

MSU EDA University Center for Regional Economic Innovation (REI)  
<http://www.reicenter.org/>

## **2014 REI Co-Learning Plan Topics**

The REI University Center has identified the following topics for possible co-learning plans in 2014. To submit an application or to learn more, please visit

<http://www.reicenter.org/surveys/2014-call-for-authors/>

The deadline for all applications is Friday, December 20, 2013. Please direct questions to Ms. Jennifer Bruen at [bruenjen@msu.edu](mailto:bruenjen@msu.edu) or 517-353-9555

### **1. Youth Entrepreneurship**

Youth Entrepreneurship Education is a great tool to educate youth to the idea of job creation and thus economic development. Teaching these entrepreneurial skills would also teach communications, necessary soft skills, and employability skills, and these students' value in economic development. This co-learning plan would examine current and/or potential tools, models, policies, programs and practices that support the development of youth entrepreneurship. We welcome innovation in the proposals and the incorporating of additional elements as appropriate. Consider your level of professional or academic experience in these areas, as it pertains to economic development. [Apply Now!](#)

### **2. Locavesting**

Locavesting is a concept that has the potential to provide a local capital pool to support local and regional economic development. This co-learning plan would describe what Locavesting is and how it could be implemented in Michigan and would examine current and/or potential tools, models, policies, programs and practices that support the development of Locavesting. We welcome innovation in the proposals and the incorporating of additional elements as appropriate. Consider your level of professional or academic experience in these areas, as it pertains to economic development. [Apply Now!](#)

### **3. Repurposing Regions into Global Trade Centers**

Michigan regions may support revitalization by repurposing brownfield sites as global trade centers and logistics hubs, advanced and green manufacturing centers, or quality open spaces that can enhance surrounding properties. This co-learning plan will examine the incentives necessary to support the repurposing of contaminated sites and the current and/or potential tools, models, policies, programs and practices that support the development of Global Trade Centers. We welcome innovation in the proposals and the incorporating of additional elements as

appropriate. Consider your level of professional or academic experience in these areas, as it pertains to economic development. [Apply Now!](#)

#### **4. Money Smart for Small Business**

Money Smart for Small Business is an entrepreneurial curriculum that divides business trainings into ten modules (financial management, credit reporting, organization types, etc.). This co-learning plan would support the development of a 'virtual' webinar-based training option for entrepreneurs based on the "money smart model." Participation in the virtual training would target people unable to participate in training due to location and timing constraints. We welcome innovation in the proposals and the incorporating of additional elements as appropriate. Consider your level of professional or academic experience in these areas, as it pertains to economic development. [Apply Now!](#)

#### **5. Community Benefit Corporations**

Community benefit corporations are "for-profit entities that want to consider society and the environment in addition to profit in their decision making process" (Wikipedia). This co-learning plan would describe what they do, how they work, whether they exist in Michigan, and how economic developers can help nurture and support their growth in the state. It would also examine current tools, models, policies, programs and practices that already support the development of Community Benefit Corporations. We welcome innovation in the proposals and the incorporating of additional elements as appropriate. Consider your level of professional or academic experience in these areas, as it pertains to economic development. [Apply Now!](#)

#### **6. TIF Elimination**

TIF (tax increment financing) authorities, which divert millions of dollars from schools and other critical public investments in infrastructure, public safety and civic governance to private development, have recently been eliminated in California. A random telephone survey of Michigan's residents in spring of 2013 indicated that 85% of respondents feel businesses should pay local taxes for police, fire, schools and other public services. This co-learning plan would examine the recent California policy and provide guidance to the state and economic development profession on the benefits and costs a community could realize by eliminating TIFs. We welcome innovation in the proposals and the incorporating of additional elements as appropriate. Consider your level of professional or academic experience in these areas, as it pertains to economic development. [Apply Now!](#)

## **7. Engaging Community Alumni**

A community's alumni, those who have previously graduated from schools in, worked in, vacationed in second homes or otherwise lived in an area but have moved away, are an untapped asset for economic development. Reconnecting with these "expatriates" has the potential to bring wise ideas and support to the communities they have left behind. This proposed co-learning plan would examine their potential. What current and/or potential tools, models, policies, programs and practices that support the development of engaging alumni. We welcome innovation in the proposals and the incorporating of additional elements as appropriate. Consider your level of professional or academic experience in these areas, as it pertains to economic development. [Apply Now!](#)

## **8. Zero Start Vacant**

This proposed co-learning plan would examine the feasibility of a program that offers financial assistance to start-up or phase II businesses with the requirement that they purchase a vacant and/or abandoned property and/or building in a distressed community of Michigan. This co-learning plan would examine the potential costs and benefits of such an economic development and business support program. We welcome innovation in the proposals and the incorporating of additional elements as appropriate. Consider your level of professional or academic experience in these areas, as it pertains to economic development. [Apply Now!](#)

## **9. Pop-up Businesses**

"Traditionally Pop-up Businesses Enterprises were used to fill a temporary niche such as seasonal holiday goods and they vanished afterward"- But today Pop-Up businesses are coffee shops and retail clothing stores. In the city of Detroit it has become a new and recurrent phenomenon, an intriguing potential for economic growth. This co-learning plan would describe their nature, scope and potential to create jobs or provide needed goods and services to communities. What tools, models, policies or programs would support this initiative? We welcome innovation in the proposals and the incorporating of additional elements as appropriate. Consider your level of professional or academic experience in these areas, as it pertains to economic development. [Apply Now!](#)

## **10. Other Idea Not Listed**

We welcome innovative ideas under this category. What tools, models, policies or programs would support this idea? Consider your level of professional or academic experience in the topic area you are suggesting, as it pertains to economic development. [Apply Now!](#)