

It Takes a Village

Collaborative Grantseeking for Economic Development

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TODAY'S AGENDA

01 | Introduction to Economic Development

02 | Key Funding Themes in Public and Private Sector

03 | Example Grants in the US and Canada

04 | Collaboration in Grantseeking

05 | Q & A



What is Economic Development?









What is Economic Development?

The ongoing process of increasing an area's wealth and improving the overall quality of life for its residents, measured by both economic indicators like jobs and income, and social factors like education and infrastructure.

It's a holistic approach that goes beyond simply attracting new businesses and focuses on strengthening the entire community's well-being.

Economic Development

WHY IT MATTERS

- Bolsters local economies and strengthens communities
- Improves access to education healthcare and housing
- Reduces poverty and unemployment
- Encourages innovation and competitiveness

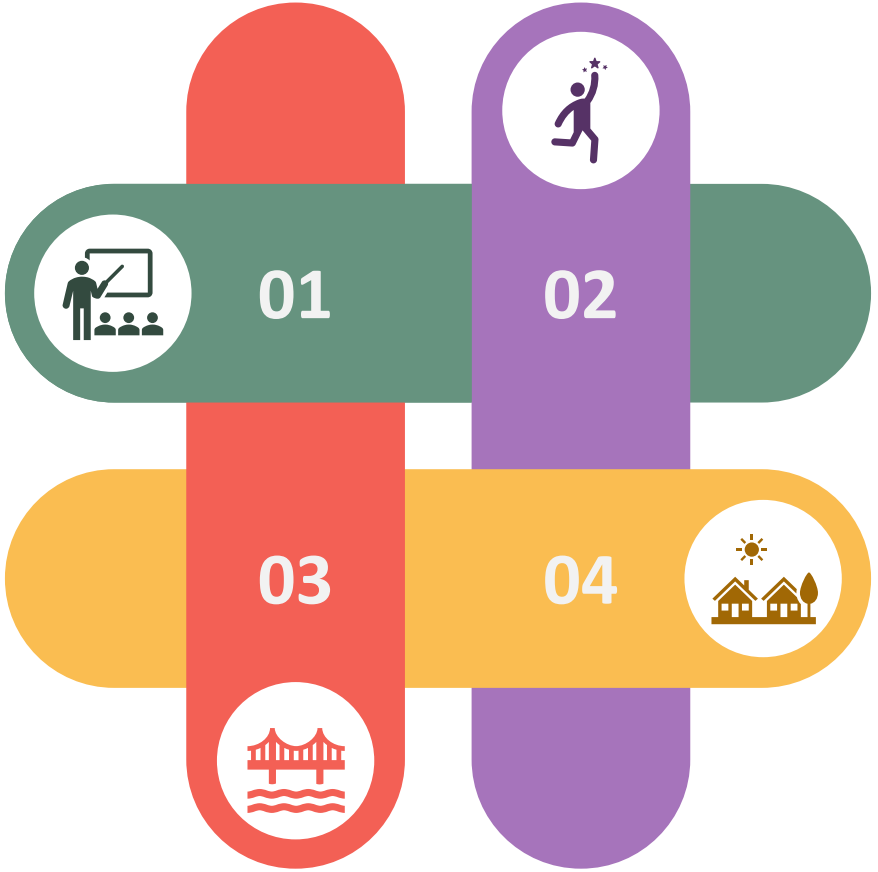
Key Investments in Economic Development

Workforce Development

Investing in education, vocational training and industry partnerships to ensure individuals have the skills, training, and opportunities needed to succeed in the local economy.

Critical Infrastructure

Investing in crucial areas like transportation, water systems, energy grids, and digital connectivity to build the foundation for public and private sector growth.



Innovation

Investing in research, technology, and creative thinking to help communities and businesses grow. It builds new industries, improves existing ones, and finds innovative ways to do things.

Community Development

Investing in education, healthcare, housing, infrastructure, and labor force to strengthen the local economy, expand opportunities, and improve quality of life.

Measuring Success

01 

Gross Domestic Product (GDP)

02 

Rates of Employment

03 

Median Household Income

04 

Rates of Poverty

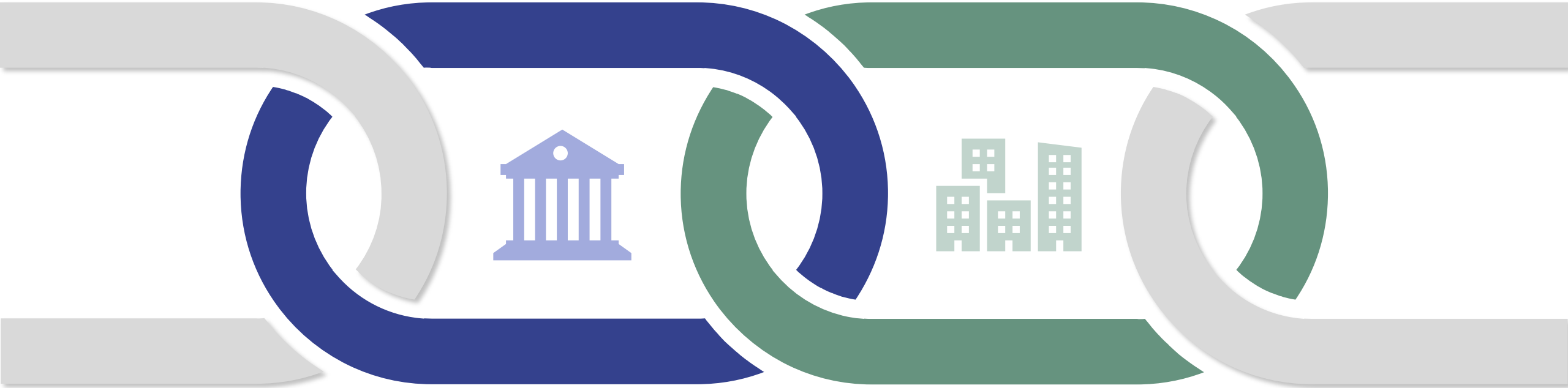
05 

Infrastructure

06 

Educational Attainment

Involvement from the Public & Private Sectors



Public Sector

Private Sector

Why is economic development a collaborative effort?

No single entity can drive lasting growth on its own.

Success depends on the interplay of multiple stakeholders to bring unique resources, expertise, and influence:

- **Governments** create policies and provide infrastructure.
- **Businesses** generate jobs, innovate, and invest in local economies.
- **Educational institutions** develop a skilled workforce and foster research.
- **Nonprofits and community groups** advocate for equity, inclusion, and sustainability.
- **Residents** provide input, require accountability, and participate in shaping their community's future.









Key Funding Themes in Public and Private Sector

Key Funding Themes

Workforce Development

- Training, career readiness, job placement, education, and partnerships

Innovation

- Research, smart city technologies, manufacturing processes, and advanced technologies

Critical Infrastructure

- Energy, transportation, water and wastewater systems, broadband, public health, emergency services, and IT

Community Development

- Affordable housing, gardens, libraries, parks, and event spaces

Workforce Development

Who Receives Grants for Workforce Development Projects?

Public Sector

- Workforce organizations
- Local governments
- Schools
- Nonprofit organizations
- Housing agencies
- Community development organizations

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Private Sector

- Individual employers (SME & large companies)
- Industry associations & sector councils
- Private training providers
- Large employers in federally regulated sectors









How Do Funders Support Workforce Development?

Priorities

- Create jobs
- Close skill gaps through training
- Address labor shortages
- Expand access for opportunities
- Promote equity and inclusion
- Support sector transformation

Innovation

Who Receives Grants for Innovation Projects?

Public Sector

- Cities, towns, municipalities, and counties
- Universities
- Nonprofit organizations

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Private Sector

- Startups & SMEs
- Large corporations
- Industry consortia & sector organizations
- Private R&D companies / tech firms









How Do Funders Support Innovation?

Public Sector Applicants:

- Advance community sustainability goals
- Enable smart city initiatives
- Support research and development projects
- Promote the use of technology and digital transformation

Private Sector Applicants:

- Support R&D and product development
- Promote digital transformation and adoption of advanced technologies
- Advance clean technology and sustainability goals
- Foster collaboration between businesses, academia, and non-profits

Critical Infrastructure

Who Receives Grants for Critical Infrastructure Projects?

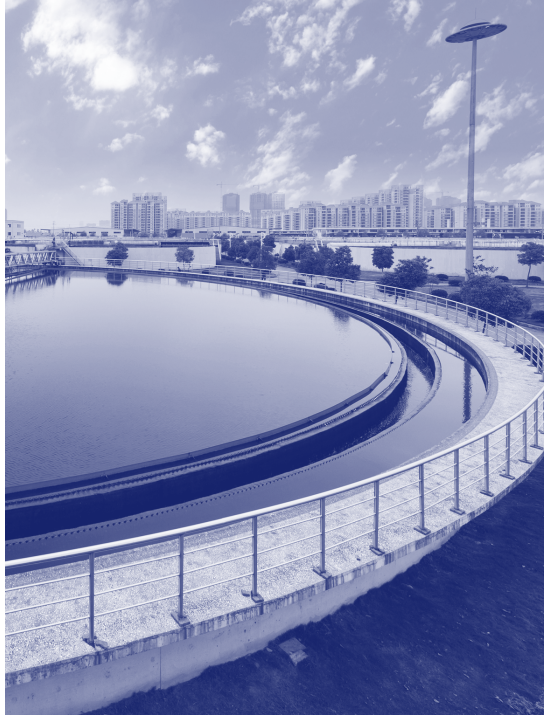
Public Sector

- Cities, towns, municipalities, and counties
- Hospitals
- Public water agencies
- Public energy utility providers
- Public broadband providers

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Private Sector

- Utilities & energy companies
- Telecommunications providers
- Transportation companies
- Private owners/operators of public-use infrastructure
- Construction & engineering firms (via partnerships)
- Critical manufacturing & technology providers









How Do Funders Support Critical Infrastructure?

Priorities:

- Build and modernize roads
- Improve public transportation
- Enhance grid resilience technologies
- Expand connectivity and access
- Accelerate the clean energy transition
- Promote water conservation
- Ensure safe drinking water
- Strengthen security
- Upgrade equipment
- Bolster supply chains and trade corridors

Community Development

Who Receives Grants for Community Development Projects?

Public Sector

- Nonprofit organizations (social services, education, community events)
- Schools, colleges, and universities
- Cities, towns, municipalities, and counties
- Housing agencies

&

Private Sector

- Developers & construction firms
- SMEs
- Private owners/operators of public-use infrastructure
- Social enterprises & B corps









How Do Funders Support Community Development?

Priorities:

- Increase affordable housing and inclusive development
- Support sustainability and green building
- Enhance community infrastructure (e.g., parks, green spaces, trails, sidewalks, community centres)
- Promote safety & security
- Revitalize local economies
- Promote social enterprise and inclusive entrepreneurship

Example Grants in the US and Canada





Strategic Innovation Fund (SIF)



Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada (ISED)

SIF aims to boost Canada's global competitiveness by supporting large-scale innovation, research & development, technology commercialization, and industrial investment.

Streams:

Business Innovation & Growth:

- Supports for-profit firms to scale up, invest in R&D / commercialization, expand facilities, and become more productive.

Collaborations & Networks:

- Funds collaborative R&D, technology demonstration, and national innovation ecosystem building among businesses, non-profits, and academia

Funding Amount

Minimum repayable contribution amount: $10 million for at least $20 million in total eligible supported costs. Non-repayable contributions are considered for certain projects.

Deadline

Applications are accepted on a continuous intake basis.

Eligibility

For stream 1:

- For-profit corporations (small, medium, or large).

For stream 2:

- Lead applicants can be for-profit or not-for-profit organizations.

Strategic Innovation Fund (SIF)

Workforce Development

- Industry partnerships with universities and colleges create opportunities for students and researchers to gain real-world experience.

Innovation

- Large-scale R&D and commercialization projects accelerate the development and adoption of new technologies.

Critical Infrastructure

- Strategic investments support advanced facilities and production capacity that strengthen Canada’s industrial base.

Community Development

- Collaborative networks, research hubs, and regional innovation ecosystems create inclusive economic opportunities across Canada.

IDEANorth



Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency (CanNor)

This program supports economic diversification, innovation, and greater Indigenous participation to build stronger, more sustainable, and resilient Northern economies.

Streams:

- Sector & capacity development
- Business scale-up and productivity
- Small-scale economic infrastructure
- Infrastructure readiness studies

Funding amount:

Up to $6 million. Cost sharing: up to 80% for non-profit applicants and up to 50% for-profit applicants.

Deadline

Combination of targeted calls for EOIs and a continuous intake process throughout the year.

Eligibility

A registered organization (Indigenous and non-Indigenous) including social enterprises, businesses, other levels of government and other non-federal entities, public or private, that have an interest in economic development in the North.

IDEANorth

Workforce Development

- Training programs, curriculum design, and sector capacity-building assist Northerners in gaining skills for emerging jobs.

Innovation

- Product commercialization, clean tech adoption, and market expansion assist businesses in improving productivity and competitiveness.

Critical Infrastructure

- Feasibility studies, incubator spaces, and processing facilities assist communities in building assets for long-term growth.

Community Development

- Visitor centres, childcare supports, and shared facilities assist local residents in creating inclusive, resilient economies.

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program

Carry out a wide-range of community development activities focused on:

- Neighborhood revitalization
- Economic development
- Improved community facilities and services

All activities must meet at least one national objective:

- Benefit low-and-moderate income persons
- Aid in the prevention or elimination of slums and blight
- Meet certain community development needs



Comparing the CDBG Programs

CDBG Entitlement Program

$2.3 billion dispersed to entitlement cities and counties (Cities of +50,000 residents and Counties of +200,000 residents).

Formula allocations.

No deadline since cities and counties are directly allocated the funds.

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CDBG Competitive Program

+ $1.0 billion dispersed across all states and territories.

Available to any city or county ineligible for entitlement funds.

Competitive calls for proposals.

Local deadlines and priorities vary.



Community Development Block Grants

Workforce Development

- Assistance to profit-motivated businesses to carry out economic development and job creation/ retention activities
- Childcare assistance

Innovation

- Technology improvements to save money and modernize services

Critical Infrastructure

- Construct water and sewer facilities, streets, broadband access
- Drainage upgrades
- Increase accessibility to public buildings

Community Development

- Neighborhood centers, libraries, senior centers
- Convert old school buildings into public use
- Gardens, sidewalk enhancements—beautification

Disaster Supplemental Grant Program



Economic Development Administration

- Investments in regions that have experienced severe economic distress or harm because of natural disasters occurring in 2023 and/or 2024
- **Readiness Path** (focused on non-construction projects)
- **Implementation Path** (focused on construction projects to address economic challenges)
- **Industry Transformation Path** (coalition of regional stakeholders to transform the economic trajectory of a region)
- Five investment priorities are critical infrastructure, workforce, innovation and entrepreneurship, economic recovery resilience, and manufacturing

Funding Amount

$1.4 billion

Deadline

Rolling Deadline expect for Industry Transformation Path (March 3, 2026)

Eligibility Notes

District organization of an EDA-designated Economic Development District

Tribe

State, county, city, or other political subdivision

Institute of higher education

Nonprofit organization in partnership with a political subdivision

Economic development organization

Public-private partnership for public infrastructure

Disaster Supplemental Grant Program

Workforce Development

- Expand workforce training facilities
- Establish workforce training programs

Innovation

- Accelerate of a large-scale industry investment
- Business incubators and industrial parks
- Expand commercialization and proof of concept centers

Critical Infrastructure

- Build/expand facilities for water systems, bridges, railways, broadband

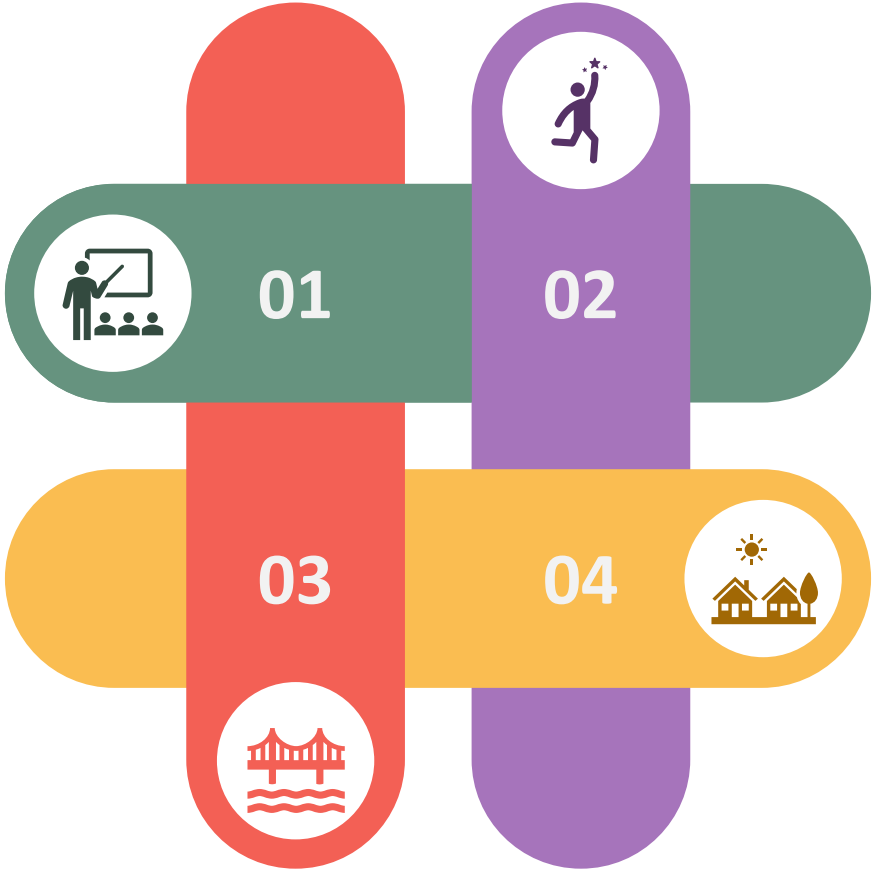
Community Development

- Expand aviation, port, and harbor facilities
- Revolving loan funds for small businesses to boost local economy

Funding Themes in Economic Development

Workforce Development

Innovation



Critical Infrastructure

Community Development

Collaboration

Why Partnerships?

01 Demonstrate collaborative approach



02 Expand reach of project



03 Increase credibility



04 Access diverse expertise and resoures



Developing Effective Partnerships



1. Define Clear Roles & Responsibilities
2. Leverage Complementary Strengths
3. Loop other organizations in BEFORE the project is fully planned
4. Formalize partnerships with a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)

Internal Partnerships

Identify key stakeholders

Who will contribute to the project?



Initiate communication

How will grant align with organizational goals?



Assign tasks

What duties will each member take on?



Establish clear communications

How will information be shared?



External Partnerships

Identify potential partners

Who has shared investment of project outcome?



Build relationships

What are mutual benefits the project has?



Incorporate partners

How will partners enhance project success?



Define roles

What tasks will be assigned to each partner?





It Takes a Village!

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