

**Tri-State Advanced Manufacturing Center for Excellence
EDA Grant**

Project Partners

Southwest Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (WI), East Central Intergovernmental Association (IA), Blackhawk Hills Regional Council (IL), Southwest Tech (WI), and Northeast Iowa Community College (IA)

Counties 25

IA: Allamakee, Cedar, Chickasaw, Clayton, Clinton, Delaware, Dubuque, Fayette, Howard, Jackson, Jones, and Winnebago

IL: Carroll, Jo Daviess, Lee, Ogle, Stephenson, and Whiteside

WI: Grant, Green, Lafayette, Iowa, Richland, Vernon, and Crawford

Project Cost

Federal: \$120,000

Match: \$120,000

Total: \$240,000

Timeline

10/1/2013-9/30/2014

Project Description

The investment objective is to develop a business plan and corresponding implementation strategies for the Tri-State Advanced Manufacturing Center for Excellence initiative that meets Tri-State regional demand for workforce, specialized training, consulting, technical assistance, prototyping, research and development, and related activities. Besides giving direction to the newly hired Executive Director, this strategy will respond to Phase 1 of the request for proposals for President Obama's Investing in Manufacturing Community Partnership program and position the region and its partners to apply for the larger (Phase 2) proposal in a future application.

The specific scope of work would include:

- Analyze the 5 CEDS that exist within this region to coordinate economic development efforts related to the growth and enhancement of the regional manufacturing industry
- Determine specific manufacturing sectors in which the region has a competitive advantage
- Develop a survey instrument to identify where manufacturing issues related to workforce, specialized training, consulting, technical assistance, prototyping, research and development, and related activities exist
- Conduct surveys of identified competitively-advantaged regional manufacturers, both online and face-to-face (with the majority of the surveys being conducted face-to-face)
- Analyze completed surveys to identify strengths and opportunities
- Develop approach for identifying members of the manufacturing focus groups

- Convene manufacturing focus groups to review the information from the surveys and identify solutions to problems
- Develop partnership models that engage specific two- and four-year educational institutions in helping to identify solutions to training and support issues
- Identify strategies to leverage contributions from existing and expanded manufacturing sector partners, including:
 - Manufacturing
 - Business
 - Non-profit organizations
 - Workforce providers
 - Educational entities
 - Economic Development organizations
 - Greater Dubuque Development Corporation
 - National Coalition of Advanced Technology Centers, and
 - Other interested manufacturing stakeholders
- Develop Implementation Strategy that includes:
 - Marketing/Branding of the Tri-State Advanced Manufacturing Center for Excellence
 - Developing a financial plan for capital investment and operation of the Center
 - Expanding successful local training and support programs to region-wide programs; i.e., Opportunity Dubuque
 - Cultivating unique advantages of the region in ways that allow it to compete globally
- Identify specialized contract training based on advanced manufacturers' needs
- Identify prototyping and research needs of advanced manufacturers
- The Advanced Manufacturing Center for Excellence, particularly the Executive Director, will validate that the educational offerings of regional institutions match the needs of employers