



Tools for Identifying and Connecting Regional Clusters across the U.S.

The U.S. Cluster Map and Registry (www.clustermapping.us) provide data on the regional clusters that are driving the national economy. Through this website, practitioners can access key information on industries by location and type, in both data and chart format, which can be useful for developing a regional economic development strategy. The registry provides a forum for organizations to identify other entities by geographic area that are directly or indirectly working to advance regional cluster initiatives. It is a useful tool for identifying potential organizations to partner with to advance regional cluster initiatives.

What is a Cluster?

Clusters are geographic concentrations of interconnected industries and supportive organizations that make regions uniquely competitive for jobs and private investment. Clusters are not top-down formulas aimed at being a panacea for all economic development needs. Nor are they intended to serve as a litmus test for qualifying or strictly characterizing good or bad projects. Clusters thrive and are critical in both urban and rural communities and:

- ★ provide a framework for understanding regional competitiveness and drivers of private investment and job creation.
- ★ help identify and prioritize opportunities for public investment.
- ★ are a platform for linking, leveraging, and aligning federal or state programs to get a better return on investment of taxpayer funds.

How can the National Cluster Map and Registry Tool be used by EDA staff?

★ Target: Identify key Industries

- ★ Provides agency staff, especially EDRs, with quick, easily accessible information on regional economies that can be invaluable in preparation for stakeholder meetings.
- ★ Provides agency staff with an objective source of data on clusters with national coverage, allowing for consistent approaches to reviewing cluster proposals across ROs.
- ★ Provides guidance to EDDs on targeted clusters for developing CEDS strategies, as well as suggestions for companies to serve on CEDS committees.

★ Benchmark: Track performance

- ★ Provides system for evaluating return on investment in cluster strategies and initiatives—how are regions with EDA investments performing relative to non-investment regions (controls)?
- ★ Facilitates collaboration across ROs and EDDs—what are the lessons learned in growing/declining clusters?
- ★ Sheds light on the life cycle of clusters—how can EDA best support clusters in different stages?

★ Connect: Share best practices

- ★ Provides a publicly-available clearinghouse for showcasing EDA investments in successful cluster initiatives and connecting EDDs and other stakeholders for sharing best practices.
- ★ Connects theory to practice—makes cluster-based economic development more “real” for people when they can see where it’s happening and who’s doing it.
- ★ Success of Member Directory depends on active user base—encourage your regions to participate!

“Regional innovation clusters are based on a simple but critical idea: if we foster coordination between the private sector and the public sector to build on the unique strengths of different regions—while creating the incentives for them to do so—we will be better equipped to marshal the knowledge and resources that America needs to compete in the global economy.”



Economic Development Decision Making Data Tools

The U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) partners with entities to develop and disseminate tools on new and emerging economic development concepts that practitioners and policymakers can utilize to make more informed development decisions.

Data tools for economic development supported by the U.S. Economic Development Administration:

Stats America: Calculating Innovation Capacity

www.statsamerica.org

The Indiana Business Research Center has developed the Innovation Index, a novel tool designed to provide practitioners an easy-to-compare method of assessing the innovation capacity of their region. This tool provides users the composite index of innovation inputs built upon data from four areas: human capital, economic dynamics, productivity and employment, and well-being.

Stats America: Measuring Distress for EDA Assistance

www.statsamerica.org/distress/distress.html

Developed by the Indiana Business Research Center, this tool provides practitioners a fast, simple way to calculate whether a county, region, or neighborhood may meet EDA eligibility thresholds for unemployment and income. This tool does not guarantee eligibility. Applicants are encouraged to contact their respective EDA Regional Office Economic Development Representative (EDR) for more information about determining eligibility for EDA assistance.

Know Your Region: A Template for Future Prosperity

www.knowyourregion.org

The Know Your Region curriculum is designed to introduce practitioners and policymakers to best practices and proven techniques for applying new and emerging concepts into the regional strategic planning process to realize economic development goals. This curriculum is delivered by the National Association of Development Organizations (NADO) Research Foundation through workshops (virtual and web-based).

National Cluster Mapping: Leveraging Regional Clusters to Support Economic Development

www.clustermapping.us

Created by Harvard University's Institute for Strategy and Competitiveness to identify the clusters driving the national economy (macro perspective), the U.S. Cluster Map and Registry (www.clustermapping.us) provide data on the regional clusters that are driving the national economy. Through this website, practitioners can access key information on industries by location and type, in both data and chart format, which can be useful

for developing a regional economic development strategy. The registry provides a forum for organizations to identify other entities by geographic area that are directly or indirectly working to advance regional cluster initiatives. It is a useful tool for identifying potential organizations to partner with to advance regional cluster initiatives.

Regional Innovation Accelerator Network: Identifying and Supporting VDOs

www.regionalinnovation.org

Created by the State Science and Technology Institute (SSTI), the Regional Innovation Accelerator Network (RIAN) is designed to help identify existing venture development organizations (VDOs) and relevant best practices that VDOs can implement to advance economic development objectives.

Triple Bottom Line: Measuring the Social, Environmental, and Economic Impacts of Development Decisions

www.tbltool.org

Created by Portland State University, the Triple Bottom Line Tool (TBL) helps optimize investments for economic, environmental, and social impact. Investors, economic development professionals, and decision makers can use the TBL Tool to: design economic development investments for maximum returns, consider an economic development investment's impact on various factors, and compare or communicate impacts of investment.

Leveraging Excess Capacity to Expand Manufacturing Sector

www.irlee.umich.edu/?page=irlee

Created by the University of Michigan, the Excess Capacity Project provides a web-based platform designed to help communities identify vacant manufacturing locations and key community data in areas previously driven by the automotive sector to help facilitate domestic insourcing of business and jobs.

For more information:
www.eda.gov
www.knowyourregion.org