

Improving Research Access to Privacy-Protected Data for Policy Making & Program Evaluation REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

In response to constituents, state leaders are demanding greater transparency and accountability from their economic and workforce development program investments. These leaders need better assessments of the impacts resulting from incentives and training investments that can be validated by data in ways that do not create more burdens on the businesses that states are trying to help.

The Center for Regional Economic Competitiveness (CREC) is seeking to support states in using privacy-protected administrative data to analyze public investments in economic and workforce development. CREC is seeking to collaborate with **five state teams** representing **revenue, budget, workforce and/or economic development agencies**. These five state teams will collaborate with one another and with CREC experts to determine (1) what data is being used to measure the impact of economic and workforce development programs, (2) strategies for improving access to anonymized data for government agencies and qualified researchers, and (3) appropriate data-sharing approaches that support policy making and program evaluation, and protect privacy.

Why Participate?

States will:

- Learn how to use administrative data to assess the economic and employment benefits of workforce development and tax credit programs.
- Work with other states to identify common standards and best practices for using administrative data.
- Receive technical assistance in creating trusted and secure processes for sharing administrative data across government agencies and with academic researchers.

No cost to states

There will be *no direct cost* to the states except for the time associated with participating in this project. Approved direct costs such as travel, lodging, and meals, will be reimbursed by the project sponsors.

Proposal Content

Interested states should submit a **three to five page** narrative outlining the following:

1. Prior efforts to use data to undertake rigorous, data-driven economic and/or workforce development analysis.
2. Current barriers to accessing and using state administrative data for evaluations, including efforts made to date to access data, successes achieved, and challenges or opportunities that remain.
3. Decision-makers views regarding the use of administrative data to evaluate the impact of economic and workforce development programs
4. Potential strategies for overcoming challenges related to the use of administrative data for policy analysis and program evaluation, including specific questions that the state team would like to ask their peers in other states and areas where technical assistance is needed.

Timeline and Submission Instructions

State applications are due **July 15, 2016**, and will be reviewed and selected by CREC. Please email all applications materials in PDF format to hspringer@crec.net. Please indicate “Proposal Submission: State Data Sharing – [State Name]” in the subject line of your email.

Before a final selection is announced, each state will be asked to submit a signed letter of commitment from its governor or a key cabinet-level official and a proposed four-to six-member core team. All applicants will be notified by August 15, 2016.

For answers to application questions or more detail, please contact:

Ken Poole, 703-504-2866, or kpoole@crec.net

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About the Center for Regional Economic Competitiveness (CREC)

CREC is a national 501(c)3 non-profit research group based in Arlington, Virginia, focused on improving economic and workforce development investments through the use of data to inform policy makers and drive evidence-based decision making. CREC has conducted evaluation research for several federal-state partnerships (e.g., the State Small Business Credit Initiative, the Manufacturing Extension Partnership, the Defense Industry Adjustment program, and the Appalachian Regional Commission as well as in several states). In 2013-15, CREC collaborated to implement the [Business Incentives Initiative](#) with The Pew Charitable Trusts, and assessed intra-state data sharing activities in a project, [Balancing Confidentiality and Access](#), supported by the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation. We anticipate sharing state experiences and lessons learned at www.statedatasharing.org.