal additional training?

ii. Current institutions for improving capability: What local community colleges, certified apprenticeships, and other training programs exist that either specialize in the KTS or could develop specialties helpful for the KTS? Do these programs result in recognized credentials and pathways for continuous learning that are valued by employers and lead to improved outcomes for employees? To what extent do these institutions currently integrate research and development (R&D) activities and education to best prepare the current and future workforce? To what extent do postsecondary partners engage with feeder programs, such as those in secondary schools? What is the nature of engagement of Workforce Investment Boards, employers, community, and labor organizations?

iii. Gaps: What short- and long-term human resources challenges exist for the local economy along the region's proposed development path? If available, what is the local unemployment rate for key occupations in the KTS? Are any local efforts underway to re-incorporate the long-term unemployed into the workforce that could be integrated into the KTS?

iv. Plans: Communities that intend to focus on workforce issues as a priority area in seeking future grants or technical assistance should explain how they intend to build on local assets to improve KTS in areas such as:

a. Linkage (including training, financial and in-kind partnerships) with employers (or prospective employers) in the KTS and labor/community groups to ensure skills are useful, portable, and lead to a career path;

b. Plans to ensure broad distribution of benefits, *e.g.,* through programs to upgrade jobs and wages or support disadvantaged populations;

c. Extent of plan to integrate R&D activities and education to best prepare the current and future workforce as appropriate to the KTS focus specified.

For *supplier networks,* the applicant should consider:

i. Current Capability: What are key firms in the KTS? What parts of the KTS are located inside and outside the region defined by the applicant? How are firms connected to each other? What are the key trade and other associations and what roles do they play? How might customers or suppliers (even outside the region) support suppliers in the region? What examples are of projects/shared assets across these firms? What new KTS products have been launched recently?

ii. Current Institutions for Improving Capability: What processes or institutions (foundations, medical or educational institutions, trade associations, etc.) exist to promote innovation or upgrade supplier capability? Please provide performance measures and/or case studies as evidence of these capabilities.

iii. Gaps: What short- and long-term supply chain challenges exist for the local economy along the region's proposed development path? Are there institutions that convene suppliers and customers to discuss improved ways of working together, roadmap complementary investments, etc.?

iv. Plans: Communities that intend to focus on improving supplier networks as a priority area in seeking future grants or technical assistance should explain how they intend to build on local assets to improve the KTS in areas such as:

a. Establishing an industrial park conducive to supply chain integration, including support for convening and upgrading supplier firms of all sizes;

b. Remedying gaps and/or undertaking more intensive supply chain mapping;

c. Measuring and improving supplier capabilities in innovation, problem-solving ability, and systematic operation (*e.g.* lean, International Organization for Standardization (ISO) certification);

d. Leveraging organizations that work with suppliers, such as the MEP, U.S. Export Assistance Centers (USEACs), Small Business Development Centers (SBDCs), SCORE chapters and Women Business Centers (WBCs); and

e. Measuring and improving trade association activity, interconnectedness, and support from key customers or suppliers (even if outside the region).

For *research and innovation,* the applicant should consider:

i. Current Capabilities: What are the community's university/research assets in the KTS? To what extent do training institutions currently integrate R&D activities and education to best prepare the current and future workforce? Does the community have shared facilities such as incubator space or research centers? What is the community's record for helping the ecosystem develop small businesses and start-ups?

ii. Current Institutions for Improving Capability: How relevant are local institutions' program of research and commercialization for the proposed development path? How robust is the revenue model? What local entities work with new and existing firms to help promote innovation? How integrated are industry and academia (including Federal Laboratories)?

iii. Gaps: What short- and long-term research challenges exist for the local economy along the region's proposed development path?

iv. Plans: Communities that intend to focus on improving local research institutions as a priority area in seeking future grants or technical assistance should explain how they intend to build on local assets to improve the KTS in areas such as:

a. Establishing shared space and procuring capital equipment for incubation and research;

b. Developing strategies for negotiating intellectual property rights in ways that balance the goals of rewarding inventors and sharing knowledge;

c. Plans for promoting university research relevant to new industry needs, and arrangements to facilitate adoption of such applied research by industry;

d. Leveraging other Federal innovation initiatives such as the interagency National Network for Manufacturing Innovation and MEP's Manufacturing Technology Accelerator Centers; and

e. Plans to ensure broad distribution of the benefits of public investment, including benefits to disadvantaged populations.

For *infrastructure/site development,* the applicant should consider:

i. Current capability: Describe the quality of existing physical or information infrastructure and logistical services that support manufacturing and provide analysis of availability of sites prepared to receive new manufacturing investment (including discussion of specific limitations of these cites, *i.e.,* environmental concerns or limited transportation access). Provide detailed analysis on how transportation infrastructure serves KTS in moving people and goods. Do KTS firms contribute significantly to air or water pollution, or sprawl?

ii. Current institutions for improving capability: Is there capability for on-going analysis to identify appropriate sites for new manufacturing activity, and efforts necessary to make them ''implementation ready?'' Do the applicants control these sites? Are they well-located, requiring readily achievable remedial or infrastructural support to become implementation-ready? Are they easily accessible by potential workers via short commutes or multiple modes of transportation? Are they located in areas where planned uses will not disproportionately impact the health or environment of vulnerable populations? Are they suitable for manufacturing investment in accordance with Brownfield Area-Wide plans, Comprehensive Economic Development Strategies (CEDS), or other plans that focus on economic development outcomes in an area such as those associated with metropolitan planning organizations or regional councils of government? Are there opportunities to improve the environmental sustainability of the KTS?

iii. Gaps: Provide analysis of gaps in existing infrastructure relevant for the proposed path to ecosystem development, including barriers and challenges to attracting manufacturing-related investment such as lack of appropriate land or transportation use planning, and explains how plans will address them. To what extent have firms indicated interest in investing in the region if infrastructure gaps are addressed?

iv. Plans: Communities that intend to focus on infrastructure development as a priority area in seeking future grants or technical assistance should explain how they intend to build on local assets to improve KTS in areas such as:

a. Transportation, energy or information infrastructure projects that contribute to economic competitiveness of the region and United States as a whole by (i) improving efficiency, reliability, sustainability and/or cost-competitiveness in the movement of workers, goods or information in the KTS, and (ii) creating jobs in the KTS;

b. Site development for manufacturing to take advantage of existing transportation and other infrastructure and facilitate worker access to new manufacturing jobs;

c. Infrastructure and site reuse that will generate cost savings over the long term and efficiency in use of public resources; and

d. Improvement of production methods and locations so as to reduce environmental pollution, greenhouse gas emissions, resource use and sprawl.

For *trade and international investment,* the applicant should consider:

i. Current capability: What is the current level and rate of change of the community's exports of products or services in the KTS? Identify existing number of international KTS firms, inward investment flow, outward investment flow, export and import figures, KTS trends in the region and internationally.

ii. Current institutions for improving export capability and support: What local public sector, public-private partnership, or nonprofit programs have been developed to promote exports of products or services from the KTS?

iii. Gaps: What are the barriers to increasing KTS exports? Identify strategic needs or gaps to fully implement a program to attract foreign investment (*e.g.,* outreach missions, marketing materials, infrastructure, data or research, missing capabilities).

iv. Plans: Communities that intend to focus on exports or foreign direct investment as a priority area in seeking future grants or technical assistance should explain how they intend to build on local assets to improve KTS in areas such as:

a. Developing global business-to-business matching services; regional advisory services for engaging international markets and international trade officials, or planning and implementing trade missions.

b. Location (investment) promotion in target markets and within target sectors to build the KTS; Investment Missions; business accelerators or soft landing sites to support new investors; marketing materials; or organizational capacity to support investment strategy implementation.

For *operational improvement and capital access,* the applicant should consider:

i. Current capability: For the KTS, what data is available about business operational costs and local capital access? The applicant can provide general description of what is available, and more detailed description of key areas of comparative advantage or of concern. How does industry partner with utility companies to achieve efficient energy distribution and delivery and/or more energy efficient manufacturing operations? What (if any) local institutions exist to help companies reduce business operational costs while maintaining or increasing performance? What (if any) sources of capital and infrastructure are available (public and private) to businesses to expand or locate in a community? What evidence exists regarding their performance?

ii. Gaps: What improvements or new institutions (including financial institutions and foundations) are key for promoting continuous improvement in KTS business operational capability?

iii. Plans: Communities that intend to focus on operational improvements and/or capital access as a priority area in seeking future grants or technical assistance should explain how they intend to build on local assets to improve KTS in areas such as:

a. Reducing manufacturers' production costs by reducing waste management costs, enhancing efficiency, and promoting resilience establishing mechanisms to help firms measure and minimize life-cycle costs (*e.g.,* improving firms' access to innovative financing mechanisms for energy efficiency projects, such as a revolving energy efficiency loan fund or state green bank);

b. Building concerted local efforts and capital projects that facilitate industrial energy efficiency, combined heat and power, and commercial energy retrofits (applicants should detail strategies for capturing these opportunities in support of local manufacturing/business competitiveness); and

c. Developing public-private partnerships that provide capital to commercialize new technology, and develop/equip production facilities in the KTS.

2. Capacity To Carry Out Implementation Strategy

Applications will be judged on the quality of the evidence they provide, including the following information:

i. Overall leadership capacity—lead organization's capacity to carry out planned investments in public goods, *e.g.,* prior leadership of similar efforts, prior success attracting outside investment, prior success identifying and managing local and regional partners, and ability to manage, share, and use data for evaluation and continuous improvement.

ii. Sound partnership structure, *e.g.,* clear identification of project lead, clarity of consortium partner responsibilities for executing plan, and appropriateness of partners designated for executing each component; clarity of consortium partnership governance structure; and strength of accountability mechanisms, including contractual measures and remedies for non-performance, as reflected in letters of commitment or Memorandum of Understanding among consortium members. As discussed in Section III.A. of this notice, the partnership (a) must include an EDA-eligible lead applicant (District Organization; Indian tribe; state, city, or other political subdivision of a state, institution of higher education, or nonprofit organization or association acting in cooperation with a political subdivision of a state); and (b) should include other key stakeholders, including but not limited to private sector partners, higher education institutions, government entities, economic development and other community and labor groups, financial institutions and utilities. Also, at a minimum, the applicant must have letters of support from a higher education institution, a private sector partner, and a government entity if these are not already part of the consortium. It is important to note that securing letters of commitment will help strengthen the application. Commitment means that the entity is making a tangible financial or other commitment to the strategy regardless of whether the applicant is designated as a Manufacturing Community.

In outlining their partnership structure, applicants must list the names of the organizations that will be part of the consortium for designation purposes, the DUNS numbers and/or EIN numbers as applicable for each organization, and the name and contact information of a point of contact for each partner/consortium member organization. Consortium member organizations must also submit letters of commitment or a signed MOU with the IMCP proposal to be counted as a full member of the consortium for designation purposes. In their partnership structure, they should list the counties represented.

iii. Partner capacity to carry out planned investments in public goods and attract companies, as measured by prior stewardship of Federal, state, and/or private dollars received and prior success at achieving intended outcomes.

iv. State of ecosystem's institutions (associated with the six subcategories under Section I. of this notice) and readiness of industry, nonprofit, and public sector facilities to improve the way they facilitate innovation, development, production, and sale of products, as well as train/educate a corresponding workforce.

v. Depth and breadth of communities' short, medium and long term development and employment goals, plans to utilize high-quality data and rigorous methods to evaluate progress towards goals, and demonstration that the probability of achieving these goals is realistic.

Competitive applications will have clearly defined goals and impacts that are aligned with IMCP objectives. Over the long term (5–10 years), plans should lead to significant improvements in the community's economic activity, environmental sustainability, and quality of life. Thus, every applicant should provide credible evidence that their KTS development plan will lead over the next 5–10 years to significant but reasonably attainable increases in private investment in the sector, creation of middle to high-wage well-paying jobs, increased median income, increased exports and improved environmental quality. We expect that every applicant will track progress toward these long-term outcomes, for their region, as it relates to their KTS.

In addition, applications will be evaluated on the extent to which applicants present practical and clear metrics for nearer-term performance assessments. For the short and medium term (next 2–3 years), applicants should develop milestones (targets they expect to achieve in this time frame) and metrics (measurements toward the selected milestones and long-term goals) that measure the extent to which the chosen catalytic projects are successfully addressing the ecosystem gaps identified in their assessment and contributing to improving the long-term metrics above. Some of the types of metrics that applicants may consider for these purposes (*i.e.,* are merely recommendations and are not all-encompassing) are set forth in the table below:

Metrics to Consider

Workforce & Training:
- Number of jobs created/retained.
- Percentage increase in STEM degrees conferred.
- Percentage increase in number of women engaged in STEM roles.
- Number of apprenticeships created.
- Number of long-term unemployed persons served.
- Average wage.
- Median wage.
- Annual average unemployment rate.

Research & Innovation:
- Number of SBIR/STTR awards.
- Number of new start-ups stemming from University R&D.
- Number of new technologies commercialized.

Trade & International Investment:
- Number of regional firms participating in international trade.
- Value of goods exported.

Infrastructure & Development:
- Number and acreage of industrially zoned vacant parcels.
- Number and acreage of sites remediated/prepared for development.
- Number and acreage of brownfields remediated.
- Number of new broadband deployments.

Operational Improvement/Capital Access:
- Capital dollars invested.

Supply Chain:
- New sales.
- Number of new firms by NAICS code.
- Customers have collaborative relationships with suppliers.
- Percent of suppliers with quality certification.

Other Metrics:
- Kaufmann Index of Entrepreneurial Activity.
- Water intensity per unit of production.
- Energy intensity per unit of production.

These intermediate metrics will vary according to the plan; for example, a community that has identified a weakness in supplier quality may track improvements in supplier quality systems, while a community that has identified a desire to increase university-industry collaboration might track invention disclosures filed by faculty and business. To the extent feasible, communities should also plan to statistically evaluate the individual programs/assistance as well as the effects of the bundle of programs/assistance taken together. For example, communities might choose randomly from among qualified applicants if job training programs are oversubscribed, and track job creation outcomes for both treatment and control groups. Please note the IMCP participating agencies may choose to conduct an evaluation using metrics similar to the ones noted above.

Key elements in evaluating proposals will be the ability of applicants to identify the outcomes they seek to achieve; the connection between those outcomes and existing conditions, supported by data (where available); the clarity with which they articulate the elements of their plan that will help achieve those outcomes; and the specificity of the benchmarks that they establish to measure progress toward the outcomes. Another key element is the rate of improvement in key indicators that the plan can credibly generate. For example, communities are required to demonstrate how their proposals will lead to an improvement in key performance metrics including increases in private investment in the sector, creation of middle to high-wage well-paying jobs, increased median income, increased exports and improved environmental quality, in addition to metrics more specifically tied to the implementation of a community's plan. Thus, both distressed and non-distressed manufacturing regions are encouraged to apply.

Resources to assist applicants with developing outcome-based performance metrics and evaluation strategies are included in the IMCP Playbook ''Resources'' section located at *http://manufacturing.gov/imcp/index.html.* All lead organizations of designated Manufacturing Communities and implementation partner organizations in the Manufacturing Community strategies will be required to participate in evaluations of the Investing in Manufacturing Communities Partnership initiative and related federal grant activities must be conducted. Lead organizations and implementation partners must agree to work with evaluators designated by participating agencies, as specified in their respective grant agreements, regulations and other requirements. This may include providing access to program personnel and all relevant programmatic and administrative data, as specified by the evaluator(s) under the direction of a federal agency, during the term of the Manufacturing Community designation and/or grant agreement.

3. Verifiable Commitment From Existing and Prospective Stakeholders—Both Private and Public—To Executing a Plan and Investing in a Community [2]

i. *Cohesion of partnership.* This may be shown in part by evidence of prior collaboration between the IMCP lead applicant, applicant consortium members, and other key community stakeholders (local government, anchor institutions, community, business and labor leaders and local firms, etc.) that includes specific examples of past projects/activities.

ii. *Strength/extent of partnership commitment* (not contingent upon receipt or specific funding stream) to coordinate work and investment to execute plan and strategically invest in identified public goods. Financial commitment for current project and evidence of past investments can help serve to demonstrate this commitment.

iii. *Breadth of commitment to the plan from diverse institutions,* including local anchor institutions (*e.g.,* hospitals, colleges/universities/postsecondary institutions, labor and community organizations, major employers, small business owners and other business leaders, national and community foundations, and local, state and regional government officials.

iv. *Investment commitments.* Extent to which applicants can demonstrate commitments from public and private sectors to invest in public goods identified by the plan, or investments that directly lead to high-wage jobs in manufacturing or related sectors. Letters of intent from prospective investors to support projects, with detailed descriptions of the extent of their financial and time commitment, can serve to demonstrate this commitment. These commitments should be classified into two groups: Those that are not contingent on receipt of a specific Federal economic development funding stream, and those that are contingent on the availability of such a Federal economic development funding stream. In the latter case, applicants should aim to show a sustainable commitment over the next 5–10 years, which may be private or public (non-Federal).

B. Review Process

All proposals submitted for the Manufacturing Communities designation will be reviewed on their individual merits by an interagency panel consisting of at least three federal employees. The interagency panel will judge applications against the evaluation criteria enumerated in Section V.A. of this notice, and score applications on a scale of 100 points. Prior to reviewing the applications, the interagency panel will determine a competitive range. Projects must achieve at least the competitive range to be awarded a designation. The maximum number of points that may be awarded to each criterion is as follows:

1. Quality of Implementation Strategy: 50 Points

i. Quality of analysis of workforce, supplier network, innovation, infrastructure, trade, and costs (6 points per element)—36 points
ii. Bonus weight (applicant must select one of the elements in section V.B.1.i. as a priority area or particular focus of their proposal for extra weighting in the evaluation)—6 points
iii. Quality of integration of the six elements—8 points;

2. Capacity: 25 Points

i. Leadership capacity, partnership structure, partner capacity, readiness of institutions (4 points per element)—16 points
ii. Quality of goal-setting and evaluation plan—9 points; and

3. Commitment: 25 Points

i. Cohesion, strength, and breadth of partnership—14 points
ii. Credibility and size of investments not tied to future Federal economic development funding—7 points
iii. Credibility and size of match tied to future Federal economic development funding—4 points.

In accordance with the criteria stated in Section V—Application Review and Evaluation Process, the panel will score applications. The interagency panel will then rank the applications within the competitive range according to their respective scores and present the ranking to the Assistant Secretary for Economic Development (who will serve as the selecting official for the Manufacturing Community designations made by EDA pursuant to this notice). In determining the issuance of Manufacturing Community designations, the Assistant Secretary for Economic Development may make a selection that differs from the rankings based on any of the following Selection Factors or use any of these Selection Factors to break a tie for applications that are otherwise equal in merit:

(1) Geographic Balance;
(2) Diversity of project types and organizational type to include smaller and rural organizations; or
(3) The applicant's ability to successfully carry out the public policy and program priorities outlined in this notice.

The decision of the Assistant Secretary for Economic Development is final; however, if the Assistant Secretary for Economic Development decides to make a Manufacturing Communities designation that differs from the recommendation of the interagency review panel, the Assistant Secretary for Economic Development will document the rationale for such a determination.

C. Transparency

The agencies and bureaus involved in this initiative are committed to conducting a transparent competition and publicizing information about investment decisions. Applicants are advised that their respective applications and information related to their review, evaluation, and project progress may be shared publicly, including for those applicants who are designated a Manufacturing Community, having their application posted publicly as an example for other communities. For further information on how proprietary, confidential commercial/business, and personally identifiable information will be protected see Section VI.A. of this notice.

VI. Other Information

A. Freedom of Information Act Disclosure

The Freedom of Information Act (5 U.S.C. 552) (FOIA) and DOC's implementing regulations at 15 CFR part 4 set forth the rules and procedures to make requested material, information, and records publicly available. Unless prohibited by law and to the extent permitted under FOIA, contents of applications submitted by applicants may be released in response to FOIA requests. In the event that an application contains information or data that the applicant deems to be confidential commercial information, that information should be identified, bracketed, and marked as ''Privileged, Confidential, Commercial or Financial Information.'' Based on these markings,

[2] Such commitments may range in intensity and duration. Lead applicants are responsible for overall coordination, reporting, and delivery of results. Consortium members have ongoing roles that should be specified in the proposal. Other partners may take on less intensive commitments such as in-kind donations of the use of meeting space, equipment, telecommunications services, or staffing for particular functions; letters or other expressions of support for IMCP activities and applications for resources; participation in steering committees or other advisory bodies; permanent donations of funding, land, equipment, facilities or other resources; or the provision of other types of support without taking on a formal role in the day-to-day operations and advancement of the overall strategy; stronger applications will also specify these commitments.

the confidentiality of the contents of those pages will be protected to the extent permitted by law.

B. Intergovernmental Review

Applications submitted under this announcement are subject to the requirements of Executive Order (E.O.) 12372, ''Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs,'' if a State has adopted a process under E.O. 12372 to review and coordinate proposed Federal financial assistance and direct Federal development (commonly referred to as the ''single point of contact review process''). All applicants must give State and local governments a reasonable opportunity to review and comment on the proposed Project, including review and comment from area-wide planning organizations in metropolitan areas.[3] To find out more about a State's process under E.O. 12372, applicants may contact their State's Single Point of Contact (SPOC). Names and addresses of some States' SPOCs are listed on the Office of Management and Budget's home page at *www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants_spoc.* Section A.11. of Form ED–900 provides more information and allows applicants to demonstrate compliance with E.O. 12372.

C. Paperwork Reduction Act

The IMCP application on OMB MAX involves a collection of information subject to the Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA), 44 U.S.C. 3501, *et seq.* The application has been approved by OMB for a six-month emergency period under OMB Control Number 0610–0107. The application is described above, and will require applicants to provide information about, *inter alia:* The Point of Contact/Lead Applicant; the Submitting Official; Geographic Scope and how they satisfy the top third KTS requirement; Members of the consortium and evidence of ability to manage a Federal Financial Assistance award; the local industrial ecosystem and implementation strategy; and the evaluation plan, including the milestones, benchmarks and outcome-based metrics to be tracked and evaluation methods to be used.

EDA expects to receive approximately 80 applications. EDA estimates cost to a respondent to prepare the electronic application is a one-time cost of $420, based on an average labor cost of $42/hour times 10 hours, which equals $420. There are no non-labor costs to a respondent (which includes equipment, printing, postage and overhead) associated with the collection. The total cost estimated is therefore:

80 responses × 10 hours/response = 800 burden hours.

800 hours × $42/hour = $33,600 per year labor.

Comments are invited on: (a) Whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the IMCP, including whether the information will have practical utility; (b) the accuracy of the estimate of the burden of the proposed information collection; (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (d) ways to minimize the burden of the information collection on respondents, including the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology. Comments regarding the collection of information associated with this rule, including suggestions for reducing the burden, should be sent to OMB Desk Officer, New Executive Office Building, Washington, DC 20503, Attention: Nicholas Fraser, or by email to *Nicholas_A._Fraser@omb.eop.gov,* or by fax to (202) 395–7285, and to EDA as set forth under **ADDRESSES**, above. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, no person is required to comply with, and neither shall any person be subject to penalty for failure to comply with, a collection of information subject to the requirements of the PRA, unless that collection of information displays a currently valid OMB Control Number.

VII. Contact Information

For questions concerning this solicitation, or for more information about the IMCP Participating Agencies programs, you may contact the appropriate IMCP Participating Agency's representative listed below.

1. Appalachian Regional Commission

a. Local Access Road Program: Jason Wang, (202) 884–7725, *jwang@arc.gov*

b. Area Development Program: David Hughes, (202) 884–7740, *dhughes@arc.gov*

2. Delta Regional Authority

a. States' Economic Development Assistance Program (SEDAP): Kemp Morgan, (662) 483–8210, *kmorgan@dra.gov*

3. Department of Housing and Urban Development

a. Office of Sustainable Housing and Communities (OSHC) grant: Salin Geevarghese, (202) 402–6412, *salin.g.geeverarghese@hud.gov*

4. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration

a. Department of Labor Programs: Melissa Smith, (202) 693–3949, *smith.melissa@dol.gov*

5. Department of Transportation

a. Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER): Matt Fall, (202) 366–8152, *matt.fall@dot.gov*

6. Environmental Protection Agency

a. Targeted Brownfield Assessments (TBA): Debra Morey, (202) 566–2735, *morey.debi@epa.gov*
b. Brownfield Grants: Debra Morey, (202) 566–2735, *morey.debi@epa.gov*

7. National Science Foundation

a. Advanced Technology Education: Susan Singer, (703) 292–5111, *srsinger@nsf.gov*
b. I/UCRC: Grace Wang, (703) 292–5111, *jiwang@nsf.gov*

8. Small Business Administration

a. Accelerator Program: Pravina Ragavan, (202) 205–6988, *pravina.raghavan@sba.gov,* Javier Saade, (202) 205–6513, *javier.saade@sba.gov*
b. Regional Innovation Clusters Program: John Spears, (202) 205–7279, *john.spears@sba.gov,* Matthew Stevens, (202) 205–7699, *matthew.stevens@sba.gov*

9. U.S. Department of Agriculture

a. Rural Economic Development Loan and Grant Program (REDLG): Kristi Kubista-Hovis, (202) 815–1589, *kristi.kubista-hovis@wdc.usda.gov*
b. Rural Business Enterprise Grant Program (RBEG): Kristi Kubista-Hovis, (202) 815–1589, *Kristi.kubista-hovis@wdc.usda.gov*
c. Intermediary Relending Program (IRP): Kristi Kubista-Hovis, (202) 815–1589, *Kristi.kubista-hovis@wdc.usda.gov*
d. Business & Industry Guaranteed Loan Program (B&I): John Broussard, (202) 720–1418, *john.broussard@wdc.usda.gov*

10. U.S. Department of Commerce

a. Award Competitions for Hollings Manufacturing Extension Partnership: Heidi Sheppard, (301) 975–6975, *heidi.sheppard@nist.gov*
b. NIST Advanced Manufacturing Technology Consortia: Heidi Sheppard, (301) 975–6975, *heidi.sheppard@nist.gov*
c. Manufacturing Extension Partnership Network Special Competitions: Heidi Sheppard, (301) 975–6975, *heidi.sheppard@nist.gov*

[3] As provided for in 15 CFR part 13.

Dated: January 26, 2015.

Roy K.J. Williams,

Assistant Secretary for Economic Development.

[FR Doc. 2015–01763 Filed 1–28–15; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510–WH–P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

Foreign-Trade Zones Board

[B–03–2015]

Foreign-Trade Zone (FTZ) 84—Houston, Texas, Notification of Proposed Production Activity, MHI Compressor International Corporation, (Gas Compressors, Compressor Sets, Electrical Generators and Generating Sets), Pearland, Texas

MHI Compressor International Corporation (MHI) submitted a notification of proposed production activity to the FTZ Board for its facility in Pearland, Texas. The notification conforming to the requirements of the regulations of the FTZ Board (15 CFR 400.22) was received on January 12, 2015.

A separate application for subzone designation at the MHI facility is planned and will be processed under Section 400.38 of the FTZ Board's regulations. The facility is currently under construction and will be used for the production of heavy industrial gas compressors, compressor sets, electrical generators and generating sets. Pursuant to 15 CFR 400.14(b), FTZ activity would be limited to the specific foreign-status materials and components and specific finished products described in the submitted notification (as described below) and subsequently authorized by the FTZ Board.

Production under FTZ procedures could exempt MHI from customs duty payments on the foreign status components used in export production. On its domestic sales, MHI would be able to choose the duty rates during customs entry procedures that apply to gas compressors, compressor sets, electrical generators and generating sets (duty rates: Free and 2.8%) for the foreign status inputs noted below. Customs duties also could possibly be deferred or reduced on foreign status production equipment.

The components and materials sourced from abroad include: Steel split taper pins; carbon steel seal rings; babbit metal seal rings; felt rings; teflon back-up rings; plastic o-rings; polymer seals; teflon back-up rings; rubber o-rings; non-asbestos packing materials; non-asbestos with rubber binder packing materials; stainless steel air hose couplings; alloy steel tubing; stainless steel bite type nuts; carbon steel sleeves; stainless steel adapters; stainless steel bolts; alloy steel stud bolts; steel set screws; steel nuts; steel cap nuts; steel lock washers; carbon steel plain washers; steel rings; steel pins; cast iron valve boxes; carbon steel motor support parts; stainless steel guide bars; copper seal rings; copper packings; pliers; steel cutters; copper bar for nuts; metal plugs; steam turbines with an output exceeding 40 megawatts; steam turbines with an output not to exceed 40 megawatts; steam turbine blades; steam turbine parts (spindles, nozzles, baffle plates, casings, casing assemblies, bushes, bushings, governing devices, levers, oil cylinders, oil cylinder covers, hand pump and hose assemblies, pistons, and rings); hydraulic cylinder tie-rods; oil cylinder covers; hand pump assemblies; macerator pumps; hydraulic pumps; jet pumps; centrifugal pumps; compressors; heat preventative plates; oil separation units; catalytic converters; parts for couplings (inner metal for coupling, outer metal for coupling); adjusting tools for puller assemblies; USB memory sticks; control valves; throttle valves; check valves; relief valves; pilot valves; valve seats; single angular ball bearings; thrust bearings; thrust bearing shoes; bushings; bevel gears; turning gears; pinion gears; shaft seals; oil seals; electric motors, generators, and generating sets (with output up to 375 kilowatts, 750 kilovolts); brush holders; caulking compounds; junction boxes; carbon brushes; temperature transmitters; and, pointers (duty rates range from free to 9.9%).

Public comment is invited from interested parties. Submissions shall be addressed to the FTZ Board's Executive Secretary at the address below. The closing period for their receipt is March 10, 2015.

A copy of the notification will be available for public inspection at the Office of the Executive Secretary, Foreign-Trade Zones Board, Room 21013, U.S. Department of Commerce, 1401 Constitution Avenue NW., Washington, DC 20230–0002, and in the "Reading Room" section of the FTZ Board's Web site, which is accessible via *www.trade.gov/ftz.*

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Diane Finver at *Diane.Finver@trade.gov* or (202) 482–1367.

Dated: January 22, 2015.

Andrew McGilvray,

Executive Secretary.

[FR Doc. 2015–01700 Filed 1–28–15; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510–DS–P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

Foreign-Trade Zones Board

[B–69–2014]

Foreign-Trade Zone 155—Calhoun/Victoria Counties, Texas, Authorization of Production Activity, Tenaris Bay City, Inc., (Seamless Steel Tubes and Pipes), Bay City, Texas

On September 25, 2014, the Calhoun-Victoria Foreign-Trade Zone, Inc., grantee of FTZ 155, submitted a notification of proposed production activity to the Foreign-Trade Zones (FTZ) Board on behalf of Tenaris Bay City, Inc., within Subzone 155D, in Bay City, Texas.

The notification was processed in accordance with the regulations of the FTZ Board (15 CFR part 400), including notice in the **Federal Register** inviting public comment (79 FR 59473–59474, 10–2–2014). The FTZ Board has determined that no further review of the activity is warranted at this time. The production activity described in the notification is authorized, subject to the FTZ Act and the Board's regulations, including Section 400.14.

Andrew McGilvray,

Executive Secretary.

[FR Doc. 2015–01722 Filed 1–28–15; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510–DS–P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

International Trade Administration

[A–570–967]

Aluminum Extrusions From the People's Republic of China: Partial Rescission of Antidumping Duty Administrative Review

AGENCY: Enforcement and Compliance, International Trade Administration, Department of Commerce.

DATES: *Effective Date:* January 29, 2015.

SUMMARY: On June 27, 2014, the Department of Commerce (the Department) published in the **Federal Register** a notice of initiation of an administrative review of the antidumping duty (AD) order on aluminum extrusions from the People's Republic of China (PRC), based on multiple timely requests for an administrative review.[1] The review covers 155 companies. Based on the timely withdrawal of the requests for review of certain companies, we are

[1] *See Initiation of Antidumping and Countervailing Duty Administrative Reviews,* 79 FR 36462 (June 27, 2014) (*Initiation Notice*).