

UPSTATE REVITALIZATION INITIATIVE PLANS

Q. Who creates a region's Revitalization Plan and decides what projects will be included?

A. A URI plan will be created by each of the seven Regional Economic Development Councils (REDCs) that are authorized to compete for one of the three \$500 million awards. A plan will describe the region's needs and opportunities and list projects that address such needs and opportunities over a five-year period.

Q. The URI competition guidelines requests that each REDC address twelve separate concepts, including innovation, private sector investment, sustainability, and work force development. Can the REDC address additional concepts in its Revitalization Plan?

A. Yes, an REDC may address additional concepts not described in the competition guidelines that are central to the region's plan. A link to URI competition guidelines may be found at <http://regionalcouncils.ny.gov/>.

Q. How can a region both increase its average wealth with jobs that pay more than the regional average, while also finding employment for hard-to-place workers, particularly those with lower educational attainment?

A. Regional Economic Development Councils will need to balance a number of important factors. The competition places a premium upon the creation of new permanent private sector jobs that will allow a family to earn a solid place in the middle class. Hard-to-place workers will help drive a region's economy upward as they become employed. It is expected that hard-to-place workers (along with some other more traditional members of the workforce) will face a transition period as they gain the skills and experience to improve their wages and salaries. How a region balances these issues will be an important feature in the evaluation process.

Q. Does the REDC need to obtain resolutions of support from county and local governments within the region?

A. Each REDC must demonstrate that it has support for its URI plan from key stakeholders in the region. This demonstration can include resolutions of support from local governments; however, such resolutions are not required. It is for each region to determine how it will demonstrate stakeholder support.

Q. What is the role and importance of other state initiatives in the URI application process?

A. One of the twelve concepts that an REDC must address in its URI submission is the use of existing state programs outside of the URI to achieve the region's goals. The REDC should strengthen its plan and augment URI funding by leveraging the support of other state programs that can further the region's goals.

Q. How should an REDC quantify five-year projections?

A. Each REDC should use its own formula to establish its multi-year projections. It is expected that REDCs will take a data-driven approach that takes advantage of currently available data and information provided by project applicants.

Q. Are there any forums or workshops on the URI process?

A. There have been a number of public meetings, workshops, and brainstorming sessions held in each region to obtain community input and to explain the process. Public engagement and consensus building is one of the key concepts that must be addressed in the URI plan. Each REDC has established and maintains a calendar of its events and a portal to receive comments from the public. These can be accessed through <http://regionalcouncils.ny.gov>. Video of the Governor discussing the Upstate Revitalization Initiative can be found on the Governor's website at <https://www.governor.ny.gov/news/2015-opportunity-agenda-restoring-economic-opportunity-0>.

Q. Who from the State will review the seven regional Revitalization Plans?

A. Plans will be reviewed by the State Implementation Assessment Team (SIAT).

UPSTATE REVITALIZATION INITIATIVE PROJECTS

Q. What is the source of funding appropriated for the URI?

A. The \$1.5 billion that has been appropriated for the URI is derived from settlements that the State reached with large corporations accused of misconduct in the financial, real estate and insurance markets.

Q. Can applicants within a region qualify for both URI funding and traditional CFA funding?

A. Applicants within a region will be eligible for funding from both the \$500 million available in the URI and the sources of funding from various state agencies in the CFA; however, in 2015 there will be some restrictions on the availability of Empire State Development capital funds in regions that win the URI competition. It is recommended that applicants submit to both programs.

Q. What can funding awarded through the URI be used for?

A. The use of URI money is fairly flexible, and a long list of examples appears in the URI competition guidelines. Most importantly, URI projects must be consistent with the goals of the REDC and of the Upstate Revitalization Initiative program.

Q. How does an REDC identify projects to consider for its Revitalization Plan?

A. Each REDC can receive project ideas from multiple sources. However, it is expected that all projects will be submitted using the URI "Intent to Propose" application on the Consolidated Funding Application (CFA) website. Project submissions are forwarded to the REDC for its consideration.

Q. Must each Revitalization Plan contain a list of projects that would spend the entire \$500 million award?

A. No, Revitalization Plans can include a list of projects that cost under \$500 million and an explanation for how future projects will be selected.

Q. If a project is not awarded funding from an agency program through the CFA, may it still be considered for URI funding?

A. Yes; however in order to be considered for funding from both sources, a full CFA application and a URI "Intent to Propose" must be completed and submitted.

Q. Should the list of priority projects endorsed by the REDC for ESD funding and the list of projects included in the Revitalization Plan be different?

A. It is expected that there will be some overlap in the lists, but also differences. The Upstate Revitalization Initiative was created to offer the seven participating regions an opportunity to develop, and if funded, to implement a multi-year transformative economic development strategy built around an overall plan for the region. The URI is designed to allow for the flexible use of committed funding

over a number of years. CFA funding of priority projects is designed to fund individual projects that are ready to go and that are in compliance with existing state funding guidelines.

Q. Can URI funding be used to support K-12 education programs?

A. URI funding cannot be used to support basic educational programs. However, in limited circumstances, URI funds could be used to support job training, mentorship or skills readiness programs or similar programs that are funded in whole or in part through K-12 schools. It is more likely that such programs would be accepted if they focus on the upper grades, specifically target job opportunities within the region, and are ready to be implemented with significant private sector partnerships.

Q. How should an REDC handle a project that is proposed for multiple regions?

A. Each region should focus on projects that it believes will be most helpful in making a transformative improvement to its economy. If a project is located in more than one region, or will benefit more than one region, the regions should collaboratively decide whether they will each include the project in their Revitalization Plan. The applicant need only fill out one "Intent to Propose." When filling out the "Intent to Propose," the applicant should check each region in which the project will take place on the location page, and the project description should reference both regions.

Q. Who can apply for URI funding?

A. Any person, business entity, not-for-profit corporation or local government can apply for URI support.

Q. Can an application for URI funding include multiple corporations?

A. A URI project can include any number of partners. It is necessary to identify a lead partner to act as the contact and partner primarily responsible for compliance.

Q. If I submitted a project idea for URI funding, and the region is selected to receive URI funding, will someone from the REDC contact me about my submission?

A. All URI “Intent to Propose” applications will flow through the REDC, which will select which applications to consider for funding through the URI. If selected, there will be close collaboration with REDC staff and successful URI project applicants.

Q. How do I obtain and submit an application for CFA or URI funding?

A. Applications for CFA and URI funding must be submitted online through the CFA. A prospective applicant may find links at <http://regionalcouncils.ny.gov/> or go to the Consolidated Funding Application page at <https://apps.cio.ny.gov/apps/cfa/>.

Q. If I submit the “Intent to Propose” for URI funding, can I still apply for funding through the CFA for the same idea?

A. Yes. However, you must meet certain program eligibility standards for traditional CFA funding. These standards are described in the CFA Resource Manual. A link can be found at <http://regionalcouncils.ny.gov/>.

Q. If I want to apply for funding from both sources, must I fill out two separate applications?

A. Yes. Although many of the same questions are asked on both applications, the level of detail is different and some questions are specific to the funding source.

Q. If I don’t fill out an “Intent to Propose” for URI funding, can I qualify for URI funding?

A. The only way for a project to officially come to the attention of the REDC is through the “Intent to Propose” web-based application process.

Q. Rather than filling out an “Intent to Propose” for a URI project, could I simply add the statement, “Consider this CFA application an application for URI funding also” in our CFA application?

A. No, the above statement in a CFA application will not enable a Regional Council to consider the application for URI funding. A separate “Intent to Propose” must be submitted.

Q. Is every CFA application that is submitted automatically considered for URI funding?

A. No, to be considered for URI funding a separate URI “Intent to Propose” must be submitted.

Q. Can I submit more than one project for URI funding?

A. Yes, you can submit more than one project for URI funding. While there is no limit on the number of separate projects that can be submitted for URI funding, each project must be separately submitted through the URI “Intent to Propose” process on the CFA website.

Q. Will all projects submitted through the URI “Intent to Propose” be considered by the State?

A. The “Intent to Propose” was created to bring projects to the attention of the Regional Economic Development Council (REDC) in which the project is to be located. Each REDC will determine which projects will be submitted to the state as part of the URI plan for the region.

Q. Do I need to submit an “Intent to Propose” for a single \$500 million project, or can there be a number of smaller projects that add up to \$500 million?

A. A single project of modest size can be submitted for URI consideration, or a number of related projects can be submitted. In any event submissions do not need to equal the \$500 million. Smaller projects will be considered.

Q. What are the application deadlines for URI and CFA funding?

A. All CFA applications are due by 4:00 pm on Friday, July 31, 2015. There is no official due date for URI project proposals. However, as a practical matter, applicants should submit their URI proposals in time for the REDC to consider the proposal for inclusion in the URI plan, which is due October 5, 2015. A winning region may seek funding for additional projects consistent with its plan at a later date; therefore, they will continue to accept “Intent to Propose” for URI projects after the conclusion of the competitive process with other regions.

Q. Should a URI project extend over all five years of a URI plan?

A. A project submitted for URI funding should commence during the five-year period of the URI plan, but can be completed before five years’ time.

Q. Can you explain the private to public match required for URI funding?

A. Regional Revitalization Plans will be evaluated in part on a plan’s ability to yield at least \$5 of private sector spending for every \$1 of public sector funds. This requirement does not apply to each and every URI funded project, but rather will be considered across the entire plan and over the entire five

years. Thus, it is likely that some projects will have less than a 5 to 1 ratio and other projects will exceed the 5 to 1 goal.

Q. Can I use other state funds to achieve the 5 to 1 match?

A. No. New York State funds cannot be used to calculate the match required by the URI program.

Q. Our region is hoping to obtain funds from the revived Restore New York program for a major community reinvestment initiative that we also wish to have considered for URI funding. Can the Restore New York funding be used as a portion of our 5 to 1 match?

A. No, although the URI is open to creative ways that the 5 to 1 private to public sector match can be achieved, other New York State funding programs, such as the Restore New York program, cannot be used to meet the private sector match requirement. Note, that the 5 to 1 match is an aggregate for all funding over the five-year life of the URI plan. However, a Restore New York project could be used to demonstrate that the region is leveraging other state programs, as suggested, to achieve a Revitalization Plan goal such as Community Reinvestment.

Q. Can we use investments made prior to the submission of our Revitalization Plan as part of the 5 to 1 match?

A. Including prior private sector investments in the calculation of private sector match is discouraged, but may be approved in some limited circumstances. Approval will depend on the facts and circumstance. Regions are cautioned against overreliance upon this approach.

Q. What private sector funding can be used to qualify for the 5 to 1 private to public sector match?

A. Eligible private sector investments can take many forms including private investments in the purchase of land, buildings and equipment; funds used for training, apprenticeship and mentoring program; salaries and related costs for new employees; investments in venture capital funds; and upgrades of needed infrastructure related to a specific private sector project.

Q. Will funds provided by local governments to support a project be eligible for the 5 to 1 match?

A. Local government support for projects that are part of the URI plan and that are being spent by the local government as direct support for such project may be presented by the region as counting

towards the 5 to 1 match. However, this type of local government support should be kept to a minimum, as the primary purpose of the 5 to 1 match is to lure new private sector investment.

Q. Can funds provided by a business to support the Governor's mentorship program be used toward the 5 to 1 match?

A. Yes, funds to support mentorship programs can be used toward the five to one match so long as the mentorship program is part of a sector targeted for investment in the URI plan. For instance, mentorship in targeted industries could qualify, as could mentorship as part of a broader program to train workers and to support hard-to-place workers.

Q. Can the URI be a match for the CFA?

A. No