



To: **State and Local Arts Leaders**

From: Narric Rome, VP of Government Affairs
Rena Cohen, Federal Affairs Fellow

Date: August 9, 2021

Re: New COVID-19 Relief Funds Through Economic Development Administration

The EDA (Economic Development Agency) [received \\$3 billion](#) from the Biden Administration's American Rescue Plan to invest in distressed and underserved communities impacted by the coronavirus pandemic. The funding will be administered through six programs that support infrastructure, innovation, and workforce training:

- [Build Back Better Regional Challenge](#) (\$1 bil.)
- [Good Jobs Challenge](#) (\$500 mil.)
- [Economic Adjustment Assistance Challenge](#) (\$500 mil.)
- [Indigenous Communities Challenge](#) (\$100 mil.)
- [Travel, Tourism, and Outdoor Recreation Grants](#) (\$750 mil.)
- [Statewide Planning, Research and Networks Grants](#) (\$90 mil.)

Of these, the most promising program for arts organizations is the [Travel, Tourism, and Outdoor Recreation Program](#), which focuses on accelerating the recovery of communities that rely on the travel, tourism and outdoor recreation sectors. It administers two types of grants:

- **State Tourism Grants:** \$510 million in non-competitive awards to help states quickly invest in marketing, infrastructure, workforce and other projects to rejuvenate safe leisure, business and international travel.
 - o **Who may apply:** States apply directly and may competitively subaward.
 - o **Timeline:** States received an invitation to apply on July 26th. Applications will be due in **late September 2021**, with awards made in November 2021.
 - o **Projects Funded:** tourism and marketing promotion, workforce training, economic planning and coordination, technical assistance projects, upgrades to travel/tourism infrastructure, new infrastructure projects for long term growth.
 - o **Award Amounts:** Amounts are based on the pre-pandemic sectors' percentage of State GDP along with employment and GDP loss in the travel and tourism sectors during the pandemic.
- **Competitive Grants:** \$240 million to help communities that have been hardest hit by challenges facing the travel, tourism and outdoor recreation sectors to invest in infrastructure, workforce or other projects to support the recovery and economic resiliency of the community.
 - o **Who may apply:** District organizations, Indian Tribes, states, counties, cities, institutions of higher education, public or private nonprofits supported by their local governments.
 - o **Timeline:** Applications are open now, and awards are made on a rolling basis. Applicants are encouraged to **submit by March 31st, 2022**.
 - o **Projects funded:** Construction and non-construction projects that support the travel, tourism, or outdoor recreation sectors, **including "cultural, arts, and tourism facilities."** EDA funds 80-100% of project costs.
 - o **Award Amounts:** Amounts will vary, but will typically be \$500,000- \$10 million.

For more general questions about this program, email TravelandTourism@eda.gov. To ask specific questions or discuss project ideas, [connect with your state's Economic Development Representative](#).